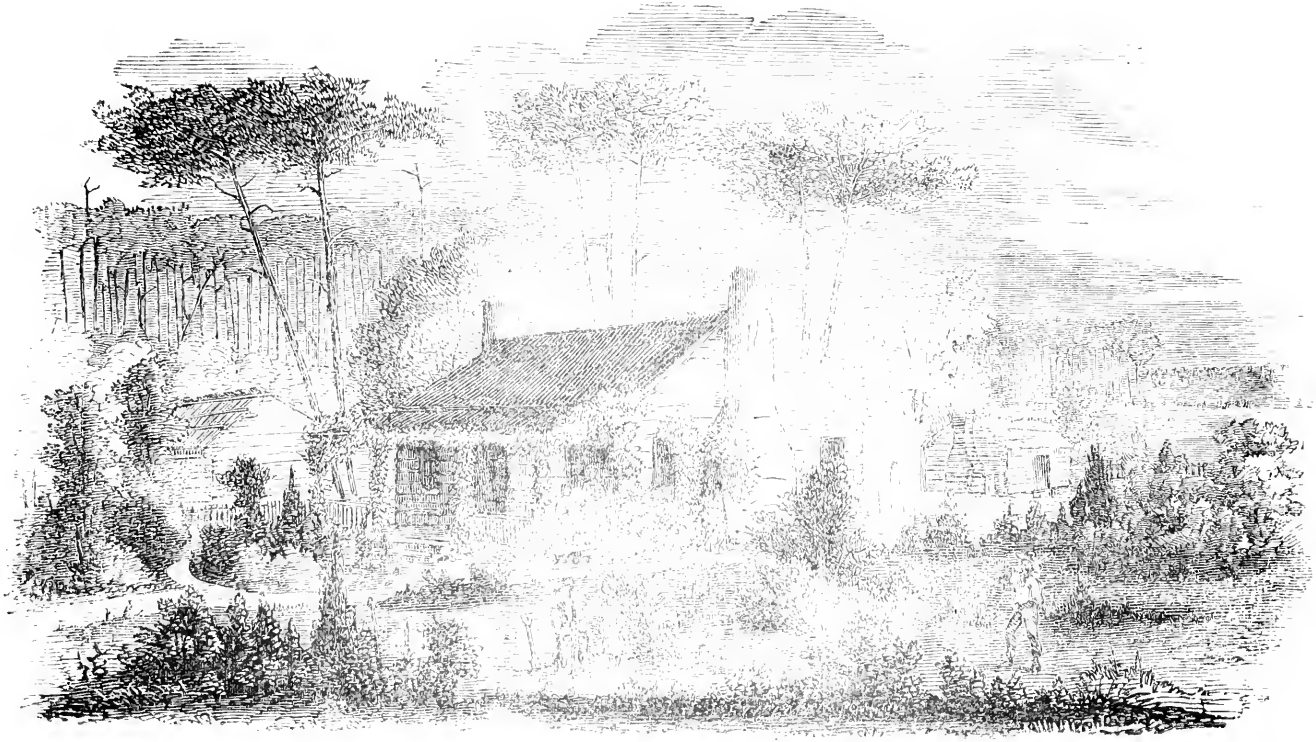

THE

OLD PINE FARM:

OR,

THE SOUTHERN SIDE.

COMPRISING LOOSE SKETCHES FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF

A SOUTHERN COUNTRY MINISTER.

S. C.

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PREFACE

THIS is not a "slavery" book, *pro* nor *con*, as might be supposed from a glance at the title, but is intended to show up some of the features of Southern ministerial life among the country churches.

Many books of a similar character have been put forth, exhibiting the phases of Northern and English experience, and it was thought due to the profession that its members in the "sunny south," should have a place in the picture.

AUTHOR.

S. C., May 1, 1859.

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OR,

THE SOUTHERN SIDE.

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It was a cold, raw, dismal morning in the month of March, the most disagreeable part of the whole year in our Southern clime, when "winter still lingers on the budding bush;" now a few days of mellow sunshine, inviting the farmer to drive his team afield—then a blustering wind howling through the forests and sweeping across the plains—again a cutting breeze, freighted with the mists of the chilly North, mocking the hope of early spring, and doubly disagreeable to the system relaxed by the preceding warmth.

Such was the day whose gray dawn found Mr. Watkins busy with preparations for his departure to meet an appointment, distant some twenty miles.

"Come, Mary," said he, addressing his wife, "let me have a cup of coffee and a bite of bread; I can't wait for breakfast: it's a long ride, and my horse is

slow, and some complained of my tardiness at the last meeting."

The good woman thus addressed was hastily making her plain toilet, and casting a glance at the little sleepers on their pallet, to see that they were properly covered, passed out into the kitchen, and calling Betty to her assistance, was soon lost to other considerations in preparing a hasty meal for her husband.

Though dimly light without, it was still night within doors, and a resinous fire sent its rays dancing over the floor, and walls, and rafters of the log kitchen, and as the ruddy light streamed through the cracks, the familiar sounds and pleasant odor of "cooking" greeted Mr. Watkins as he passed by on the way to the stable to look after his old "gallant gray."

But old daddy Cyrus had anticipated him, and was currying the horse, which was deliberately partaking of his food as his master entered.

"Ah! Cyrus, you here! I hardly thought you were astir so early."

"Hi, massa, you tink I bin lay down and sleep when missis and Betty gone for cook breakfast. More den dat, he no look right for massa go feed hoss when he got on clean close for preach in."

"Well, you can saddle him and bring him round directly; I shall soon be ready to start."

"Yes, massa, soon he bin eat some corn and fodder I ketch him and bring him round to de gate. But he *mus* eat little bit, hoss can't trabel good if you no feed him."

After this brief colloquy, Mr. Watkins returned to the house to make up a fire and wait until his faithful wife and domestics had made the necessary arrangements for his leaving; and as he walked off, old Cyrus might be heard singing in a low tone, as he ran the curry-comb over the horse:

"O de old ship of Zion, hallelu, hallelu,
De old ship of Zion, halleluya;
She hab carried many a thousand,
And she'll carry as many more,
O glory, halleluya."

"Dat's a Methodis song," muttered the old man to himself, "but I love for sing um, he make me feel good."

Pending the preparations for leaving, let us introduce our friends more particularly to the reader.

Mr. Watkins was a representative of a large class of Southern preachers, who give the strength of manhood and the experience of old age to a toilful, self-denying ministration to the Baptist churches. With but limited means for the support of their families, spiritually "working for nothing and finding themselves," life is with them a struggle for existence, until wornout mortality finds the rest of a quiet grave.

Having several churches to "supply," often at very inconvenient distances from home, much of their time is spent away from their families, their secular business is necessarily neglected, and the hard task of providing for and training their children devolves mainly on their patient, weak, laborious wives.

Should it not then be a matter of pity, rather than reproach (if it were true), that "a preacher's children are the worst in the whole neighborhood."

Mr. Watkins, at the time we write, was some thirty years of age, of moderate education, with a wife and three children. The Pine Woods Farm, of about three hundred acres, on which he lived, a colored woman with two small children, old Cyrus, a small lot of live stock, with farming utensils, make up the sum total of his worldly possessions. True he could not sing

"No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness,"

but his lot in life was quite as hard as many who could.

For five years he had given himself to the ministry of the Word, and the labors of those five years had perhaps brought him in enough to buy another horse, when the carrion crows should have held a carnival over old gray's carcass.

He had now in charge four congregations; the nearest three, and the farthest twenty miles from his residence; the other two, twelve and sixteen respectively; and, according to a custom long prevailing, two days of the week were given to each of these congregations—Saturday being "church meeting," or "conference" day, with preaching (when a sufficient number of people could be got together), and Lord's day devoted to preaching and administering such ordinances of the church as might be required.

Having but little education, Mr. Watkins, nevertheless, was gifted with more than ordinary abilities, a good address, and had made use of such time as could be spared from his churches and his farm in adding to his store of knowledge. Ardent and sanguine, he was seldom depressed by difficulties, always hoping for a "better time coming." By dint of hard work, with the help of old Cyrus, he managed always to raise enough from the farm to supply the simple wants of his family, not forgetting, also, "to entertain strangers;" while his prudent, quiet, managing wife contrived, with Betty, to keep things in order about the house and yard.

Mrs. Watkins was about three years his junior, the eldest daughter of a neigboring farmer, who a few years after her marriage had emigrated to the West in search of better lands and better facilities for bringing up and settling a large family, leaving Betty, the negro woman, as her patrimonial inheritance. Sad was the parting which sundered the social ties between herself and family, and gladly would she have gone with them; but Mr. Watkins not being able at the time to find a purchaser for his land, they agreed to "bide their time," in the hope of joining their friends after a while in their new home.

But they were destined to remain longer than they expected in their native State, and indeed it was not very long before they found their little home was becoming a dear spot to them, as one after another different improvements were made—a rose bush

planted here, a tree there, an addition made to the house, and the front paling glistening in its covering of spotless whitewash; so that the recollection of former connections and of earlier days grew fainter as the cares of the present succeeded to the remembrance of the past. Such is life, and a blessed arrangement of Providence it is, that time and circumstances should assuage the grief, and remove the sorrows of poor humanity.

Thus it was that Mr. and Mrs. Watkins became happy in themselves, happy in their children, their servants, their little business; and happy in the esteem and confidence of their neighbors; these, being generally like themselves, humble in their pretensions and pecuniary means, plain, simple in their habits, and kind in their sympathies and little acts of friendly regard.

The day with which our story opens was the regular time of meeting with the Green Mount church, situated in the upper part of the district in which Mr. Watkins lived. This was a wealthy congregation, and but for the want of proper training might have saved their preacher the labor and suffering of his long, cold ride.

Mr. Watkins had just entered on the second year of his ministerial "supply;" and though much pleased with his services, the church had very crude notions of what is meant by the "support of the ministry."

Having been long accustomed to the dispensation of a "free Gospel," the previous year's contribution of forty dollars was thought a decided mark of regard

for their popular preacher, and Mr. Watkins like too many who had preceded him, was too modest to correct the impression; or, having been raised himself in the same school, and never having felt the pain of pinching necessity, he perhaps gave the matter very little consideration. The people liked him, and he liked them; the congregations which attended on his ministry were large, and his prospects for usefulness flattering; what could he desire more?"

"Well, Mary, I must be going," remarked he, rising from his early breakfast, "Cyrus, I see, is at the gate with the horse, and it's a tedious journey. Good bye, don't expose yourself in this weather, and keep the children by the fire."

"Good-bye, dear," replied his wife, "I am sorry you have to ride so far this unpleasant day. Do try and get back as soon as you can; it always makes me sad when you are away from home."

"Indeed, my dear, I always carry a heavy heart from home, and often do I cast an anxious thought back to the dear ones in our little cottage. But God will provide; I know, and I feel, that it is wrong not to trust him who has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;'" and drawing on his overcoat and taking his saddlebags on his arm, Mr. Watkins walked out to the gate, where Cyrus was holding his horse.

"Massa, you no gwine tek your umbrella long? May be he rain fore you get up yonder; aint you see he bin cloudy now?"

"Perhaps it would be better to do so, Cyrus," replied Mr. Watkins, looking upward, "It's rather cold

for much rain, but the weather may change; go to the house and get it for me."

"Yes, sir, carry um for true," said Cyrus, starting for the umbrella, "he no good for get wet dis time de year."

"Missis! Missis! I tank you for de umbrella, mam, for massa."

"O yes," replied Mrs. Watkins, handing it to him at the door, "how could I have forgotten it."

"Ah, dat's him, now massa can go."

"Keep everything straight until I get back, Cyrus," said Mr. Watkins, mounting his horse, "give particular attention to the woodpile, and see to the cattle, this cold spell is very trying to them. We must try and plant some corn next week. Good-bye."

"Yes, sir, I tek good care of ebery ting, by de help of de Lord. Good-bye, massa, God bless you," and Mr. Watkins started on his cheerless way, through the dark pine forest, while Cyrus went to his duties as directed.

CHAPTER II.—*The Journey.*

THE keen north wind was any thing but pleasant to Mr. Watkins, as mile after mile he held on his weary way, and an occasional drizzle verified the apprehension of old Cyrus, expressed by his advice in regard to the umbrella. Long before reaching the half-way point in his journey, he found he was getting "too cold for comfort;" his feet particularly being unprotected, had become damp from the light showers which had passed over, and he felt strangely tempted to stop and "warm" at some of the houses which were scattered here and there along the road. But the day was advancing, and his slow beast made slow progress; many tiresome miles still lay before him, and resolving to "endure hardships as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," by dint of checking and thumping with his heels, he urged old gray along. His mind, too, was busy as well as his body. He tried to anticipate the business that was likely to come before the Conference, the probabilities were decidedly against having a congregation large enough for a regular sermon; hence he could find some employment in making out such "remarks" as might be deemed suitable to the occasion. Then his thoughts would revert to the dear ones at home, and he would wonder if they were gathered around the fire,—the little ones, perhaps, nestling in the corner of the ample fireplace.

"Ah, me," he would sigh, as he soliloquized on the hardships of a country minister. "Many think it

an easy life, this riding round and preaching to the churches, but little do they know of its trials. Methodist preachers sometimes talk of their privations, and doubtless some of them have a hard time of it; may God reward their self-denial." Then he would hum the good old song,

"Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas."

Again he would muse on the low state of religion in the country; "one gone to his farm and another to his merchandise." Thence turn his thoughts to the condition of the world at large; the vast numbers to whom the Gospel had not yet come; the corruptions of church establishments in civilized lands; the very few who observed "a patient continuance in well-doing" amid the general wickedness, and wonder when the world would be converted. Here a vile doubt would be injected by Satan, What if it should be a mistake, after all? Who knows, but after all the toil and pains-taking, the preaching and praying, that man does not at last go to an eternal sleep when the grave closes over him? But the thought is torment, and he prays, "Lord save me from an evil heart of unbelief." "Lord let thy kingdom come." And as the recollection of the cloud of witnesses, and the fulfillment of God's promises in times past come to mind, and as the glories of the latter days gild the horizon of Hope, Love burns within his soul, Zeal prompts to continued exertion as he seems to hear,

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,"—not be thou "*successful*,"—that may be impossible; but be thou "*faithful*." For a time, home is forgotten, cold unfelt, inconveniences disregarded, and he hardly knows whether he is in the body or out of it. But alas! as in the case of the disciples, while the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak, and our worthy minister gradually comes to find himself plodding along his gloomy way, benumbed with cold, the damp winds sighing among the waving pines and whistling a tuneless melody about his ears.

By this time he had entered a clearing, called, in Southern *parlance*, a "new ground," over which lay numerous piles of logs and brush, many of which were on fire, sending up volumes of smoke and shedding a genial warmth around. One of these was burning near the road side, around which were several negroes working, and a white man overlooking and directing their operations.

As Mr. Watkins approached the log-heap, he was addressed in a friendly manner by the overseer.

"Good morning, Bro. Watkins. Come, ride up and warm awhile; you must be well chilled riding against this sharp wind."

"Thank you, Bro. Orton; I am very cold, and at the risk of being a little late at meeting, I must thaw my hands and feet."

"And your *nose*," pleasantly remarked the overseer. "I hardly think you will meet much of a congregation to-day, and am rather surprised at your going"

"To have consulted only my feelings would have certainly resulted in my remaining at home," returned Mr. Watkins. "And if I had thought it would be so very disagreeable, perhaps I should not have come anyhow. But, doubtless, it is all for the best, and I shall feel better for having done what duty seemed to require."

"I should be glad to go with you, cold as it is, but my time, as you know, belongs to my employer, and he might not like me to leave the plantation."

"O, of course it would not be right for you to go without permission, where there is no necessity for your doing so. Faithfulness to secular engagements is a part of religion, and in observing this we render an acceptable service to God. 'Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together,' is an apostolic exhortation which should by no means be disregarded whenever circumstances will allow its observance; but religion is something which should control the whole man in all the relations of life; and one may serve God in his field, his storehouse, or his workshop."

"So I think," replied Mr. Orton; "and thus I try to console myself when prevented from attending as I desire at the church. We read, 'it is according to that a man hath and not according to that he hath not,' that he must be judged."

"Very true, Bro. Orton, only don't let us make excuses when none really exist. I suppose you will be at church to-morrow?"

"O, yes, Providence permitting, I will certainly be there, rain or shine."

"Well, bring all you can with you, and try and get the negroes on the plantation to come, as many as can do so, and I trust we may have a good meeting yet, unpromising as appearances now are. But I must be going; there are still five miles of riding before me; it is now eleven o'clock, (looking at his watch.) Good morning, Bro. Orton."

"Good day, Bro. Watkins," returned the overseer, extending his hand; "a pleasanter ride to you than I expect you will have."

Mr. Watkins mounted his horse and reluctantly rode away from the rousing new ground fire, to encounter again the biting blast. But the warming had greatly helped him, and he did not become so cold again during the remainder of the journey. Old gray, too, seemed to move with more life after his little resting spell, and at the end of an hour's jolting, on ascending a hill, Mr. Watkins was gladdened with the sight of the old weather-beaten meeting-house, dingy with age and the storms of a quarter of a century.

A few horses hitched about under the trees showed that his expectations in regard to a small congregation, were not disappointed. So tying the reins of his bridle to a limb of a tree, he dismounted and walked into the house to join those who had preceded him, where we will leave him for a while, and go back to see how the family are getting on at home.

CHAPTER III.—*The Farm.*

WHO that has ever traveled through South Carolina and Georgia but has remarked the uniformity of design as respects the dwellings of the country-people—varied chiefly by the pecuniary circumstances of the owners? The little log cabin, with a single room and a clay chimney. This represents the lowest class.

Two log pens, and two back shed rooms, with a passage through the center and a piazza in front; clay chimney at each end of the house. This is the second class in the ascending scale.

Two story house, built of pine boards, with four rooms in the body of the house, and two shed rooms behind; brick chimney at each end, piazza in front, and passage through the center. This is the third class—men who are getting "well-to-do in the world."

Large two story double house, eight rooms, chimney running up through the roof, giving a fireplace to each room; piazza or portico in front, and passage through the center. This completes the series, and here we find the lordly planter, with all the appointments of comfortable and stylish living. Occasional deviation from these descriptions may of course be found, according to the peculiarity or amount of taste in individuals; but the picture in the main is, we think, correctly drawn.

To the second in the series belonged our worthy preacher; but while thus low down in the scale, there

was about the premises abundant evidence of an elevation of taste above his class. The trim flower-garden in front of the house, with its neatly white-washed palings, vines climbing about the piazza, carpeted floors, books, magazines, and newspapers, about the rooms, and pictures on the walls; vegetable garden in the rear of the yard, an orchard of various kinds of fruits and many other little matters, marked the refined taste of the preacher and his family.

The operations of the farm, too, were conducted in a manner creditable to the industry and good judgment of its managers. The soil, indeed, was not originally very fertile; but was made to yield an abundance to satisfy the simple wants of the family. The everlasting worm-fence of the south inclosed the cultivated grounds; but even this was, in one sense, straight—that is, it was put up plumb and true, and well secured with "stakes and riders." The condition of the live stock also, betokened a degree of attention paid to it, uncommon in this latitude, which usually consists in "penning" the cattle at night, and turning them out in the morning to work for a living—the motto observed in regard to hogs being emphatically, "root pig, or die." As to sheep, the armies of useless curs of every size and color, white, black, brindled, bob-tailed and crop-eared, which infest the yards of rich and poor, white and black, make that animal almost as much of a show in some places, as a lama or a camel.

The principal crop raised at Pine Farm was, Indian corn, with cow-peas planted between the rows; a small

field of wheat, oats, sweet potatoes, and a patch of sugar cane. But the indispensable cotton patch, producing that which is deemed of essential utility as an article of sale, was not neglected. True, it was not a large crop, but like everybody else, Mr. Watkins "must have some cotton."

Cotton! what a power in the world! It is music in the ear of the speculating dealer.

Cotton! The wealthy nabob assumes a loftier air as he rides over his vast plantation.

Cotton! The merchant prince contemplates, with proud satisfaction, the piles in his warehouse and his vessels freighted for foreign shores.

Cotton! "The lords of the loom," calculate its profits as they stalk amid the clatter of machinery preparing it for the varied uses of man. The poor man rejoices in the expectation of the return of his summer's work; and the domesticated African, as he hoes the grass away from the roots of the plant, and gathers the fleecy locks into his basket, wonders where all the cotton goes to! Wonderful thing! For long ages an insignificant plant in some out of the way corner of the earth, "wasting its sweetness on the desert air," now receiving the homage of the sons of Mammon, as it sits a king upon the throne of trade.

But to return to our friends. Saturday is a busy day to country people. The yard must be swept, clothes done up, house put in order, and things fixed up generally for Sunday; so that after breakfast Mrs. Watkins was soon diligently engaged in domestic duties, the children in the meantime bringing in

wood from the pile which Cyrus was accumulating in the yard, and rendering such little assistance in different ways as they were capable of.

We have said that three children composed the family of Mr. and Mrs. Watkins. Julia, the eldest, was a promising child of ten years growth, resembling in form and face her much-loved father, with mild blue eyes, dark ringlets clustering about a high forehead, that indicated an uncommon degree of intellectuality; amiable, and ever ready to help "mother" about household matters, and with quite a feeling of importance, was wiping the cups and saucers at the table, after bringing in an armful of wood.

Susan was three years her junior, a romping, merry little black-eyed reproduction of mother; and Tommy, as he toddled in with a turn of lightwood, presented a specimen of a hearty fellow who required more than three years to develop fully his mental and physical tendencies.

"Mother," said Julia, "why did you not wake me up this morning to see father? I am sorry he has gone away; will he come back soon?"

"I hope he will return on Monday, my dear. I thought it best to let you sleep, as by your getting up it might have disturbed the smaller children, and I did not have time to dress them before getting something for your father to eat."

Julia thought this a good reason, and made no reply, though she thought how much she would have liked to kiss father before he went away.

"O, mother," cried Susan, "here is Tommy play-

ing with the fire," as this last-named personage was making fiery circles in the air with a straw lighted at the end.

"Don't do so, Tommy," said his mother, reprovingly; "fire is a dangerous thing to play with; you know how little Willie Jones was burned last week."

"Put it down, sir," commanded Susan. "Mother, he won't do it."

"I is, mudder," rejoined Tommy, dropping the straw.

Julia, who was standing near, quietly picked it up and threw it behind the fire. "Now, Tommy, let me get you something to play with." So saying, she stepped across the room and took a primer from the table. "Here, Tommy, look at these pretty pictures, and let Susan tell you about the horses, and dogs, and birds."

This arrangement seemed to suit him very well, and as it gave Susan an opportunity to exercise a little brief authority as teacher, they seated themselves on the floor and were soon absorbed in the wonders of natural history.

Things being "put to right" in house and kitchen, Mrs. W. spent the morning with Betty in such business as did not expose them to the weather, while Cyrus gave his time principally to cutting up fire wood and attending to the stock.

During the afternoon the wind veered around to the west and brushed away the clouds, giving promise of a fair day on the morrow. In the evening, after the supper things were cleared away, Mrs. W. called in

the servants, and gathering the children around the fireplace, read some passages from the Bible, and all then kneeled down while she commended them and her absent husband to the kind care of the heavenly Father. After prayer she led in singing a devotional hymn, in which she was joined by the little company, when they retired for the night to seek the rest of "nature's sweet restorer."

CHAPTER IV.—*The Methodist Meeting.*

THE wind, which was blowing with considerable force when the family retired to bed, gradually subsided, and by midnight the air was still. The morning broke clear and cold, and a frosty sheet, spread out on plain and hillside, reflected, from its pure crystals, the rays of the rising sun, and as it melted under the influence of the increasing warmth, there went up a vapory cloud as though earth would offer incense in acknowledgment of descending mercies. Higher still mounted the sun in the heavens, sending down a flood of light over mountain and valley, field and forest, running stream and quiet lake. Far off upon the sea, where the monsters of the deep roam in unrestrained freedom, his rays danced upon the deep blue waters; the dormant germs of earth felt his life-giving power, and nature's warblers joined in a chorus of thanksgiving to Him who made the sun to rule by day. The deep tones, as they floated in musical solemnity from the spires of the crowded city, and the sweetly modest ring of the village bells, and the Sabbath stillness of the country, all seemed to tell "this is the Lord's day!" Alas! that man should so disown its obligations.

The Lord's day! What means it?

Go ask the affrighted soldiers who saw the mighty angel roll back the stone from the door of the sepulcher.

Ask Jerusalem ruined and her scattered people.

Ask death vanquished and devils in dismay.

Ask the cloud of witnesses who have run their race, received their crowns, and in company with those who heard the morning stars sing together, strike their harps of gold to the glory of the Deliverer.

Hear that shout which filled heaven as he entered, "Lift up your heads ye everlasting gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors."

And, as you learn of the resurrection of "the first fruits of them that slept," learn, too, that by faith in Him may earth's children cursed, be able to join the shout of earth's children redeemed, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" Blessed be God for the Lord's day, when the laborer may rest, and when the pious may go up to the house of God, to learn wisdom from the teachings of His Spirit's inspiration.

A day like the one we have described was such as would call the worshipers to the house of God, and as there was no meeting of their own people within reach, the family at the Farm determined to pay a short visit to their Methodist friends, who assembled at a meetinghouse some four miles distant.

Mrs. W. signified this intention to Cyrus, and in due time he had harnessed up the remaining horse, a gentle, steady animal, known as "Bob," and was in waiting with the clumsy wagon at the gate. The two larger children were to accompany their mother, who, taking Julia beside her and, seating Susan in a small chair, bade Cyrus occupy the front seat as driver. The old man had spruced himself up in a

suit of his master's old clothes, and looked as staid and respectable as any parson's servant in the country. Everything being ready, the party drove off, leaving Tommy in the care of the faithful Betty, whose husband Joe had come to visit her from a neighboring farm.

An easy drive of an hour brought them to the meeting, and Methodist preachers being "minute men," as respects commencing the service at the appointed time, Mrs. W. felt rather mortified, being a preacher's wife, at finding them singing the first hymn. However, taking her children by the hand, she entered the house and took up her position at the first convenient seat, the whole congregation standing during the singing of the hymn. This was succeeded by a prayer of much seeming earnestness and unction, in which the members participated, manifesting their sympathy by an occasional "Amen" and other demonstrations peculiar to that people.

The singing of a solo by the preacher, completed the preliminary and devotional services, when he announced his text, and began his discourse. He was a man of education and talents; and having an easy flow of words, common to nearly all his class, he appeared to have no trouble in gaining and retaining the attention of his audience. At first calm and deliberate, gradually rising in fervor, ideas seemed crowding for utterance. Heaven, earth, and hell came within the range of his argument and imagination, and throwing off in the conclusion some passages which would have done credit to the eloquence

of men of greater fame, he appeared to throw some of his hearers into an ecstasy of happiness. Amen! Glory! and clapping of hands, might be heard in different parts of the house, and in one or two cases a laugh, sounding strangely to unaccustomed ears, indicated the emotions of the hearts from whence it proceeded; and in the midst of this scene, some would say of confusion, others of spiritual enjoyment, the preacher closed his sermon and gave an invitation to any who desired to join the church, or have prayer made for them, to come forward to "the altar." A number "went up," while the congregation sang an inspiriting hymn. This concluded, two persons, a man and woman, members of the church, presented an infant child to receive the rite of baptism, whereupon the minister, according to the prescribed service, proceeded to pour a little water on its forehead. A string of appointments followed, and the preacher, raising his hands, dismissed the people to their respective homes.

A few minutes passed in shaking hands and mutual inquiries made in relation to each other's health and the health of families,—remarks on the pleasant change in the weather and the sermon just delivered; invitations extended and promises made in relation to visiting, and our little party was on its homeward way.

"How did you like the meeting, Cyrus?" asked Mrs. W., when they had gotten fairly on the way. Now, Cyrus was an out-and-out Baptist. Nothing short of an old-fashioned experience, and going

"clean under," came up to his notions of a Christian baptism. He was always ready, too, for a discussion on the subject with anybody who opposed him, and he would sometimes get sorely bothered, but, like old John Bunyan, who was always ready for a lift with the devil, Cyrus would "pitch into" the next opponent with undaunted courage; and though his arguments might be shaken, there was no such thing as shaking his faith,—just as well try to make Sir Isaac Newton doubt the principle of gravitation.

"I like de preachin and prayin bery much, ma'am," he accordingly answered, "and de singin, too, dat make me feel mighty good; but I aint like de baptizin, dey aint hab water nuff, and de chile too little."

"Mother, have any of us children been baptized?" asked Julia.

"No, my dear, the Baptists never baptize any who do not profess to believe and repent of sin."

"Why, then, do the Methodists do so, mother? does the Bible say they must?"

"The Bible does not enjoin the baptism of infants, but the Methodists, and several other denominations, think it should be done because, under the Jewish dispensation, they were regarded as part of the congregation or church."

"But I do n't call dat baptism, no how," put in the old man, "only pour little water on he head; wish I could see dat man, I tink I could show him dat aint right."

"Well, they think it is right of course, though it seems strange how they can do so."

"Mother, I think I would like to be baptized."

"Why so, my daughter."

"Because, mother, I believe the Bible, all that I know of it; and I love the Savior, and when I do wrong, I am sorry for it, for I know I ought not to sin against God."

"Bless de chile," murmured old Cyrus.

"Well, my dear," replied Mrs. W., with emotion, "I am sure it would give me great happiness to see you baptized if I thought you were prepared for it."

"I do not think I am worthy, for I am a sinner, but the Bible says, Jesus came to save sinners, and I heard father read, 'he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.'"

"I think you had better speak to your father about it. I do not like to give you advice in so important a matter."

By this time they had reached the lane leading by the house, and little Tommy, having caught a sight of them coming, ran to get a ride.

"Stop, Cyrus, and let him get in," said Mrs. W. "Has my little son been a good boy?"

"Yes, I'se been a dood boy; I did n't cy, but Pompey did."

"Here 's Pompey, too, at the gate," and getting out with Julia and Susan, Mrs. W. bade Cyrus take Pompey in with Tommy and drive them round to the stable, and walked into the house where Betty was laying the table for dinner.

CHAPTER V.—*The Return.*

NOTHING of special interest occurred at the meeting where we left Mr. W. Like the generality of Saturday meetings, there were few persons in attendance—some extempore remarks from the preacher, followed by a "church meeting," in which nobody knew of any thing requiring particular attention, a motion for adjournment, and the meeting was dismissed. Among several invitations to spend the night, Mr. W. decided to accept one from Bro. Williams, the senior deacon, a good and true man and the main pillar of the church at Green Mount; a man who, under proper training, would have been an uncommonly efficient member; as it was, the expenses of the church, such as they were, devolved mainly upon him, and he had more than once intimated to the brethren the necessity of a greater degree of liberality, especially toward their minister.

Notwithstanding Mr. W. did not appear to be and really was not in necessitous circumstances, yet the small pittance given him was wholly inadequate to the services rendered, and there was a strong probability that, without some improvement, his situation would become embarrassing; and one object Bro. Williams had in insisting on his going home with him, was to have some conversation on this subject. What occurred that night at his house we can not say, but the next day the deacon was circulating a paper which

proved to be a subscription list for the benefit of the minister.

This was a new feature in the financial operations of Green Mount. Hitherto there had simply been a collection taken up at the end of the year, amounting to some twenty or thirty dollars, the large majority giving nothing, and a few contributing from fifty cents to five dollars.

Some objection was made to the "innovation"—"it looked too much like preaching for money"—"the old plan was the best." A few even intimated that "preaching ought to be a free thing." "Paul preached the Gospel without charge," and why not others? On the whole, however, the measure met with approbation, and by persuasion and his personal influence, Bro. Williams succeeded in taking up a subscription amounting to nearly one hundred dollars. The result of his application to one man who was not a member of the church, was particularly gratifying.

"Yes, sir," said this individual, "put me down ten dollars, and here is the money, if you want it. Mr. W. is a poor man and ought to be helped; he should not be allowed to leave his business and ride all the way up here for nothing. If you wish more at any time," he added, "I hope you will call on me." The good deacon thanked him kindly, and sincerely wished that others who ought to do so, would take the same view of the matter.

The day, as we have said in the previous chapter, was fine, and a large congregation had assembled, and when Mr. W. had closed one of his happiest efforts,

there were many who gave evidence of the power of God's Word upon their hearts, and as they quietly dispersed, there was a general feeling that some arrangement should be made for having a visit from their pastor oftener than once a month.

Mr. W. spent the night with Bro. Orton, so that he had only fifteen miles to ride the next day, and the overseer's obliging wife having given him an early breakfast, he was enabled to reach home by the middle of the forenoon, much to the joy of his family. The children came crowding about him before he could get into the house. Susan ran to tell mother that he had come, Julia carried the saddlebags, while master Tommy asked "fader" to let him "tote de umbella."

"I am so glad you have got back," said Mrs. W., meeting him at the door. "The children have been looking up the road for the last hour, but I did not think you would have been here so early."

"'A spur in the head is worth two on the heels,' you know," said he, smiling. "Old Gray, too, had one in *his* head, I think, probably in the shape of a horse trough, though he doubtless fared well last night. I stayed with Bro. Orton, and good Sister O. gave me an early start this morning."

"What a bitter cold ride you must have had on Saturday."

"Yes, but I soon forgot it after it was over, which I find is the way with most troubles."

After spending a few minutes in conversation with his wife, Mr. W. went out to put away his horse, which having done, and it being some time before

dinner, he concluded to walk out to the field where Cyrus was at work.

"Well, Cyrus," said he, as the old man drove out at the end of the row, "laying off corn ground I see."

"Yes, massa, but I aint make de row bery straight, and I git long bery slow. I glad you come, I most fraid you bin git sick from de cold."

"O no, I am back again feeling very well, thank the Lord. You can go on till noon, and after dinner my horse will be sufficiently rested to work and we can finish laying off the field so as to plant some corn to-morrow."

So saying, Mr. W. returned to the house, and Cyrus proceeded with his plowing.

"How have you employed your time since I have been away, Mary?" said he, drawing a chair before the fire.

"Well, we spent the day on Saturday chiefly within doors," replied she, "but yesterday we went out to hear the circuit rider preach."

"And how did you like him?"

"Very well indeed; he seems to be a pious man, and is decidedly talented, I think. I wonder he was not appointed to a city church."

"Well, the Methodist rule is, you know, to keep the preachers moving, and if he is such a man as you take him to be, he will doubtless come in for his share of eligible stations."

"We had a baptism also at the close of the service."

"That must have interested you, however much it may have disagreed with your views of propriety. I suppose of course there was not an immersion."

"O, no," answered she, "the *subject* would hardly have admitted of that form. It was Mrs. Wright's youngest child; Jane, I think it was called; was it not, Julia?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied the child.

"What did you think of it, Julia?" asked he.

"Why, father, I did not know what to think. It did not look like baptizing to me. They did not do like you do at all. The minister took a pitcher and poured the water on the baby's head."

Mr. W. could not help smiling at her artless simplicity, as he asked her "what the 'baby' seemed to think about it?"

Julia laughed in her turn at the idea of the baby thinking any thing about the matter, but "father," she answered, "I don't think it liked it much, for it *cried*."

"Well, I suppose it was a little astonished," said he.

"Do not our Pedobaptist friends dip the children in a font sometimes?" asked Mrs. W.

"That was once the rule, and may be so still for aught I know; but the *practice* is entirely abandoned. The Episcopal service required the child to be dipped unless its state of health forbade it, and Mr. Wesley, who was the founder of the Methodist church, and followed the Episcopal form, is said to have given great offense to some persons in Savannah, because

he refused to sprinkle or pour water on a healthy child. But the inconvenience attending the immersion of infants has long since caused its abandonment, and the 'solemn application of water,' as it is termed, by sprinkling or pouring, is now universally practiced, at least in all the branches of the Western church, Romish or Protestant. The Greek, or Eastern church, which prevails in Turkey, Greece, and some other countries in the East, and which is the established church of Russia, continues the Apostolic form as respects the ordinance, though departing from it as regards the subjects. It is difficult to account for this difference between the two establishments. Perhaps it may be referred to a greater degree of worldly refinement, which, consulting its ease and taste, shrinks from what many term the troublesome and indecent practice of dipping the person in water."

"But how can people talk so, when the Bible plainly teaches our duty in the matter," remarked Mrs. W.

"There are many strange things in the world," replied Mr. W., "but strange as they are they still exist. The substitution of an ordinance of man for that of God, must have originated in a willful disregard of his authority; but we must suppose that many pious persons in the present time, who from the force of education and a veneration for long-established usage, think they are doing God's service while they are perverting his ways in the perpetuation of error."

At this point the conversation was interrupted by

Susan's running in to announce that "dinner was ready in the kitchen;" whereupon Mrs. W. and Julia proceeded to prepare the table for its reception. They both thought of what had passed on the road from church the day before, and the latter desired very much to know what her father would say about the matter. But, somehow, she felt a degree of timidity in introducing the subject, strangely at variance with her usually confiding manner toward him.

CHAPTER VI.—*Home Matters.*

"MARY, can you spare Betty from the yard to-day?" said Mr. W., as he rose from the breakfast table.

"If you stand in need of her assistance, she must go of course, though I shall miss her very much; what do you wish her to do?"

"To drop corn. Cyrus and I can get along by ourselves, to be sure; but it's rather an awkward business without a third hand. Still, I would rather take a little longer to plant the field than to impose any extra labor on you."

"O, no, it will not be any extra labor that I know of, only I shall have to delay some matters that I would like to have attended to. There is nothing requiring immediate attention that I can not do with the children's help."

"Let us know some of your operations and I can better judge of the matter."

"Well, there are several nests to make for the setting hens; that must be done at once, but Tommy and Pompey can get the straw for me. Then there is a pot of soap to boil. That I can start and let Julia mind it, while Susy can stay with her and rock the cradle with Betty's youngest child. Betty generally makes Pompey do it when she can be near by. But the most important of all, perhaps, is the garden. I have done very little yet, and the season is pretty

far advanced: yet I can manage for a day or two to get along without her, and I am very anxious for you to get a fair start with the crop: you have to lose at least one day in every week, and sometimes more."

Mr. W. stood musing for a few moments with his back to the fire. "Well, the truth is," said he, "I must try and get a little more help, some how or other. I don't like to interrupt your matters, and as you say I am compelled frequently to leave my work, so that it comes hard on Cyrus, and if he should give out I should be very much put to it to get along. Wonder where I could hire a hand?"

"I am sure I don't know," replied his wife; "it 's a bad time to hire; everybody has made arrangements for making a crop, now. Pity you did not think of it at the beginning of the year."

"Father," said Julia, "I heard Joe tell Betty that he saw John Waters in the road as he was coming here, and John asked him if he knew where he could get some work to do."

A shade of sadness passed across Mr. W.'s face at the mention of John Water's name. "Poor John," said he, "I don't wonder at his wishing to get away from home; for between his drunken father and termagant stepmother, the boy must have a time of it. But I don't see how they will manage without him; he does everything I expect that is done about the place."

"Well, now, I should n't wonder," remarked Mrs. W., "if you might contrive some plan to employ John, and it would be such a good thing if you could.

It would not only be helping us but him, also; and who knows but it may be a Providential thing to save him from ruin."

Mr. W. remained sometime without replying. "It looks like a dull chance, Mary; but, as you say, it may be a design of Providence, and there is no harm in trying. John would suit very well, and I think would be a fine boy if he had a fair showing. So if you *can* do without Betty I will ride over this evening after we 've done work, and see Waters about the matter, if I can catch him sober."

This plan was finally agreed upon, and Mr. W. left the house, desiring his wife to send Betty on as soon as she could do so. Everything was soon put in order for the forenoon; table cleared away, floor swept, and nine o'clock found Mrs. W. with Pompey and Tommy, busy in the fowl-house, and Julia presiding over the uncertain destinies of the soap-pot, while Susy was sitting by, rocking the cradle and singing

> "Bye baby in the tree top,
> When the wind blows the cradle will rock."

About a half hour later Mrs. W. heard some one calling from the back door, and presently Susy came to say that, "Miss Caroline Simpson come."

"Tell her to walk this way, Susy."

Miss Caroline stopped a minute to see Julia's operations, and then walked across the yard to the fowl-house.

"Setting hens, Mrs. W.?" asked Miss Caroline, as she put her head in at the door.

"Yes," replied she, "and I am glad you have come, for I have got a provoking animal here; perhaps you may suggest some way to manage her: good morning."

"Good morning. I suppose it's a hen that won't set; and if that's the case I advise you to give in at once. I tried last week to make one *set*, but do as I would she would *stand*. She had taken a notion to set on an empty nest, and as that did not pay, I concluded to put her on some eggs, but she would not stay on the nest. I then put a basket over her and left her all night; and when I went to look at her next morning, you think the contrary old thing was n't standing straight up? I do believe she stood up all night. So I first turned her out of doors and put the eggs away until I could find one more tractable. Turn her out, Mrs. W.; it's no use trying."

"Well, I think I'll take your advice, for awhile, at least; perhaps she'll change her mind in a day or two. I have about got through here, now; let's take a walk in the garden; though I have not much to show you."

"I've no doubt you have as much to show as any one else," remarked Miss Caroline; "you always have an early garden. Dear me," she continued, as they entered the garden, "what fine peas; they are nearly large enough to stick. Our's are just coming up."

"I might have had them much larger but for the backward spring; they've been planted long enough."

"And then your cabbage seed have come up beau-

tiful," said Miss. C. "I hope you'll be able to give us some plants to set out."

"O, certainly; if I have them to spare, you shall have as many as you wish. But I must show you something of Mr. W.'s work." So saying she carried her visitor to a corner of the garden, where there was a square of Irish potatoes. "Have you seen any larger than these?"

"Well, I declare!" said Miss C., holding up her hands, "you must have planted them last summer."

"O, no," answered Mrs. W., laughing. "Mr. W. planted them since Christmas, but he prides himself on his skill in raising potatoes, and he made the ground very rich. Beside, it is as you see, the warmest part of the garden. But let us go to the house, Caroline. I wish to see how Julia is getting on with the soap."

"Why, very well, indeed," replied Miss C., turning to go. "I stopped a minute with her, just now,—though there's no knowing," she added, "how soap boiling will turn out. Sometimes it seems the thing is *witched*, and you may boil and boil all to no purpose. Some people say it *is* witched."

"You don't believe in witches, do you?" said Mrs. W., amused at Miss C.'s humorous way of talking.

"No, I don't," answered she; "but it's mighty *curious*. It's as bad as trying to set a contrary hen. Mother put me to mind a pot of soap once, and it boiled about a week. I never got so tired of stirring in my life, and it never did make good soap. Old marm Daphne said it was conjured, and wanted to do

something to it to break the spell; but I forget what it was. I remember though once when the butter would n't come, she put a ten cent piece in the churn."

"I suppose, then," said Mrs. W., laughing, "she would put a half a dollar in a soap pot."

But Julia's soap did not need any conjuring process, for it was evident on examination that it would soon be ready to be taken from the fire. So after giving her some simple directions, Mrs. W. proceeded to prepare dinner for the family, in which she was much assisted by Miss C., whose humor the meanwhile served much to amuse her friend.

CHAPTER VII.—*The Hired Boy.*

At early dawn the next morning John Waters had, with a lighter heart than he had carried for many a day, accompanied Mr. W. and Cyrus to the field. He had spent a happy night, though it took him some time to satisfy himself that the change was not a pleasant dream. The contrast presented between his own miserable home and that of his new friends, their pleasant conversation, the wholesome food to which he had long been a stranger, the evening devotions, and the air of quiet contented happiness which pervaded the little circle, was new and strange to him; and as he was shown to the shed-room and told by Mr. W. that "this was his room," he seemed to have been translated to some dreamland—a realization of some of the fairy tales with which the fancy of his early childhood was beguiled; and after his friend had bidden him "good night," and closed the door behind him, he sat down on a chair, absorbed for a time in thought and lost in singular emotions. He wondered if this was not too good to last—if he ever could do enough for his benefactors. And then he was to be *paid* for having all this happiness conferred upon him! The thought was so ridiculous he could scarcely restrain a hysterical laugh. Well, he *could* plow and hoe, and he knew all the country around, and could go on errands anywhere for Mrs. W. And then he could make a little wagon for Tommy, and

he reckoned he could make a cage and catch some mocking birds for the little girls,—he did n't know whether this would be exactly right, but he would ask Mr. Watkins about it.

What could they do with all the books and newspapers he saw about the house! He wished he could read. Mother *did* teach him a little, but that was a long time ago, and he had forgot it nearly all; maybe Julia would teach him at night,—he knew she could read, for he had heard her read to Tommy and Susan about "an old man that found a rude boy upon one of his apple trees stealing apples." Somehow he thought he had heard something like it before, but he could not remember where. And then the pictures around the walls, he wondered if they made them or got them somewhere else—maybe they sent to Charleston for them.

But he had to get up soon in the morning; so pulling off his shabby old clothes, hoping he 'd get some better ones by and by, he blew out his candle and lay down on the soft mattress between the white sheets.

Then the dim light of other days came stealing over his memory, and he thought—though he was not certain about it—that a long time ago, before mother died, he had slept in a bed like this. He wondered where she was now; he knew where her grave was—he had often gone there and sat down by the tree he had planted and wished he was lying beside her. But he had heard preachers and others say that good people went to heaven when they died, and he knew she was good—everybody said *that*. Even father, when

he was sober, said she was too good for such a man as he was, and wished he was with her now.

Then a dreamy vision passed before him. He starts! Again a drowsiness comes over him—and the boy was sleeping in forgetfulness of the "lights and shadows" which had crossed his brief pathway.

John was awake, refreshed, and ready for work, when the first clear ring of chanticleer's trumpet announced the coming day; and when Mr. W. called at his door he had gone to the stable to gear up the horses for the plow.

"Hi, massa Jonny, you beat me gitten up so," said old Cyrus, who reached the lot a few minutes after him. "Bless de Lord, I hope we git 'long better now."

John was gratified at the compliment, but Mr. W. coming up at the moment, he made no reply.

"Where is the seed-corn, Cyrus?" asked he.

"I gwine git 'em now, sir; he all ready in de barn."

"Lead Bob up to the door, John, and let Cyrus throw the bag across his back."

John obeyed the direction, and the party moved off to the scene of the day's labor. When the hour for breakfast arrived Mr. W. invited the boy to the house, but he expressed a wish to remain with "daddy Cyrus," and have his breakfast sent to him. Whereupon his employer left them to join his family at the morning meal, while John and Cyrus took the horses from the plows and led them to a pond at some distance to drink. When they returned, they found

Pompey with a pan and basket, with victuals for each, which, after throwing some fodder to the horses, they proceeded to dispatch.

"Poor Waters," remarked Mr. W. to his wife, as they were sitting at table, "he 's got low down indeed, and is a striking exemplification of the Scripture that 'wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging; and he that is deceived thereby is not wise.'"

"I can remember when he was well off," returned she. "Indeed, people thought Jenny Moore was doing remarkably well to marry him; but it shows how deceptive appearances sometimes are."

"Yes, he began business with a plantation and twenty negroes left him by his father, and his wife had five or six more; she also had some money, it was said, but I do not know how much. But it has all gone like the morning cloud and the early dew, and a blessed thing it is that Jenny has gone too. I trust that we may be able to keep John until he is grown. I am afraid they will not let him stay; it was difficult to get him, rather."

Why, what objection had they to his coming?"

"Well, Waters did not particularly oppose it, but his wife did not appear to like the arrangement, and she generally manages to carry her point. But after setting forth the advantage it would be to John, I offered them two months' wages in advance, and the prospect of a little ready money seemed to turn the scale. Poor creatures, they needed it badly, and I felt as though I would willingly have advanced the whole year's wages if it had been possible."

"But why, in the world, father, don't the people *do* something?" asked Julia. "They might make a crop, or Mr. Waters might go about and dig wells like Mr. Bennett, and Mrs. Waters could sew, and raise poultry, and have a garden."

"Truly they might, my child, but you have not lived long enough, or at least have not been so situated as to know any thing of the dreadful effects of liquor drinking. May God forbid that you should ever experience them."

"How did John seem about the matter?" asked Mrs. W.

"Why, poor fellow, he looked like a man on trial for his life, and when it was decided that he should come, I could not help thinking his feelings were similar to those of one in whose case a jury had brought in a verdict of not guilty. When we got out to the road I asked him if he would not ride behind me on the horse? 'No, sir,' said he, 'I could run from here to your house without stopping.'"

Mrs. W. thought what a dreadful state of things it must be thus to change the natural instincts of the heart.

CHAPTER VIII.—*The House Raising.*

THE crop of wheat had been harvested, and corn laid by. Nothing much remained to do about the farm in the way of cultivating the crop but running over the cotton a time or two more, and setting out and working potatoe slips. Just about this time of the year, the farmer has a short season of comparative leisure, and Mr. W. determined to improve it, by getting some of his neighbors to assist him in putting up a new barn, the old one beginning to be much the "worse for wear," or rather old age and weather. With Cyrus and John he had cut the poles which were to be used for the body of the building, peeled the bark from them, and was getting out the clapboards with which to cover it. One serious difficulty lay in getting the heavy logs to the building site. It might be done indeed with Mr. W.'s own small wagon and team, but it would be a tedious process, and borrowing was a thing he always avoided if possible. True, there were few of his neighbors but what were more or less in debt to him in that line; now a hoe just to use a few hours in the garden, the hands had all the hoes in the field; then an auger, a jack plane, or some other carpenter's tool. His little wagon, too, it was so handy to go to the mill with, or to the railroad for a barrel of flour. And thus it was, his implements, agricultural and mechanical, were scattered about the neighborhood, few persons thinking it

necessary to put themselves to any trouble in returning such small articles; and his blacksmith's bill at the end of the year was not unfrequently increased by sundry repairs on his wagon, in consequence of injuries received in its various expeditions. They were so insignificant though, that the borrowers could not spare the time to take it to the workshop. "Bob," too, was now and then cut out of an afternoon's rest, because "he was so gentle, anybody could drive him." These things sometimes annoyed the minister and incommoded his family; but was n't he a preacher? How then could he refuse? He must, by all means, set a good example. All this, however, he was willing to let remain as it was, and have his neighbors continue in his debt. Borrowing he very much disliked, and had about come to the conclusion to do the best he could with his own small wagon and team. Everybody knew his situation, and if they did not offer assistance, he did not feel disposed to ask it, though John strongly urged that he was entitled to some return for the favors shown to others.

"It 's nothing but right, Mr. W.," said the boy. "You have helped a great many people in different ways since I 've been living with you."

"Well, let it go so," replied the preacher, "I like to feel independent, and I have no doubt we shall be able to get along. There will at least be no difficulty in getting help to raise the house; people like to go to a raising for the fun of the thing."

But the minister was unexpectedly relieved from

all embarrassment by Mr. Jones, whom he met on the road as he and John were returning from their work in the woods.

"I forgot to say to you the other day, Bro. W.," remarked this gentleman, after the usual salutations had passed, "that my wagon and oxen are at leisure, and you will find them very useful in getting up your logs. Tom can bring them over in the morning and spend the day in hauling."

"I thank you, Bro. Jones; it would be much better than getting them up with my weak force, but I should dislike to put you to any inconvenience. You may not be able to spare Tom very well."

"Well, just leave that with me. Tom is not very busy, and if he was, it would make no difference. A man who would n't make some sacrifice to help a neighbor through a strait, ought not to live among men."

"That is well spoken, Bro. Jones, and I only wish the sentiment was more general. To one who has the right feeling on the subject, it is a satisfaction, a pleasure to deny himself sometimes in order to benefit others. But there are too many who seem to feel like the man who

'lived on the river Dee,
I cared for nobody, and nobody cared for me.'"

"Yes," replied Mr. Jones, "and you would n't have to go a thousand miles to find some of those 'river Dee' people. I have had some experience in these matters, but let it pass. I suppose you have engaged help to put up the barn?"

"O yes, quite a number have promised to come over. I particularly requested the Allen boys and Davis to come as 'notchers.' They excel in that line."

"Very well, William will also be there. He may come over with Tom and the wagon to-morrow, but if not, I will send him to help you raise. Good evening."

"Good even, Bro. Jones, I am very much obliged to you."

"Not at all, not at all," returned Mr. Jones, putting his horse into a gallop to avoid the minister's thanks."

"A clever man that, John," observed Mr. W.

"Yes, sir; he has helped us at home in many ways, and often talked to father about his——"

The boy did not finish the sentence, and Mr. W. continued by turning the conversation, to divert his mind from a painful subject.

The next morning, at sunrise, Tom's "whoa buck," announced that the oxen had arrived, and by dinner time the logs were hauled and laid down in a square about the spot where the house was to go up. Mr. W. was about to dismiss him with a small present, but Tom insisted that there was "no use in his going home before night, and massa would n't look for him no how," so the afternoon was spent in hauling up the boards and rafters, and in getting out the blocks to serve as the foundation of the barn, and thus everything was in readiness to go to work the next day. To the uninitiated, a brief discription of a "house raising" may not come amiss.

In the olden time, and in certain localities at the present, the term is in some degree synonomous with a frolic, and many a house has been raised at the expense of a broken head, not to speak of lighter disasters; such as the loss of a nose or an ear. Such things though are getting "few and far between;" people are beginning to learn that liquor is not essential to mental or bodily effort, even at a house-raising. In raising the house, though, the blocks and sills having been properly adjusted, and sleepers and floor laid down, a man is stationed at each corner to "notch" the logs, while others remain on the ground to hand them up. Sometimes, when there are not hands enough to supply a man to each corner, the notchers have to move from one corner to another, an inconvenient, not to say dangerous arrangement, particularly in the last stages of the raising. For the first few rounds those on the ground have an easy time of it, but their labor increases with every additional course of logs, until a good deal of scheming has finally to be resorted to, such as climbing and "jack screwing," in order to get them up. This latter operation requires a pretty strong back, being an example of the third kind of lever, in which the power (*i. e.* a man's shoulder) is between the fulcrum and the weight. By this process, one end of the log is thrown up on one corner of the house, where it is held by the notcher, until the other end can be carried up by climbing. The workmen in the present case were all sober and industrious, and before the sun went down, Mr. W. had the satisfaction of seeing the barn raised,

rafters set up, and sheeting nailed on, so that nothing remained to be done except to cut out the door and put on the clapboard roof, which could be easily done by the home folks.

All hands stayed to supper, after which they dispersed quietly to their homes, carrying with them the hearty thanks of the minister, and the happiness of having done an act of kindness to one who well deserved it at their hands.

CHAPTER IX.—*The Distiller.*

"HELLO!"

Such was the salutation which called Mrs. Watkins to the door on a pleasant Saturday afternoon, a fortnight after the event recorded in the foregoing chapter.

The summer had carpeted the hills and vales with luxuriant verdure. The spring flowers had gone and the time of fruit was come, and our friends were rejoicing at the prospect of coming plenty. Industry and favorable seasons had done their work, and the minister and his family, with thankful hearts, looked over the fields of rustling corn and blooming cotton.

The sun was slowly sinking to the west, and the hum of innumerable insects arose from field and forest, and a dreamy influence seemed to hang upon the very atmosphere. A second "hello" indicated the impatience of the visitor as the lady was coming to answer the summons. Looking out she observed a stout, coarse-looking man sitting on his horse at the gate. His florid face and bushy whiskers did not impart to him a particularly intellectual cast of countenance, and there was an air of hauteur about his old white hat turned up at the sides, and an indifference to appearance manifested in his whole dress. He carried in his hand a large walkingstick, which seemed to threaten instant demolition to any one who would presume to dispute the word or will of its imperious

LOVIE DEL
STILLMAN

master. He rode a high-mettled horse, which pawed the earth with impatience.

Mrs. Watkins at a glance recognized the man as 'Squire Young, "the richest man in the neighborhood," and advancing into the piazza, she politely invited him to come into the house.

"No, thankee, ma'am," replied he. "Is the parson at home?"

"Mr. Watkins is somewhere about the place, sir, and if you will come in I will have him called."

"Well, I wish you would; I want to see him on a little business."

The lady returned to her work and directed Susan to run out into the yard and call her father to the house. Susy started on the errand, but her father who was working with John in the sweet-potato patch in the rear of the garden, had heard the "hello" at the gate, and was coming across the yard.

"Father, one man want to see you."

"Very well, my dear, I am going to see him now."

Mr. Watkins had no difficulty in making out his visitor as he saw him through the passage of the house, and muttered to himself as he passed out to speak to him, "I wonder what Young wants with me."

"Good evening, Parson," said the 'Squire, as Mr. Watkins approached.

"How are you, Mr. Young?" returned the minister. "Won't you come in, sir?"

"No, I'm in a sort of a hurry; it's a mighty busy time with me just now."

The preacher understood the allusion but made no remark.

"I hear you have a good lot of peaches," continued the 'Squire, "and I called to see if I could buy them from you."

"I have never sold any fruit, sir, and do not care to do so."

To a different customer and under different circumstances, the minister would in all probability have felt differently disposed; but he did not deem it necessary at this stage of the conversation to say so to his visitor, and the 'Squire, thinking his indifference was assumed only for the purpose of driving a good bargain, with pretended carelessness remarked, that "he could n't give much, but concluded to come over and make an offer; it was a good fruit year, and he could get peaches cheap anywhere, but he had heard the preacher's were rather fine, and thought he would rather sell them than to let them be wasted."

Now, the worthy minister disliked very much to offend any one, and especially at his own house, and would gladly have dismissed the subject; but he perfectly understood the 'Squire's maneuvering, and determined to come out at once, candidly, and put a stop to the negotiation. A more prudent, or less conscientious man might, perhaps, have adopted a different policy, and asked a price which he knew the other would not give. But Mr. Watkins despised hypocrisy, and with a secret satisfaction that it was in the road and not in the house he was dealing with the distiller, he spoke right out.

"To be plain with you, Mr. Young: I suppose you wish the fruit for your distillery, and as such I can not sell it to you."

The 'Squire was evidently taken aback by the frank and independent tone with which this was said, and in seeming surprise asked "what difference it made as to the use he intended to make of the fruit?"

"I can not be made a party, sir," replied the preacher, "to a business which is productive of such consequences as liquor-making and liquor-selling."

"But I do not see," persisted Young, "why you should inquire into the use to be made of an article you sell."

"I admit the correctness of the rule you intimate, sir, as respects its general application; but when one knows, or has reason to suspect, that a bad use is intended, the matter assumes a different aspect. I would readily lend my gun to a neighbor, if a steady, upright man, without asking questions,—or even send it to him by a servant if requested to do so. But if it came to my knowledge that a man asking the loan of my gun meditated mischief in the use of it, I should promptly and sternly refuse the application. A druggist has a right to sell strychnine, but not to one whom he knows intends to commit suicide, or poison his wife. I know the purpose you have in buying peaches, and by selling to you I should be accessory to the crime."

"You consider it a crime, then, do you? That's a serious charge, sir."

"I do so esteem it, sir," answered the minister,

firmly, "under the circumstances that you do it, to distill liquor, and ten years' experience in the business, I should think, ought to have brought you to the same conclusion."

"Why your brother Bates sells all the liquor I make; how do you keep him in the church?"

"It is not for me alone to turn a man out of the church, sir; though I blush for shame at the thought of the church's allowing so flagrant a wrong to go unnoticed, and trust the reproach will not continue much longer."

"Well, well, Mr. Watkins, you can do as you like; but you ought to remember that you have a family to support. For my part, I know if I do n't 'still' somebody else will, and I had just as well turn an honest penny as any one else. Moreover, you know we are commanded to 'labor to support the weak,' and it is said to be 'more blessed to give than to receive,' and we can't give unless we make something to give with."

Mr. Watkins could hardly repress a smile at the thought of 'Squire Young's reputation for "giving," as he remarked that "the same authority forbids us to 'do evil that good may come,' and that his visitor had certainly seen enough of the dreadful effects of liquor-making and grog-drinking in the neighborhood."

"However," abruptly remarked the 'Squire, "it was only a part of my business to buy the peaches, and there seems to be no prospect of our agreeing about that. I called, also, to request you to send

Waters' son over to my house. I have hired him until we get through the press of work."

"Send John over to your house! Why I have hired him for the balance of the year."

"I can't help that; I am just from Waters' house and he agreed to let me have him; and well he might, for he owes me enough—more than he will ever pay. I promised, nevertheless, to pay half the wages and let the balance go to his account."

"You astonish me, sir," replied the minister. "Aside from the injustice of the thing, it will put me to serious inconvenience for him to leave at this time."

"Well, I'm sorry to discommode you, but it can't be helped; my work is pressing, and I must make any shift while the season lasts."

"But how could Waters hire his son to you after making a bargain with me and receiving a part of his wages in advance?"

"Did you have the contract in writing?" asked Young.

"No. I did not think it necessary to have any writings about so simple a transaction. Who *would* have thought of such a thing?"

"It's always best to have writings, sir," said the distiller, complacently. "There are some writings between me and Waters which give me the advantage of any one else."

Mr. Watkins now began to understand the true state of the case. This last remark had thrown light over the whole matter. He remembered that several

years before a large part of Waters' property had passed into Young's possession—sold under a foreclosure of mortgage; that mortgage was, perhaps, not yet satisfied, and Waters was a mere "tenant at will," on the land of his creditor. His stern and pitiless master would, therefore, have but little difficulty in bringing him to a compliance with his wishes, and Waters knew that Mr. Watkins would give up his claim to John before he would see him and his wife turned out of doors. The case appeared almost hopeless, and after a few moments pause, Mr. Watkins concluded to submit the question to John himself, and abide the issue. He, therefore, directed Betty who was passing into the yard through a side gate, to say to John he wished to speak with him a minute.

"My business is large, Mr. Watkins," resumed the distiller, "and it is important for it to go on; yours is small and it won't amount to much anyhow; so you ought not to hesitate about giving up the boy."

The minister's cheek mantled at this insolent speech, but recollecting himself, he quietly remarked that, "large or small, his family were dependent on it for a living;" intimating, also, that Young had a few minutes before reminded him of the necessity of providing for them.

"Well, now, look here, Parson," said the 'Squire, coaxingly, "I don't want to be hard on you, and we can compromise the matter. If you will let me have the peaches *reasonable*, I will give up my claim to the boy."

A curl of the lip, expressive of unmitigated con-

tempt, was the only reply to the infamous proposal, and John Waters coming up at the moment, Mr. Watkins explained to him how matters stood.

"All that I have to say, sir," replied John, "is that I won't go."

The boy tried to say this calmly, but his voice was slightly tremulous, and a palpable agitation affected his whole frame as he stepped back and laid his hand on the garden paling for support.

"I rather expect it is not exactly as you please about it," said the distiller. "You are not your own man yet, and I have hired you from your father."

"I tell you again, I won't go. Do n't provoke me too far."

Mr. Watkins saw that a storm was threatened, and thought it best to try and allay it.

"Perhaps you had better go, John," said he, "I regret it very much, but it will only be for a short time I hope, and your father may have good reasons for what he has done."

A tear started to the boy's eye at this remark, but it quickly dried as Young observed, "yes, he has good reasons for it, and the less said about it the better." John tightened his grip on the paling, for a moment his teeth were clenched and his breath came quick and hissing between them. His eye flashed fire as he broke out.

"You canting old hypocrite, say that again, and big as you are, I'll tear you from that horse," and he stepped forward and laid his hand on the reins of the bridle.

"John! John!" said Mr. Watkins, taking hold of his arm, "what do you mean."

But the boy's blood was up, and he answered, "I mean to say that this man is an old scoundrel and hypocrite. Yes, sir," said he, addressing the distiller, "you can go to the camp-meeting, and shout, and laugh, and talk to people about religion; and you, and your brother in rascality, Bates, with your devilish still and grogshop, you have killed my mother, ruined my father, and made me worse than an orphan. You have got rich by making other people poor; and you have done more wickedness than all the rest of the settlement put together. Now, sir, I dare you to speak to me again as you did, and I tell you I won't work at your infernal still if you never make another gallon of liquor; I had enough of it last year, and I will die before I will go there again."

Rage and fear seemed contending in the distiller during this speech. His face was alternately red and white, now like crimson, then pale as a sheet, and when John stopped speaking, and still held on to the bridle, the Squire appeared in doubt as to what he should do. Should he ride over the boy, or sit and take his bold abuse? How could SQUIRE YOUNG submit to such an indignity, he who was accustomed to rule nearly all with whom he had any thing to do? But perhaps he remembered something of an old saying, about "taking wit in one's anger," boys sometimes grow to be men, and there was no telling what even a high-spirited lad might attempt, exasperated by the thought of wrongs and cruelties inflicted on his

parents. The unusual noise had attracted the notice of Mrs. Watkins, who came out to the gate followed by Julia and Susan, in timid wonder. Seeing how matters stood, she called in a soft voice, "John! come into the house John!" The boy dropped the bridle reins and obeyed the call. At the gate he stopped and gave a piercing glance at the distiller—then turned and walked on with the lady.

Young sat a moment in continued surprise and indecision, then wheeling his horse, rode away without even bidding Mr. Wakins adieu. He had been enraged and humbled by a boy.

CHAPTER X.—*The Explanation.*

Our little family were sitting out on the piazza enjoying the cool Southern breeze; cool, not abstractly, but in contrast with the heated atmosphere of a sultry summer's night. The sea breeze, though losing much of its stimulating properties long before reaching its terminus, penetrates some fifty miles into the pine land regions, and to appreciate its refreshing influence after an oppressive day, one must feel the fanning of its gentle wings. Indeed, a great advantage possessed by the lower over the middle regions of the Southern Atlantic States, is in the breezy nature of the atmosphere. Though the thermometer may range higher, yet the heat is seldom as oppressive as it is among the elevated sand hills of the interior.

It is contended by some that all the world is on an equality, that what any particular section may lack of advantages possessed by another, a compensation is to be found in some superiority in other respects. This is hardly true to the letter, and yet, doubtless, there is not so great a disparity between different places as many imagine. Often is one led away to seek a better country in our great Western domain, who, disappointed in his expectations, looks back with longing to the old homestead. The doctrine of equality is particularly true in its application to the different parts of our own State. While the lowlander does not have equal advantages with those living in higher

atitudes in respect to diversified scenery and cold water springs, he finds a compensation in level fields, fine roads, and a climate tempered by the winds which having swept across the ocean, carry refreshing coolness to the dwellers on the plains.

Our friends had partaken of the evening meal, and the evening prayers had ascended from the family altar, and they were grouped in pleasant conversation on the piazza. There was a pause of some minutes as though each was absorbed in thought, when John suddenly broke the silence by saying, "I reckon you thought strange of me to-day, Mr. Watkins, when I spoke so to Squire Young. I hated it myself after it was all over, but I could n't help it at the time."

"I confess I was surprised, John," replied the minister, "it was so different from your usual manner. The Squire's deportment and words were very provoking, but we ought always to try and govern our passions, else there is no telling to what extremes they may drive us."

"I have no doubt that is true, sir, and if it were to do over again I think I would act differently. But," he added, after a pause, "you do n't know, sir, what feelings I had. It seemed to me I could see mother, as she often sat crying about father's drinking so, and tell me she hoped I would die before I ever became a drunkard. And then it came fresh to my recollection how Mr. Young came to our house with another man, and took away all of our negroes, and how there was such a crying among them when they parted. And Patty, my nurse, took me up in her arms and said,

'good-bye sonny, Patty have for go leave you now. De Lord bless you chile, but do n't cry, may be you buy nigger back, bimeby.' And then mother asked Mr. Young to let old Maum Hager stay—Maum Hager had raised her, and she hated to see her go off—she would try to pay him somehow. The man that was with him said he wished he *would* let the old woman stay, but Mr. Young said it would do no good, she would have to go sometime, and Bates wanted his part of the money. I was a little boy, sir, but I shall never forget the time;" and he buried his face in his hands and wept.

Mrs. Watkins took the children and retired into the house, while her husband sat in silence, with heart too full for utterance.

After his emotion had a little subsided, he said, "I know something of that transaction, John, but I supposed you were too small to remember any thing about it. The man who was with Young was the sheriff who had gone there to levy on the property. I have heard him speak of it more than once as being the severest trial to his feelings of any thing that occurred during his term of office.

"The negroes were sold under a mortgage given to Young and Bates a year or two before. Your father had stood security for a man by the name of Turner, who, at the time was looked upon as an upright, managing man; but he suddenly disappeared and left your father to answer to his creditors. To avoid a lawsuit and gain time to make the money, your father executed a mortgage on property to those men, and I

have no doubt but that his land is now subject to that instrument.

"I suppose, sir," remarked John, "that Turner was in debt to Young and Bates then."

"Yes, to a considerable amount, but he owed a good many other debts for which your father was security, and these men bought up those debts at a discount, and thus got the whole matter in their own hands."

The boy left his chair and walked back and forth across the floor, abstracted and agitated. He was evidently meditating some important, perhaps desperate step.

Mr. Watkins deemed it prudent to divert his mind from the subject and soothe his feelings.

"Come sit, John," said he, "and let us talk about other matters. I hope you will not cherish any revengeful feelings. 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord.' Be assured it will all work out right in the end. God, who 'sees the end from the beginning,' may have suffered all these troubles to come upon your family to accomplish some design of benevolence which we can not now think of. One member is without doubt happy, 'where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.' You have received a lesson on intemperance and the faithlessness of man that may be of vast service to you, and bad as the case now seems, your father may be brought by his trials to seek the salvation of his soul."

John, who had resumed his seat, had nothing to

say to this. It might be as the minister said, but his frame of mind did not dispose him to consider it as he ought, and not having "the wisdom which is from above," he could not fully appreciate it. Still he felt the force of Mr. Watkins' remarks, and was by no means insensible to the vast importance of religion.

"Mr. Watkins," said he, after a short silence, "were you at the Methodist meeting last year, the time they had such an excitement there?"

"No; I was off at one of my own churches holding a meeting; but I heard something of it. I think too I heard you seemed at one time to be interested in it."

"Yes, sir, I was," replied the boy. "I felt I was a sinner, and I wanted to be a Christian. Mother used to make me say my prayers, and said she hoped I would be a Christian if I lived, and would meet her in heaven; and when they gave an invitation to people to be prayed for, I went up among the rest. I don't know how it might have been, sir, but while I was kneeling down that man came up and put his hand on my head, and began telling me what I must do, and it seemed to drive away all the good feeling I had; and when the prayer was ended and he began to sing, I thought I would n't go to the meeting any more, but would stay at home and try to pray the best I could. But the more I thought about it the less I felt disposed to try. If that man has got religion, I thought, I do n't see what good it does. But I know that was wrong."

Mr. Watkins thought of the Scriptures: "If the

light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

"It was wrong John," he replied. "We ought not to allow the bad conduct of *professing* Christians to prevent us from doing right. If I had suffered myself to be influenced by such things I should long since have given up in despair. But I know that the bad conduct of those who profess to be religious, can not affect the truth of God, and the Scripture says, 'every one shall give account for himself to God.'"

"Well, sir, I suppose you must be right, and I wish I could be a Christian. I think I would be if I knew how."

"The way is very plain, John, if we will only attend to what the Bible says." Julia had returned to the piazza and was listening with intense interest to her father.

"The whole duty of man," he continued, "is summed up in few words,—'fear God and keep his commandments.' The Christian religion is beautifully and mercifully simple as it is developed by inspiration. It consists simply in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ,—that is, *trusting in Him:* repenting of sin; that is, being sorry for, and breaking off from, sin; and being baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He who does this truly and sincerely is a Christian; and having become such, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, he must fight the good fight of faith,—love God and live to His glory, using all the means which God has given for the disciple's growth in grace and knowledge, as earnest

prayer, studying the Scriptures, and doing good to his fellow creatures. Thus acting, the comfort of the Holy Spirit will be with him, the Word of the Lord will direct him. God will give him grace according to his day, and he will certainly finish his course with joy and keep the faith, and as sure as God's promise stands, he will be saved. Think of these things, John, and may God help you to learn and obey the truth; and let me earnestly exhort you to put away all bitterness of feeling toward any one who may have injured you. 'If ye forgive not men their trespasses,' said the Savior, 'neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your trespasses.'"

The night was advancing and the party broke up, John to try and follow the minister's advice, and the minister rejoicing in the hope of his speedy conversion to God.

Julia wished to say something to her father, which she determined to do at some other time.

CHAPTER XI.—*Church Discipline.*

About three miles from Mr. Watkins' residence was the "Rocky Spring" church.

This establishment was large as respects member ship, but possessed of little wealth, there being only a few individuals who were accounted "rich," even in that plain community. But what was better far, there was a degree of spirituality about it which, with churches as with individuals, is often characteristic of the poorer class,—the greater shame to such as feel no sense of obligation for bounteous blessings.

A higher degree of intelligence *might* have added still more to the piety which distinguished many of the members. At all events, it would have given them more courage in the discharge of certain duties and the correction of certain evils—one in particular which detracted much from the church's influence, and caused grief to the hearts of those interested in its welfare.

Now, there are two things which, in our Baptist churches, tend more than all else to mar their peace, destroy their effectiveness, and try both their patience and disciplinary skill. These two things are, liquor-drinking among the male white members, and marriage relations among the blacks. There will sometime causes occur among the latter class that would puzzle a court of judges; and in respect to the former, the difficulty is to get a man to acknowledge

himself intoxicated. "He takes a drink, to be sure, as any man in a free country and in a free church has a right to do; but that he ever gets drunk!—he gives the charge a flat denial."

He may, indeed, in returning from a muster, or an election, or the court-house, claim more of the road than the law allows him, making a track that would serve as a foundation for a "Virginia fence;" he may, on horseback, perform feats of balancing that would do credit to a rope-dancer; but he "defies any man to say that he ever saw James Brown drunk—that's his name, JAMES BROWN; and he aint ashamed to own it."

But, should he be honest enough, as is *sometimes* the case, to "confess to the soft impeachment," it is generally done with so much penitence, and such fair promises of amendment, that the brethren can but forgive him and hope for the best. There were some cases of this description in the Rocky Spring church, which had been standing for some time, and our worthy minister had preached, and prayed, and exhorted, but without any permament effect. There was one case, however, which for flagrancy every one felt to be far worse than those of the "weak brethren," who would sometimes be "overtaken in a fault;" and yet how to get hold of it,—to make it assume a shape that would be actionable—was the trouble. It was the cause of a man of substance, perhaps the richest man in the church; one, too, of will, who would not lightly brook any interference with his "private business," and to bring him to trial was like

bearding a lion in his den. Something, though, *must* be done, but who was to assume the responsibility? Mr. Watkins had expostulated with him, but to no purpose; he had also intimated to the leading members the necessity for some action to be taken; but the members seemed to think the minister must not only be moderator, but cite the offending member to appear at conference, make a motion, second it, and—well, they *would vote* if the matter could be submitted.

The subject was discussed, however, in church-meeting, and to the surprise of every one, a modest, silent man, who seldom took any part in church matters, got up and moved that the clerk be instructed to cite Bro. Hanson Bates to appear at the next conference to answer to the charge of liquor-selling and keeping a disorderly house. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned, all apparently relieved at the thought that a beginning had been made to bring this notorious offender to account.

The news spread abroad that Bates was to be tried in the church, and became the topic of conversation in the neighborhood. Bates was indignant to the last degree. "He 'd show them what it was to meddle with his business—this was a free country and he was willing to try the right of the church to pry into his affairs, and dictate to him about the management of his own concerns."

The occasion, as might be expected, drew together a large crowd, and not the least prominent among the

concourse in the church yard before service, was the portly form of 'Squire Young.

"A pretty state of things," remarked this gentleman to the bystanders, "a church to be interfering with a man's business in this way!"

"For my part," said another, whose face exhibited a description of flowers which derived their class and order from the deposits in Bates' "bar," "for my part, I have long believed that Watkins was a 'Maine Law man.'"

Several remarks of a similar kind were made by different persons, when some one in the house having raised a song, the anxiety of the people induced them to go in and witness the proceedings from the beginning.

Mr. Watkins having delivered a discourse, he came down from the pulpit and announced that the church would proceed to hold the usual monthly conference; also stating that any one who felt so disposed might remain, and particularly inviting visiting brethren to take seats with them and participate in the proceedings. The clerk then read over the "order of business," the several items of which were duly attended to, though all were evidently absorbed in the special case of the occasion. The last thing on the record of the preceding was the citation of Bro. Hanson Bates.

Here there was a pause—then a subdued whispering, several members looked appealingly to Bro. Peters, when this gentleman arose and said: "Bro. Moderator, (a profound silence) as the mover of the

resolution which brings this case before us, it may be thought necessary for me to say something about it. I have not much to say, more than that in common with others I have, for sometime past, felt that some action ought to be taken in relation to it for the credit of the church, if nothing more. The citation charges that Bro. Bates is in the habit of selling ardent spirits, and having disorderly conduct about his house—that is, his storehouse, and I would like to know if he admits or denies the charge."

Bro. Bates arose and said: "Bro. Moderator, I am constrained to pronounce this a singular and 'disorderly' proceeding. In the first place, there has been no regard paid to the form observed, in sending a committee to see me before citing me before the church; but I shall not stickle at this. What surprises me, though, is, that the church should assume to inquire into my private business affairs. This is a free country, sir, and the church has no right to interfere with me in this unwarrantable manner."

A buzz among Mr. Bates' friends, interspersed with some words indistinctly heard, like "independent fellow," "that 's the way to talk," etc., testified their approbation of his speech.

"I acknowledge, Bro. Moderator," replied Bro. Peters, "the justness of Bro. Bates' excepting to the conduct of the church in not having sent a committee to visit him, but the notoriety of the offense may be urged in extenuation, not to mention the fact that several individuals had informally spoken to him and expostulated with him. But will he, having waived

this objection, say whether or not the charge is true?"

"I deny the right to inquire into the matter," said Mr. Bates.

"Then *I* submit," rejoined Bro. Peters, "whether the church will sustain the objection."

Bro. Watkins having requested one of the deacons to take the chair, spoke as follows:

"Bro. Moderator, I very much regret the course which this matter is taking, and before proceeding with what I have to offer, I wish to disclaim any feeling of unfriendliness toward Bro. Bates, and any disposition to interfere with, or even to inquire into, his business, provided it be made to appear that it is of such a character as does not derogate from the honor or utility of Christianity. But where common report as well as the testimony of individual members, go to show that one is engaged in a business that is hurtful to himself, to his neighbors, and to religion, the church certainly has the right to institute an inquiry into the matter; with a view to correct the evil if it exists, and to defend him from the imputation, if he is innocent. Such is the nature of the case before us, and as such I contend for the exercise of the church's prerogative. Nevertheless, it would not be proper in my opinion to be precipitate, and as Bro. B. complains that the usual courtesy has not been shown him, by the appointment of a special committee, I should not object to letting the matter lie over to the next meeting, so that if possible it may be adjusted without proceeding to extreme measures."

All seemed to acquiesce in these views, and a motion was about to be made that the case be deferred, when Bro. Bates arose and objected—"he had been arraigned for trial, and they might now proceed to dispose of it to suit themselves; he wished no committee to come about him."

"Will you say, then, Bro. Bates, whether the charges are true or not?" remarked the moderator.

"I contend, sir, that I have a right to follow any business which the law authorizes."

"But suppose, Bro. B.," said Bro. Jones, "this business outrages, by its effects, your moral obligations—your obligations to God, to society—can the fact that the civil law permits it, justify the violation of these obligations? And as the church professes to be made up of those who hold these obligations superior to all human law, has it not a right to call one to account who does violate them?"

"And suppose, sir," returned Bro. B., "that the church sees fit to fine, imprison, or put me to death for it, is it to thus set aside the authority of the state?"

"No, sir," rejoined Bro. Jones; "and you know that you are supposing a case that has no existence. You well know that the Baptist church assumes to inflict no physical pains or penalties for the transgression of its rules—that its extreme penalty extends no farther than the exclusion of an offending or perversely refractory member."

"Well, I see you are determined to have things your own way, and I shall leave you to carry out your own ends. I shall do as I please in the conduct

of my own business, and not ask the permission of the church about it." So saying, Bro. Bates took his hat and indignantly walked out of the church.

"Bro. Moderator," spoke Bro. Peters, "I consider this a case which imperatively requires the discipline of the church. Bro. Bates has not only treated it with contempt, but signified his determination to persist in a course which is dishonoring to Christianity, and detrimental to the welfare of the people, temporal and eternal. I therefore move, sir, that his name be erased from our books, and that he no longer be considered a member of this church."

"I second the motion," said Bro. Jones.

"Brethren," said the Moderator, "you have heard the motion; if any one desires to express an opinion on it let him now speak freely. No response. If no one has any thing to say," continued the moderator, "I shall proceed to put the question. All in favor of this motion let it be known by saying 'aye.'" A unanimous "aye" seemed to come from the whole church.

"If any are opposed to the motion, let it be known by saying 'No.' No response to the call. Bro. Bates, then, is, by unanimous vote, excluded from this church, and the clerk will make an entry in accordance therewith. Is there any thing more requiring the notice of the conference?" continued the moderator.

"I think, sir," responded Bro. Peters, "that some confession or explanation should be made by Brethren Smith and Craswell. They have, on several occasions, as is known to many here present, been under

the influence of liquor to a degree not becoming professing Christians, and in my presence the church has been severely censured for taking no notice of it. If the church is not faithful, it can not exert a wholesome influence. I do not say that we should be hasty or unnecessarily strict; it is always better to reclaim an offending member, if possible, than to exclude him, and as these are cases of public notoriety, I would be glad to see these brethren waive all formality and save the delay and trouble of appointing a committee to wait on them."

Bro. Smith was an old man, and had been for many years a member of the church. He was esteemed a good neighbor, and kindly disposed man generally; and but for his "besetting sin," might have been a shining light. He owned his weakness, but could not be prevailed on to adopt the only safe course—to abstain entirely from the use of spirits: consequently his *good qualities* were in a great measure neutralized by his *bad habits*.

He was much affected on the present occasion, and with considerable agitation arose and confessed his fault, and promised amendment.

"Can you not agree, Bro. Smith," asked the moderator, "to say that you will abandon the use of liquor entirely? I do not say that the church has a right to require this, for I do not think it has; but it would be a great satisfaction to the brethren if you would voluntarily do so; it would strengthen their confidence and your efforts."

Bro. Smith stood for some moments without speak-

ing. His whole frame shook, his lips quivered, and there was evidently a violent struggle between the voice of duty and the clamor of appetite. Apprehension, too, lest he should not be able to keep the promise, made him hesitate.

"I'll try," at last he uttered, and burying his face in his handkerchief, sunk down on the bench.

Bro. Peters could scarcely command himself to express a "hope that the church would receive Bro. Smith's acknowledgement, and that the brethren would pray for him, and in every way try to help him to keep his resolution;" which of course was agreed to.

After the feeling had a little subsided, the moderator asked Bro. Craswell "what he had to say to Bro. Peters' suggestions?"

Now Bro. Craswell was a different man from the other. True, he was not essentially a bad man, but he dearly loved the "critter," and no less loved his own reputation. He was given to boasting. that he could "drink" without getting drunk, and to get up before the congregation and confess his fault was more than his vanity could stand. The wicked wags who often enticed him into irregularities would laugh him out of countenance. So he cleared his throat and swallowed and rose to his feet, then swallowed again and cleared his throat.

"Ahem!" he began, "Bro. Moderator, I do sometimes take a drink, it's true (another swallowing and ahem), but, sir, I —— Bro. Peters what do you mean by being under the influence of liquor?"

This brother, being thus appealed to, explained what

he meant by being under the influence of liquor generally, and in Bro. Craswell's case in particular, specifying, also, the time and place of a recent offense.

"Well, I was at the election and took a drink," replied the culprit, "but I did not get drunk. I knew everything that was going on just as well as anybody."

Here a titter went through the crowd of "outsiders," who seemed to take much interest in the proceedings.

"More shame to you then," said Bro. Jones. "I would rather confess I did not know what I was about."

"Why, what did I do?"

"Did n't you throw off your coat and jump up and crack your heels together, and say you could whip any 'co-operation' man on the ground?"

(Another suppressed laugh.)

"I do n't remember any thing about it," returned Craswell, "and if I did, I do n't believe in being run over by the Yankees."

"I do n't suppose you do remember it," significantly remarked his tormentor. "But," continued Jones, "did n't you offer to run a horse race?"

"Yes, but I did n't intend to do it."

"Who helped you on your horse to go home?"

"O, that was only the mischief of the boys, I could have got on the horse by myself."

"Well," answered Bro. Jones, "I was one of the 'boys,' and I certainly intended no 'mischief.' Now

Bro. Craswell, why not come out at once and confess your fault, and not be dodging in this way?"

"I tell you I *was n't* drunk. I reckon I know. I *have* been drunk in my time."

The Brother was evidently getting warm, and the patience of the church was becoming exhausted, while the mirth of the outsiders was increasing. The moderator therefore interposed by remarking, that "he very much regretted the brother's equivocating manner; there could be no doubt, from the evidence, that he had acted very improperly, and that there should be a stop put to such scandalizing conduct."

To this agreed Bro. Whiston, who up to this time had said nothing in the conference. He further remarked that, "knowing the brother's weakness, he was disposed to exercise all possible leniency toward him, but he was himself at the election, and should certainly have thought himself '*drunk*,' if he had been in Bro. Craswell's situation; that is when he got sober enough to think any thing about it. And, Bro. Moderator," he added, "the worst feature in the case is that Bro. Craswell denies the fact."

Poor Craswell began to find himself in a straight place and begged for "quarter." "He was n't prepared just then, but if they would let the matter lie over to the next meeting, he *knew* he could give the church satisfaction."

This, after some discussion, was agreed to, but with much reluctance, and not until Bro. Craswell had promised to keep straight in the meantime, and to

tell the *whole truth* about the matter; after which the Conference was closed in due form.

"Well, we have had a fine specimen of Baptist government, to-day," remarked the "Squire," as he came out of the house. "To think of a church's interfering with a man's private business! I hope we shall hear no more about a 'free government.'"

CHAPTER XII.—*The Protracted Meeting.*

A MONTH after the discipline meeting described in the preceding chapter, came on the annual protracted meeting with the Rocky Spring Church.

These meetings form a striking feature in Southern religious society. They are usually held in the latter part of the summer, when the crops are laid by and nothing remains to be done but to gather them in. The farmers feel that for that year their fortunes are made, be the crop large or small, nothing can be done until another year, and their anxiety is past. Then come on the protracted meetings.

The utility of these institutions has been warmly discussed, and while it is unquestionably true that in the main they have been of much benefit, yet some evil may have resulted from them; in other words, they have been perverted to improper uses. What feasting and good cheer do they not afford to the gay! What a time for candidates to electioneer! From about the middle of July to the middle of September, one need not desire better living than may be had at the hospitable picnics afforded by the liberal-hearted country people at the meeting houses, and the hospitalities of their dwellings at night. All the products of the field, the pasture, the fowl-yard, and the orchard are dispensed in rich profusion, and the pastry often to be met with would not suffer by comparison with the preparations for a marriage festival. Weeks be

fore the time the appointments for the occasion are published in all the neighboring churches; the attendance of ministers is requested, and a general invitation given to everybody to come, and thus vast concourses of people are collected, prompted by a great variety of motives. Where the size of the house can not afford the necessary accommodation, an arbor of bushes is sometimes erected, and not unfrequently temporary seats are placed in a grove of trees, where the congregation assemble to listen to the preaching.

To avoid confusion among the number of ministers sometimes present, and to relieve the pastor of responsibility, a committee of church members is appointed to arrange the exercises; and now the work begins.

An objection which is urged against meetings of this character is, that an undue excitement is produced among the people, that a degree of animalism is engendered, which is mistaken for spiritual influence, the legitimate effect of the Word preached, and thus members are brought into the church who are unchanged in heart, and who, when the excitement subsides, lose all interest in religious things, and go back to the world. And that by this means an injury results both to the individual and to Christianity.

This is an objection which is not without foundation, but it is attributable rather to the conduct of the meeting, than to the meeting itself. Some measures are resorted to which are not authorized by the Scriptures, and which experience has shown to be questionable, if not improper. But until people, and the preachers in particular, learn better the "simplicity

that is in Christ," it will be difficult to get along without them.

However, let everything be done with ever so much propriety, and in strictest accordance with apostolic precedent and precept, there will be some taken in that time will show had better been left out. And thus the kingdom of heaven continues to be what it was in the days of Him who compared it to a net cast into the sea, which draws to shore all kinds of fishes. The present meeting was held with the church last mentioned, and from all Mr. Watkins' "appointments" were persons present; several were also present by invitation, and the exercises began with a sermon from one of them, Bro. White, on the importance of Christians cultivating a greater degree of spirituality, and praying especially for a blessing on the meeting. Others followed, during this and the following day, on different subjects, with increasing congregations, and on Lord's day, the whole country was assembled; white and black, old and young, professors and non-professors—all seemed moved by a single impulse to "turn out." There was great unanimity or rather uniformity in the character of the discourses from the different ministers, so far as it respected the leading orthodox views—total depravity, human weaknesses, salvation by grace, etc., the subject of baptism rarely alluded to, and when it was, it was in such a way as to indicate a very slight appreciation of its importance as a part of the remedial system. Strange that a people who are distinguished from all others chiefly by this ordinance in respect to its action and

subjects, should take so much pains to show its non-essentiality. There was one, however, who evidently "differed from his brethren" in this, and took occasion more then once to urge upon the people the propriety—nay, the necessity, of yielding obedience to all God's requirements, and, while guarding them against the error of "Sacramentalism," showed, at the same time, that an appointment of God to accomplish an end, carried with it all the authority and power with which he invested it; and that to be a Christian it was not only necessary to profess faith, and show signs of repentance, and be able to tell an experience like others, but to yield obedience to an ordinance which was sanctioned by the Savior's example and enjoined by his authority. That such, and such only, had a right to a Christian name and a Christian assurance. In short, that the promise of salvation is to "him who believeth and is baptized." These views, set forth with considerable force, were from the worthy pastor himself. In a company made up of such a variety of materials they could not of course be expected to meet with universal favor. Some, even of his own brethren, especially the ministers, thought he was "rather strong on baptism." But, his words evidently told upon the people, and at the close of his exhortation on Lord's day afternoon, there was a considerable manifestation of feeling in the crowd who went up by invitation to join in prayer, and for religious conversation.

The meeting continued the next day, and though the assembly was much diminished, yet the interest

was increased, and thus it went on from day to day until the following Lord's day, when there was a larger crowd present, if possible, than at any previous time; a large company of persons was baptized "into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," who went their ways rejoicing, and the ministers went elsewhere to preach the Word.

We need not say there was light, and joy, and love in the pastor's cottage, and in the pastor's heart, when we say that among those who had "put on Christ," were Julia and John.

CHAPTER XIII.—"*Sickness in the Family.*"

"THE even tenor of their way," which had marked our friends at the Farm during the year, was at last interrupted by a visitor which pays his attention alike to rich and poor. A heathen poet has said that, "pale death knocks at the palaces of the great and the tabernacles of the poor." And though the visitor we are about to introduce is not so terrible as the subject of the poet's verse, yet it is one of his servants, and one who at all times is unwelcome—an intruder who never receives willingly the hospitalities of his host. Among the thousand forms assumed by this disturber of peace, is that known in common *parlance* as "measles." What the doctors may call it we know not—doubtless they have some more respectable name for it; but it all comes to the same thing, and as "a rose by any other name will smell as sweet," so the pang of the toothache is not soothed, nor are the measles less troublesome by calling them according to science, and like some other ills to which flesh is heir, this latter is one of the evils which it is said "must be gone through with." How happy the family which can boast that "they have all had the hoopingcough and the measles." No uneasiness is felt by hearing that these diseases are in the neighborhood; no keeping up of quarantines at the gate against the neighbor's children. But it is useless to try to put off the evil day. Our friends, at the first

alarm, had taken all the usual precautions to guard against the infection; but like cholera and yellow fever, which leap over all the barriers which doctors and councilmen can erect, so the fact was apparent from John's flushed cheeks and certain accompanying pimples, "thick as autumnal leaves which strew the brooks in vallambrosa," that the measles had invaded the minister's cottage. John was a hearty boy, though, and hardly lay down for it, and in a few days was about again. But this was only the "beginning of the end." Julia, Susan, Tommy, Betty and her children, all took it in quick succession, the heads of the family and old Cyrus alone escaping by previous contraction. So that within a fortnight the whole household that could take it were under its influence. Mrs. Watkins, we have said, was measle-proof, but certain infant wailings which came from her room, and Mr. Watkins' diligent attention to the cradle, indicated her helpless situation at a time when her services were most important.

John, however, was beginning to get strong again, and Susie having lost the fever, *would* be up and flying around attending to the sick, with all the importance which characterized her.

Just about this juncture Mr. Watkins discovered that the meal was out, and as, sick or well, children must have bread, not to speak of those whose appetites were rather sharpened by labor, something must be done to obtain a supply of meal. So John was packed off early in the morning to mill, leaving Mr. Watkins, Cyrus and Susie to discharge the various

duties which the situation of the family required. The mill was several miles distant, but it was hoped John would be back by dinner time. Dinner time came, however, and passed, and evening drew on apace, still he came not. Many bags were before him, the water was low, and he had to submit to the miller's rule, "first come first served."

Another difficulty in the meantime presented itself; the baby wanted some tea, and all the milk had been consumed by the sick, and the question, Who should milk the cow? was matter for as grave consideration as that presented in the congress of rats as to "who should tell the cat." Mr. Watkins had never tried the experiment, Susie was too little, so old Cyrus seemed the "forlorn hope." But Mr. Watkins could not command his countenance sufficiently to direct him to do so.

"Susie, dear," said he, striving to hide his emotion even from the child, "go tell daddy Cyrus to get the piggin and milk the cow."

"Yes, sir; may I mind the calf, father?"

"O, yes."

So away ran Susie, full of the importance of her embassy.

"Daddy Cyrus," said she.

"What, honey," said the old man, dropping his ax and looking round.

"Father says you must milk the cow."

"Milk cow! I nebber bin do sich a ting in my life. Dat 'oman work. Maybe you aint hear him good. Go axe him gin, honey."

Away went Susie into the house.

"Father, daddy Cyrus says he do n't know how to milk the cow."

"Go back and tell him he *must* try," answered Mr. Watkins, putting his handkerchief to his mouth.

Susie returned with the message to Cyrus.

"Bless your soul, honey—kin you milk? Aunt Betty bin larn none of you chillen?"

"Julia can milk; but I can mind the calf for you.'

"De name of sense, what you call dis? Well, I must go try." And off he started to the cow-pen, scratching his head in utter consternation.

"Daddy Cyrus, you must get the piggin."

"Shure nuff; where him? Go fotch him, honey, I'll get de calf time you come. Did I eber tink I have for milk cow," said he to himself as he walked toward the pen. "Wonder now if massa aint been joke?"

Susan soon came back, and Cyrus having turned the cow and calf together, fixed up for the tug of war.

But Crumpie did not seem to relish the business; do as he would, she would move so as to keep her head toward him.

"Sow, den."

He remembered having heard milkers say this, but it would n't answer in the present case.

"Stan still, I tell you," said he, getting furious; "how I gwine milk and you keep turnin' round."

"Go up to her, daddy Cyrus, and pat her on the back."

"I wish I could git close nuff, honey; but de ole hussie keep movin' so."

The cow at last got into a fence-corner, and Cyrus cautiously approached, but unfortunately on the wrong side; and as he was in the act of making her "back leg," he saw the milk-pail rolling across the pen, sent by a vigorous kick from the cow's foot. He jumped back as if he had been shot, and stood gazing at her in dismay.

"Look ere cow, what you mean, any how?"

"Daddy Cyrus, the calf will drink all the milk."

"Well, what I must do, chile? Stop, leave me part 'em and go axe Betty," and having effected a separation between them, he posted off to the kitchen.

"Betty! Betty! wake up and talk to me."

Betty, who was in a feverish slumber, turned languidly over and asked what he wanted.

"I want some milk for de baby. Massa sen me milk de cow, and de ole varmunt won't let me tech 'em."

The thought of Cyrus milking the cow was to Betty better than a dose of physic. She broke out into a fit of laughter, which lasted to the utter exhaustion of the old man's patience.

"Come, gal, you better bin stop dat. Whot for you bin laugh so? I tink say you bin sick, but I aint much believe it now. You better git up and go to de pen yourself."

"Ha! ha! ha! How did you do, Da. Cyrus?"

"How come you axe dem foolish question? Aint I do like you,—turn in de calf and let 'em suck little bit. Den I go up to de cow and tell 'em 'sow den,' 'back leg,' so I can git hold de bag for milk 'em, and

time I git my hand on 'em—ki, she sen the piggin clean off yonder. What must I do 'bout it?'"

Seeing how matters stood, Betty was convinced of the impracticability of Cyrus milking the cow, and simply told him she did not know, and the old man turned away from the door in mute despair. But what was his joy, as hearing the front gate open, he looked up and saw John driving in! No time was lost in making him acquainted with the state of affairs, and John richly enjoying the story gave the meal in charge to Cyrus, who would rather have carried meal-sacks for a week than again encounter the refractory cow, he proceeded to the pen and soon obtained what milk the calf had left, which Susie carried in triumph to the house.

John, whose miscellaneous duties at home had made him an exemplification of the saying that "necessity has no law," was seldom at a loss about any business pertaining to a farm, and as old Cyrus remarked, "could milk cow like 'oman."

CHAPTER XIV.—*The Catholic Convert.*

Mr. Watkins drove up one pleasant afternoon to the house of a Brother who lived near one of the churches which he supplied, and on entering was introduced to a gentleman who proved to be quite a character, something decidedly beyond the generality of men usually met with in out-of-the-way places. He was a man past the meridian of life, venerable in appearance, and intelligent to a degree that made him an exception to the multitude. Added to this, his reading had been extensive and varied; and having the organ of language largely developed, there were few men to be met with more entertaining in conversation. Let the subject be agriculture, or medicine, or astronomy, or religion, he exhibited a degree of penetration and comprehensiveness, which, with his easy flow of words, lent a peculiar charm to the discussion.

But, as is too frequently the case, much reading had served rather to unsettle than to establish his religious opinions; in all the prevailing denominations he discovered things objectionable, and strange as it may seem, though bold and independent in his scientific investigations, and receiving as true nothing for which he could not assign a reason, and exercising his judgment without reserve in examining systems of religious faith, he was brought at last to throw himself upon a system which outrages reason—which binds its votaries in the chains of priestly despotism, while

it blindfolds them with a napkin of superstition. The Bible interdicted, reason silenced, and the right of private judgment denied, unquestioning obedience is required to that which is at variance with the intellect and the Scriptures—violates the principles of logic, the inductions of science; and having persuaded him to sell his birthright for less than a mess of pottage, turns the man into a tool. Such are some of the paradoxical phenomena of humanity.

Mr. Watkins had heard something of this man, and felt an uneasiness in being brought in contact with him, which he would have been ashamed to own. The circumstances of the case were particularly trying. Here he was, in the midst of a family of which he was the religious teacher. His reading on Romanism had not been extensive, and his general education was limited. Before him was a man who had been at no little pains to post himself in the argument, and whose controversial proclivities would in all probability involve him in a disputation; and to be beaten in the presence of those who looked up to him as their spiritual guide, was a thought not pleasant to contemplate; so he resolved to avoid, if possible, all occasion for discussion. He felt indeed that his opponent could advance no argument, properly so called, in support of his system, but the minister might not be able to make it appear so. On the whole, therefore, it might be advisable to act on the principle that "prudence is the better part of valor," and he strove to lead the conversation away from all questions of "doubtful disputation."

But his efforts were unavailing. Somehow, his Catholic friend would wedge in something so as to turn the conversation in the desired direction; and before he was aware of it, the preacher found himself in the attitude of a disputant, and having crossed the river, his only plan seemed to be, to take up his course for the gates of the city.

"Why, sir, you talk about the infallibility of your church! How do you make it out infallible? The days of inspiration have passed."

"O, I perceive you do not understand the matter, sir," replied the Catholic. "The church does not profess to be inspired, but to be supernaturally protected from error."

"And pray, sir," rejoined the minister, "what is the difference? What was the object of inspiration but supernaturally to protect the Apostles from error? You, and this company, must see that the distinction is only in the words used."

"Why, you must acknowledge that there is an overruling Providence which directs the affairs of the world, and regulates the conduct of men, which protects us in things temporal and spiritual; but there is no inspiration in the matter."

"I do acknowledge an overruling Providence," said Mr. Watkins, "general and particular; but it is not in this sense we are using the term 'supernatural protection.' We are using it in reference to infallibility in imparting spiritual knowledge—in giving rules for the observance of Christians in interpreting the will of God; and in this sense it *is* synonymous

mous with inspiration, and if, in this respect your church claims to be infallible, its infallibility must be obtained by inspiration, or visions, or the ministration of angels; and unless you can show that it is predicated on some of these, I must dispute your claim to 'supernatural protection.'"

"But sir," answered the Catholic, "I contend that by virtue of the supremacy with which Peter was invested in having committed to him the 'keys,' he was the first head of the church on earth, and the same dignity and authority which he possessed was transmitted to his successors. Christ said that 'on this rock he would build his church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it.' Peter was the Rock, for that is what his name signified. He was the first Bishop of Rome, and his successors must be the representatives of the same head, the continuation of the same rock, and possess the same keys. Therefore, the Pope of Rome is the head of the church, and the Roman Catholic church is THE CHURCH, and all others that profess to be such are only *sects* and not churches."

"Pray, stop a little," said the preacher, "such a crowding of things together is rather confusing. Let us consider one at a time.

"First, You say that to Peter were committed the keys; this I admit: but that it conferred on him any supremacy, I deny. The keys were not a symbol of supremacy. In Christ's church, or rather congregation, no man is, nor ever has been, supreme. Christ himself said, 'one is your Master, and all ye are brethren.'"

"What, sir," asked the Catholic in surprise, "you say the keys conferred no supremacy on Peter?"

"Assuredly not," continued the minister, "'one is your Master, and all ye are brethren.' Keep cool, and let us examine the matter."

"O, I am not getting excited at all. I am only surprised at the position you take."

"Very well, then. Now I suppose of course you allow that this was a figurative transaction, that there were no real keys given, iron, steel nor brass. That however, would not affect the matter if there had been real keys used, for even then, they would only have been intended as a symbolic representation. The question then is, what did they symbolize?

"Now in every figure there must be a reality from which the figure is taken, and which the figure represents. For instance, a man is said to be a pillar of the church, or a pillar of the state. This is a figurative expression drawn from architecture. A pillar is a post or column which supports a building; and to call a man a pillar of the church or state, is to say that he supports or sustains those institutions in different ways. We need not multiply illustrations.

"Well, a key, implies a lock, a lock implies a door, and a door implies a house. A key then is intended to open a door, and give admittance into a house, or rather inclosure. What, now, does this giving of the keys to Peter imply? Undoubtedly that he was to use them in opening something, and that something was the kingdom of grace or favor, as we learn from subsequent developments. He used them first on the

day of Pentecost, when the doors of the kingdom were opened to the Jews under the commission to 'go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.' He used them again at the house of Cornelius, eight years after, when by the direction of a vision, he opened 'the door of faith' to the Gentiles, and admitted them to a common participation with the Jews in the blessings of the kingdom.

"Now, sir, mark it; these were the only instances in which Peter ever made use of the 'keys,' and in both intances he used them under instructions. The keys had now done their work; the doors had been opened, and pope, bishop, nor devil can close them. Peter's authority, or supremacy, or whatever you may term it, was at an end; the keys were returned to his Master, and the vain boast that they hang at the girdles of high church dignitaries is all a myth of prelatical assumption. Now, sir, are you satisfied about the 'keys?'"

"No, sir," answered the Catholic. "I am not. You can not prove that Peter's authority stopped there; but proceed to the other points. What have you to say about the succession of Roman bishops, from Peter to Pio Nono?"

"I am not concerned about a succession which has never been established, and which would amount to nothing if it could be done. A succession of Roman bishops is no more than a succession of Jerusalem bishops, or Ephesian bishops, or Constantinople bishops, and if it could be proved that Peter was bishop of Rome, there would still be lacking evidence to

show that he transmitted his authority or power to any successor—indeed, it is palpably plain that he did not."

"Why, my dear sir, you talk as if you did not believe in an Apostolic succession at all.

"I certainly do not," said the minister, "and until I see the Apostolic 'signs' accompanying, it is probable I never will."

"What then did the Savior mean, when he said the gates of hell should not prevail against his church?"

"Allowing that he said this," replied Mr. Watkins, "he could only mean, as I think, that there would always be a congregation of true believers and obeyers—that this congregation never should become extinct; which, by the way, has been, and continues to be the case. But it is possible that you and others have misread the passage to which you allude."

O, that is out of the question, sir. I have too often read it, and it is the main pillar of the Pope's supremacy."

"Very well," said the preacher, "let us read it. 'When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea,' etc. (Matt. xvi, 15–18.) Now observe first, it was the gates of Hades (not hell)—the unseen world, which should not prevail.

"Next, what is it against which these gates should not prevail? It strikes me that there is a mistake made here by both Romanists and Protestants, by not understanding what is symbolized by the phrase 'gates of hell," or *hades*, which the best philologists tell us is not used in the same sense as '*gehenna*,' or hell. But expositors, not observing this, seem to

think it means some evil power which is to attack the church, but which will not be able to overcome it. Now, in all symbols, there must be some analogy between the symbol and the thing symbolized. What then is the office of a gate? It does not make an attack on any thing, but is used to bar the entrance to an inclosure; to exclude whatever is not designed to enter it, and include whatever is not designed to go out of it. When cattle, for instance, are inclosed in a pen and make an irruption against the gate, break it down and escape, we say that the gate could not prevail against them, *i. e.*, could not withstand them."

The Catholic and all the company appeared intensely interested in this new exegesis, and the minister continued. "You perceive, then, that this 'prevailing' was to be a passive and not an active thing—a standing against, and not an attack upon, something.

"What was this something, I again ask? Let us see if some other passages will not help us to the interpretation. David said, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell' (sheal or hades.) Again: 'Thou hast redeemed my soul from the power of the grave' (sheal or hades). To whom did the prophet allude? Certainly to Jesus Christ. When he was crucified and was buried, he entered the gates of hades; the gates closed on him, and wicked men had a short triumph. But on the third day there was an earthquake, an angel descended, the Savior burst open those gates.

"'The rising God forsakes the tomb,
The tomb in vain forbids his rise.'

What, then, was it against which the gates of Hades

should not prevail? Was it not the truth which Peter uttered, THOU ART THE CHRIST THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD? If He had not been this, the gates would have prevailed against Him, because he would have been only man, poor, weak man, with no strength to set at defiance the power of death.

"But, supposing that it *is* the church against which the 'gates' shall not prevail—even then it does not help your cause; for keeping in mind the office of the symbol, we must refer the matter spoken of to the general resurrection, in respect to which Paul says in the conclusion of his argument in this respect, 'O death where is thy sting? O grave (Hades) where is thy victory?' And, at that time will be brought to pass, in all its fullness and glory, the great truth that 'JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD;' for 'as Jesus died and rose again, so also them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.'"

These were "strange things" to the Catholic. He could not gainsay them, but having committed himself to "Mother Church," of course he could not admit their truth. Had she not denounced reason as corrupt, and should one of her children dare to let reason produce in his mind a doubt of her infallibility? He, therefore, could not keep his position.

"Well, Mr. Watkins, what have you to say against the doctrines of our church?"

"Which one of them, sir?"

"Any of them. Transubstantiation, for instance?"

"I would prefer hearing you saying something in favor of it."

"Well, I of course believe it to be true, and can prove it to any unprejudiced mind."

"Proceed, sir," said the minister. "I have talked a good deal; you can lead in the argument, and I will state my objections when you get through, that is, unless you prove the doctrine to be true."

"I make my argument, then," said the Catholic, "on the words of Christ and the decisions of the Church. Jesus said to his disciples, 'this is my body.' He said again, 'except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.' Now, if this does not prove that the elements are transubstantiated, then language has no meaning. 'This is my body,' what can be more explicit? Again, the church has so decided, and the church being infallible, can not be mistaken. Therefore, transubstantiation is true. Now, sir, we will hear your objections."

"Why, are you through already? You make short work of it indeed, and you must excuse me for saying that I can not regard as an argument that which takes for granted the very thing in dispute.

"Now, sir," continued the preacher, "let us examine the passage, 'this is my body,' a passage on which Romanists rely so confidently in support of their notion. Does it, as you affirm, mean that the bread was literally, and substantially, and essentially the body of the Savior? Then *your* body is literally and substantially grass; for it is written, 'all flesh is grass.'

"Also, our Lord was a door, for he said, 'I am the door.'

"Again, he was a vine, 'I am the vine, ye are the branches.'

"Once more; in the same connection in which it is said, 'this is my body,' it is also said, 'this cup is the New Testament in my blood.' Can it be that the cup was the New Testament? Is not rather the plain and obvious meaning of the passage, the wine in this cup represents my blood? So, also, this bread represents my body."

"Why, sir," interrupted the Catholic, "Your great man, Martin Luther, taught our doctrine in regard to the passage, 'this is my body.' You presume to set up your judgment, not only against the church, but your own leader."

"Excuse me, sir," quietly remarked Mr. Watkins, "if I do not acknowledge the leadership. I am told to 'call no man master on earth.' Luther was a great man, and was raised up, I doubt not, by God for a great work; and in the fulfillment of his destiny, he struck a blow at the Papacy from which it has never recovered, and from which it never will recover. Nevertheless, he was only a man, and neither inspired nor 'supernaturally protected from error;' and I certainly do set up my judgment against any man, living or dead, Romanist or Protestant, if, in my judgment, he speaks not according to the law and the testimony. And, in that instance, that wonderful man gave a striking exhibition of mental obliquity. In justice to him, however, he did not teach exactly what your church does. He contended for consubstantiation, in which there is a mysterious presence of the body and

blood of the Lord, combined with the bread and wine Whereas, transubstantiation implies a *change* of the bread and wine into the real body and blood of the Lord—something which outrages every sense in a man's body, seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling, and smelling; and is contrary to reason, science, and the Holy Scriptures. And you will pardon me for saying that a man can no more rationally believe such a thing than he can believe he is corporeally constituted to inhabit the sea, or that fishes are adapted to living on dry land. You do not believe it. The Pope does not believe. Not one of the fallible men that made up the infallible council which decreed the dogma, believed it. One may believe that which is above the comprehension of the senses, but he can not believe that which is contrary to the senses."

"Hold, hold, sir," said the Catholic, "you are getting excited. I certainly ought to know what I believe."

"So you ought, but it seems you do not. How do you obtain a knowledge of external objects—trees, stones, houses, etc.?"

"By the senses, of course," replied the Catholic.

"Well, what is this?" asked the minister, holding toward him a book.

"This! a book, what else can it be?"

"I deny it," said the preacher, "it is a stone."

"Indeed," answered the other, "You are disposed to jest."

"By no means," said Mr. Watkins, "prove it to be a book."

"Prove it! why don't I see it, can't I feel it?"

"Then, sir, with only the testimony of two of your senses, you affirm positively that it is a book, and yet you reject the testimony of all the senses in respect to the bread and wine. Now, if it is by the senses that we obtain a knowledge of things, can you or any other man believe the bread to be transubstantiated?"

"Well, what have you to say about the turning of water into wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee?"

"That," replied the minister, "was a real, sensible, *bona fide*, transubstantiation. It looked like wine, tasted like it, smelt like it, and produced the same effect on the system. That case and your transubstantiation present no points of resemblance whatever."

Here there was a pause, and Mr. Watkins was disposed to discontinue the discussion, but his friend did not seem satisfied.

"Mr. Watkins," he asked, "what is your standard of infallibility?"

"The Holy Scriptures, sir."

"But the Scriptures are variously interpreted. Who then is to determine their meaning?"

"To his own master every one stands or falls."

"Ah, there is where we Catholics have the advantage of you. We have an infallible interpreter."

"Who is it?" asked the minister.

"THE CHURCH, sir," answered the Catholic.

"The church indeed! I think, if you will consider the matter, you will discover that your infallible interpreter is as great a figment as transubstantiation.

Every individual member of the church, from the Pope down through the descending series of cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, friars, etc., is fallible. This you admit. How then can these, individually fallible, come collectively infallible?"

"I can not say, sir, but it is so, for the church has so decided."

"A poor reason truly," replied the minister, "and one that will not be likely to satisfy a reasonable man. If the church decides that two blacks make a white, or two wrongs make a right, no man in his proper mind can believe it, no more can he believe that two fallibles, or a thousand fallibles, can make an infallible."

Mr. Watkins here proposed to stop the discussion, and no objection was made. The parties slept in the same room, and the conversation was resumed after they lay down, and the preacher at last fell asleep while the Catholic was talking. The next morning they rose and went down together to breakfast, but neither seemed inclined to renew the controversy, and when the hour approached for service at the church, the minister left to attend his appointment, and his friend went elsewhere on his way. They parted in all friendliness of feeling, which they continued to maintain toward each other.

CHAPTER XV.—*The Country Funeral.*

All countries have their peculiar customs, and these differ considerably even in the same countries. Ostentation is something that pertains to humanity, and is displayed in life and in death, varied by the means at command, and absent only in exceptional cases where interest or idiosyncrasy falls below or rises above the weakness. But amid all this vain show, or mixed up with it, there is to be found something of genuine feeling—true affection, and something which seems to have survived the ruin of Eden, and rises superior to the moral depravity which pervades the mass of humanity. Total depravity is true, so far as relates to its earthly universality. It is not true, as respects its entire control of its subjects, outside of Tartarus, and except in the cases of those who have reduced themselves so low in sin as to be incapable of a moral impression. The cry of distress, and the silent sorrow of the heart, blasted in its affections, and weighed down with troubles which follow in the train of the curse, finds an answering sympathy in the natures of such as "groan and travail" in common with them; and where such sympathy is wanting it must be in such natures as are concreted over by the indurating influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

This sympathetic exhibition is strikingly displayed

in the plain and sincere regard manifested in the country customs of burying the dead.

There is, indeed, something impressive in the black hearse, with its dull black trimmings, the black plumes that nod from the heads of the black horses. And as it passes through the streets with its train of carriages, and, as arriving at the gates of the cemetery, the cortége follows the body to its resting place among marble obelisks, cenotaphs, slabs, and mausoleums, the whole scene tells a tale of helpless mortality.

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." But in the free open country, where the free birds sing, and the wild flowers bloom, there is something of special interest in the sight of simple-hearted neighbors collected together to pay a last tribute of kind regard to the departed.

It was an incident of this kind, which, on a bright autumn morning, called Mr. Watkins to a house of mourning. A little child, the center of earthly affections to its parents, around which clustered the hopes of future happiness and usefulness, had been taken from the evil to come; a flower of earth, transplanted to the garden of the celestial paradise, a little probationer, just started on life's journey, taken away from the doubtful issue of earthly trial. Strange! is it not, that people should weep about such a thing?

Yet nature will speak, even while it bows in resignation. And who knows but the cause of the weeping will intensify the rejoicing when they meet again "up yonder."

The little innocent lay shrouded in a pine coffin

placed on two chairs in the center of a room, around the walls of which were seated the female part of the attending neighbors, while the men were gathered on the front piazza or standing about the steps waiting for the usual service of such occasions to begin. Mr. Watkins was sitting by a table near the coffin, seemingly in meditative sympathy with the bereaved family, when a man approached, and in a low tone requested him to proceed. He arose and commenced by reading a portion of the Scriptures suited to the occasion, and announced as a passage suggestive of a few remarks, a verse in one of John's epistles, "And the world passeth away and the lusts thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

"'And the world passeth away.' To discuss this proposition," he began, "by offering evidence of its truth, would be an unnecessary work. No one disputes it, no one doubts it. But as Peter wrote to the brethren to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, so it is useful to remind people of that which they well know, lest absorbed by the world, they forget that it is passing away."

And thus he went on, analogically illustrating the fact that everything pertaining to earth was uncertain and changeful.

The trees of the forest, the beasts of the field, all organic life must cease to live; yea even inorganic matter is subject to change by the laws which govern it.

"'Passing away.' Why look you, friends, see that old man, as he goes, leaning upon his staff, bending

under a load of years and infirmities. Speak kindly to him. Ask him "Father! why this staff to support your tottering frame? what means the dimness of your eyes? and the feebleness of your movements?" And he will answer, "Son, I was once young; these feeble limbs once trod the earth elastic with the buoyancy of youth, and steady in the strength of manhood; the few silver hairs scattered over this old head once shone in glossy blackness; these old eyes now dim, could scale in vision the mountain top, and watch the eagle to its eyrie. But time has done its work, and I am 'passing away.'

"Look at this lovely child, beautiful even in the paleness which tells of coming corruption, and ask what means the repose, in strange contrast with its active playfulness? Where has gone the lively prattle that once rejoiced the hearts that loved it, and that love it still? What has gone with the brilliancy that lighted up those windows of the soul? And there comes a response as from the spirit world, 'it has passed away.'

"Behold that gay band of pleasure's children. Listen to the ravishing music by which their graceful limbs measure the mazes of the dance. How lightly rings the silvery laugh! how brightly flash the eyes that meet! Can dull care ever enter that charmed circle? Will those hearts ever grieve, and weeping be heard from their voices? Will those limbs be palsied with age or lie cold in the prison-house of the grave?

Come, behold again when time and trial have done their work. The merry laugh is hushed; the brilliant

lights are gone, and the quiet stillness that broods over yonder earth mounds tells the story, 'they have passed away.' And will it ever be so? shall pain, and sorrow, and parting, and woe, forever fill the cup of humanity's curse? Shall the trail of the serpent be always found among the flowers that bloom in the garden of human happiness? O! is there not something that survives the decay of earth?

"Listen to the words of the apocalyptic vision. 'And I, John, saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.'

"'O, the hope, the glorious hope,
The hope through Jesus given,
The hope, when days and years are past,
We all shall meet in heaven.'"

And the minister kneeled down, and was joined in a fervent prayer by the pious present, that the occasion might be blessed to all, and that the bereaved might be comforted by that comfort which God only can give. And rising, he gave out and sung the hymn,

"There is a hope, a glorious hope,
More blessed and more bright,
Than all the joyless mocking,
The world esteems delight."

Then came tender hands and adjusted the drapery of death; then came strong hands to bear away the little sleeper to its resting place. And then the funeral train moved off silently, and with sad hearts, as the sounds of bitter grief proceeded from the child's mother.

Arrived at the burying ground, all gathered about the grave, surrounded by others, where lay the moldering mortalities that testified to the truth of inspired record: "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

How strange is death! Why should men die? Why not continue to live on and on; life ever renewed by the agencies which support it. Is it not just as natural that people should live as that they should die? Can not the power that brings them into being continue them in being? Most certainly. Why then should they die? Find the answer in the history of Eden's ruin, where man innocent became man guilty—man perfect became man depraved, and his nature becoming corrupt, the same corruption is transmitted to his posterity, and thus decay and death reigns over the human race.

But turn and see the other side of the picture, where the second Adam repairs the ruin of the first, and rejoice in prospect of the "better day coming,"

when death shall be swallowed up in victory, and from the hearts of the great multitude redeemed, shall come the shout of triumph like the sound of many waters, "O death where is thy sting, O Hades where is thy victory?"

With tender care the little body was lowered into the grave, and over it were placed the boards to protect the coffin from the superincumbent earth; then came the hollow sounds of the falling clods, and with it a fresh burst of grief from the smitten hearts; spadeful after spadeful of earth poured in until a red mound appeared above ground. This was smoothed over and stakes were driven down at either end—the minister, raising his hands, pronounced a short prayer and a benediction, and the crowd dispersed. The weeping parents returned to their sad home, to come again and plant flowers about the spot now so dear for the treasure it contained. And in after days, when grief is assuaged, and from the earthly their affections are transformed to the heavenly, and they find it is good to be afflicted, and the balm of God's grace has healed the wounds his chastisement had made, they will look with melancholy pleasure on the "little green grave," and long for the time of the reunion to come, "when this mortal shall put on immortality."

CHAPTER XVI.—*Disruption of the Coalition.*

ANY union in Church or State, social order or business pursuits, to secure to itself permanent benefit or usefulness, must be founded in virtue—must have for its basis certain great principles of RIGHT, and a disposition of heart and mind in the covenanters answering thereto. Hence a good government is the result of right constitutional principles, written not only on paper or parchment, but on the hearts of the people: and so long as there is an adherence to these principles, so long may the government be expected to be permanent and strong.

There is, indeed, a power in wrong. Kings may form alliances for oppression—to perpetrate the *jus divinum* by which tyrants rule; but selfishness is at the bottom of it all; and wrangling about "mine and thine"—apprehension about the "balance of power"—continually threaten to dissolve the compacts: and wronged right, on which their thrones too often rest, will heave up like the swell of an earthquake, and tumble the oppressors from their toppling hights. For long ages has the struggle between might and right been maintained, and doubtful, nay, disastrous has often been the issue; for "on the side of oppressors was power;" but it was a power extraneous to itself. But right, feeble in *ab extra* force, has within itself a strength, an endowment by Him who is the source of right: and gradually, slowly, to

cotemporaries almost imperceptibly, it has been growing, increasing; gathering, little by little, accessions of power. It is almost ready for the final trial, and only waits the fullness of time to shake the heavens and the earth. Then out of the ruins shall come the throne of RIGHT, to be set up upon the principles of right, and occupied by the Author of right.

As compacts of wickedness are entered into by the dignitaries of earth, so do the little ones of earth form copartnerships in iniquity, which for a time seem to prosper; but selfishness being the bond of union, they are in continual danger of disruption, with terrible consequences to the contracting parties. Such was the nature of the firm of Bates & Young, and the catastrophe of its dissolution was as might have been expected.

According to the articles of agreement between these worthies, all the liquor made at Young's distillery was to be delivered at Bates' store, and this latter gentleman was to sell the same to the best possible advantage, reserving to himself certain commissions, and paying over the balance to Young.

To secure the faithful performance of these conditions, they entered into a written contract; having also a private understanding as to various expedients by which the stock should be made to go as far as possible—the least injurious of which was a prudent use of water; of other ingredients we forbear to speak.

This arrangement was highly advantageous to both parties. It saved Young from the odium attaching to the profession of a retailer. He was a wholesale

dealer; and, as in some other things, the magnitude of the crime lessened the degree of guilt. A man who kills his fellow-man is a murderer—a conqueror who kills a million is a hero. A man who steals a shoat to keep his family from starving is taken to the whipping-post—another who gets off with half the capital of a bank is a "lion" in fashionable circles. So a cross-road retailer is beneath the notice of respectable people, while a distiller or importer, who supplies the means of trade to a thousand retailers, is to the last degree respectable. Bates being not very sensitive about social position, did not much consider of these things; and if he did, why he kept a store, and of course would be expected to keep whatever people wanted.

But what of the victims of this league of iniquity? Is one man to benefit himself at the expense of another's ruin? Bah! what a question to ask in this progressive age! Let every man look out for himself. If Thomson sells a man a gun, it's no concern of his whether or not the fool kills somebody with it. And if Bates supplies a man with a quart of whisky, and the wretch goes home under its influence, and runs his wife and children off into the woods, or to a neighbor's house, or knocks old Tom on the head with a fence rail, is Bates to abandon the sale of liquor, or Young its manufacture? Nonsense! Just as well say that an apothecary should not keep opium, because that silly fellow Green put himself into a sleep that "knows no waking," that he might escape the thought of having "wasted his substance in riot-

ous living." Surprising indeed that people will have such old fogy notions!

But the course of iniquity does not always run smooth, and selfishness, true to its instincts, is suspicious and watchful. Young had serious misgivings as to the correctness of Bates' returns, and Bates, equally on the alert, had heard of several instances in which his partner had sold secretly a gallon or so at the distillery. They both acted on the maxim to "treat all men as rascals," and to trust no one farther than you can see him; and by some law of humanity, not yet fully understood, each was aware of the other's distrust. Psychologists might, perhaps, explain it on some newly discovered principle; but be that as it may, the fact is evident that emotions, feelings, or states of mind are mysteriously intercommunicable. For some time did these suspicious thoughts haunt these men, but both seemed averse to taking the initiative in requiring an explanation, because neither had sufficient evidence to authorize such a proceeding. An incident finally occurred, however, which presented a fair opportunity for bringing the matter to an issue.

Dan Spencer had been drinking pretty freely at Bates' "bar," and becoming rather noisy, he was admonished once or twice to keep more quiet. But he paid little attention to the remonstrance; and some ladies coming to the store to "trade," were so annoyed and frightened by his boisterous behavior, that they soon left without making any purchases. This exasperated Bates, and they had but just gone

out, when he began to speak to Spencer in very plain terms; told him, unless he conducted himself better, he might go elsewhere "to drink." Spencer, in his turn, became enraged, and expressed the supremest contempt for the storekeeper and his liquor, asking him "if he thought there was no liquor in the neighborhood but at his store."

"There is none that you can get," said Bates.

"That 's all you know about it. I can get as much as I please at Young's still."

The thought flashed upon Bates that he might turn the quarrel to some account, as he replied:

"You can't do any such thing. Young has no license, and he sells all his liquor to me; and, unless you can prove you got it there, I must believe you lie about it."

Here was a dilemma for Spencer. He knew he ought not to betray Young, but his character as a man of truth was at stake. The bystanders began to laugh at him; and, in desperation, he exclaimed:

"I did get a jug of brandy from him last week, and I can prove it, too!"

"Ah, yes," retorted the storekeeper; "begged it from him, I suppose?"

"It 's a lie!" shouted Spencer; "I bought it, and paid for it."

Bates did not much relish the "lie," but he was aiming at a purpose, and kept cool.

"Very well," said he; "I advise you to go there again;" and he walked round behind the counter, and began apparently to look over his books.

Spencer continued to talk, striding across the floor with his hands in his pockets, and his hat set on the side of his head with a most independent air. What was his dismay, on turning toward the door, to see 'Squire Young walk into the store! It had a more sobering effect than a bowl of coffee.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the 'Squire to the company.

The salutation was returned, and the 'Squire eased himself into a chair, and leaned back against the counter.

There was a pause, and one of the company was about to make a remark about the weather, when Bates, taking advantage of what had just passed, to relieve the matter of embarrassment, said to Spencer:

"Now, sir, we'll see whether you have told the truth;" and he related to the 'Squire what had passed. Young's face underwent as many changes during the recital, as it did when John Waters, holding the reins of his horse, portrayed his character in such vivid colors. There was no chance to deny out of the scrape—a living witness was present, and one who would rather have been a hundred miles away; but he had to meet the issue, much as he disliked it.

"Well, I did n't like to tell on you, 'Squire," said he, sheepishly; "but this man provoked me to it."

Young looked clubs and fists at him, but made no reply.

"What am I to understand about this matter, Mr. Young?" asked the storekeeper.

This plainly implied distrust of his honesty, brought the 'Squire to his speech, and he gruffly answered:

"You can think what you please, sir."

"But, sir," returned Bates, "have you no more honor than to violate our agreement so?"

"Do you mean to impeach my honor, sir? I expect, if the truth were known, your own dealings would not bear the strictest scrutiny. I ought to have got more money than I have for the quantity of liquor that has been sent to your store."

The 'Squire had risen during this speech, and stood facing his partner, who remained behind the counter.

The storekeeper, in his turn, was fully roused by the reflection on his honesty, and the scene was getting interesting. The loafers began crowding up, and Dan Spencer was as sober as a chancellor.

"I dare you to repeat that, sir; and I'll put you out of that door faster than you came in!"

"I do repeat it, you infernal scoundrel!" roared the 'Squire, at the same time striking at Bates with his walkingstick.

Bates instantly caught up a two-pound weight, which was lying on the counter, and hurled it at Young's head, and in a moment he was stretched bleeding and senseless on the floor.

All was now the wildest confusion. Several advanced to raise the fallen man, but it seemed useless; and one of them seizing a bolt of cloth, placed it under his head, while another began bathing his head with water.

"Go for the doctor, Spencer;" and this gentleman,

mounting his horse, dashed down the road in search of medical assistance.

Bates, in the meantime, not knowing the extent of the injury he had inflicted, and fearing the worst, retired to the back room, and unlocking the safe, proceeded to transfer all the money to his pocketbook, to be ready for an emergency; intending to leave his affairs to be settled by his wife. He then stepped to his house, a hundred yards distant, and hastily communicated to his wife the state of affairs; giving her a few brief directions to follow in case he should be compelled to leave. Having done this, he deposited a revolver in each side-pocket of his coat, and slipped a dirk within the waistband of his pantaloons; then returned to the store, leaving orders to have his horse in readiness.

A thousand thoughts shot through his brain as he walked back. "He might stay and stand his trial; he would hardly be convicted of any thing but manslaughter; but there was *some* risk; and then he did not like the idea of lying in jail, even until the governor's pardon could be obtained; *perhaps*, too, he would not grant one. On the whole, it was less trouble to keep out of harm's way. He could get a fair start before a warrant could be issued, and no one would voluntarily try to stop him, armed as he was. But Young might not be killed; he would see how matters were tending."

"Well, Bates," said one, as he entered, "I think you have fixed him."

"Is he dead?" asked the storekeeper.

"No; but his skull is broken."

A groan from the wounded man smote the ears of the crowd—whether it reached the heart of the storekeeper is doubtful. Perhaps it did; perhaps it was policy which induced him to tell them to take him up, and lay him on the bed in the back room.

For an hour they stood round him, applying such restoratives as unprofessional skill dictated, when they were relieved by the appearance of the physician.

"Where is Spencer?" was asked.

"He has gone to inform Young's family of his situation," replied the doctor; and went immediately to the patient.

"What do you think of it, doctor?" he was asked, after having examined the wound.

"A bad case—very bad, indeed."

"Can he be moved home?"

"Yes, on a litter, if he lives long enough. I told Spencer to bring some negroes with him."

Late in the afternoon the doctor left with his patient, borne by four negroes on a litter, accompanied by the wounded man's wife and a few persons who were at the store. They reached home after dark, and every attention was given to the patient which skill or affection could suggest.

The next morning the clerk was alone in the store, and Bates' whereabouts was known only to a select few.

CHAPTER XVII.—*The Crisis.*

"Good morning, doctor," said Mr. Watkins, as he ascended the steps of the piazza at Young's house.

"Good morning, sir," replied Dr. Thomson. "I am glad you have come; the family here are in great distress, and their minister is away on the circuit."

"I should have come last night, but did not hear of the dreadful state of things until this morning. What is Mr. Young's condition now, sir?"

"Very critical indeed, sir: but there is some hope that his injuries may not prove fatal. He is now in a high fever, and raves a good deal."

"What a shocking thing," said the minister, "shocking, shocking! And Bates—where is he?"

"Cleared out, so Jackson says, who came by the store a while ago. I suppose, though, he will lie around, not far off, to see how the case will terminate. But come into the room, sir."

Mr. Watkins, as he entered the apartment, saw a scene which sickened his heart. On a bed lay the wounded man, the bandages about his head giving evidence, by the blood which had oozed through them, of the wound beneath. By the bedside sat his wife, an impersonation of distress, while around stood several negroes, under the direction of Deacon Jones, to prevent Young from injuring himself in his sudden outbreaks of delirium.

Mr. Watkins and Mr. Jones silently shook hands,

The minister would like to say something to Mrs Young, but what could he say?

"Stand back there, you infernal villain. You dare to accuse me of dishonesty. I took you from the ashes, and this is the thanks I get for it."

Mr. Jones passed his hand soothingly over the raving man's face.

"Yes, Mr. Grayson, I know it's wrong to make liquor. * * * That sermon you preached on intemperance—I felt it: it made me mad; but I knew it was the truth."

Mr. Watkins thought he would try the effect of soothing words, but they fell unheeded on the sufferer's ear.

"Don't come here to torment me, Waters. I couldn't help your drinking. * * * O, your wife! Well, that did look hard, but what could I do?" * * * "Give up stilling, Mr. Grayson! What's the use to talk so? What's done, can't be undone." * * * "Repentance! Forgiveness! Do you think there is any forgiveness for me?" * * * "If I make restitution! Why that would take all I've got." * * * "Yes, that would be better than to be lost, lost, lost. Well, I'll see Mr. Watkins. I know he is a good man; he wouldn't sell me his peaches, to turn God's blessings into a curse with them." * * * "But RESTITUTION! That's a hard word to one who would have to restore so much.' * * * "Well, yes, you are right, sir. It does not look so large when you put it by the side of SALVATION!"

Thus the poor man continued at intervals during the day; toward evening the fever subsided, and with it his delirium, and as the shades of night settled upon the earth, he sunk into a stupid sleep. During that long night, the physician watched the case with intense interest. Would exhausted nature be able to recover? The attendants seemed to share fully in the anxiety. Mr. Watkins retired to the parlor for a short time with Mrs. Young, and tried to offer such consolation as the desperate nature of the case would allow. Hour after hour passed. The silence almost of the tomb pervaded the house. The dim light in the sick man's chamber added to the gloom. O how gladly, after the hours of weary watching, did the occupants of that dismal chamber welcome the coming of the "day star" which paled the glare of the sickly taper!

The sick man himself, seemed to feel its influence. A feeble groan escaped him—he turns languidly in his bed—his eyelids open, and as his gaze passes around the room, the practiced eye of the physician discovers that reason has returned to its throne.

"Be quiet, Mr. Young," said he, mildly, "you have been severely hurt, but I hope you are better now."

"How did I get here, doctor."

"Kind friends brought you, sir; but you *must not* talk. Your mind and body require the utmost quiet."

Young submitted to the directions, at least in part, but he could not help wondering who those kind

friends were—he could not remember any who were at the store.

The physician heartily thanked the attendants for their patient watching, which was sincerely indorsed by Mrs. Young; and saying there was "no necessity for extra attention at present," he requested the lady to keep the house quiet and call him if necessary; then, throwing himself on a temporary pallet on the floor, in a few minutes was sound asleep, worn out with fatigue and excitement.

Deacon Jones was almost as much exhausted as the doctor, having set up two nights and a day; and begging Mr. Watkins to take his place, he mounted his horse and rode home, promising to return at night.

Mrs. Watkins had sent John Waters over after breakfast to inquire how Young was, and if necessary to relieve her husband, who also availed himself of the opportunity to go home to rest, promising, in like manner, to return. So that John and Mrs. Young were left alone with the servants to attend the patient during the day.

It would not have been surprising if, after what had occurred, John had been embarrassed by his peculiar situation, nor that the Squire should participate in the feeling. But John bore himself bravely through the ordeal, giving every possible attention to his charge.

He had just handed him a drink of water, and was again seated, and was waiting to perform any other service which might be required. Observing a slight movement of the patient, he instinctively looked up

to see if any thing was wanting. Young's eyes were fixed on him with a steady gaze. John turned away his face, and sat with an uneasy feeling, looking at the vacant wall. Another movement of the patient attracted his notice, but he did not take his eyes from the wall. He *felt* that the gaze was still upon him.

"How old are you, John?"

The abruptness of the question startled the boy, but he promptly answered

"Fourteen years, sir."

Young said no more for some time, but his thoughts were evidently busy. His gaze was still fixed on the boy, who was again intently engaged in tracing the varied scenery of a white wall.

Perhaps the Squire's memory was busy with thoughts which brought again the shadow of the degrees that had gone far down in the dial of life. Some scene which had well nigh faded away under the influence of worldly cares, was freshening under the touch of that mysterious agent which "sponges off" the incrustations of the brain, and brings out the hidden characters.

The work on which it was now employed might have brought out successively the parts of a picture in which were mingled the forms of a drunken man, a legal process, a weeping woman, frightened negroes, and an innocent-looking flaxen-haired boy. Who can tell either, but that the faint recollection of a delirious dream about *Restitution* might be disturbing his mind? Nothing was said to indicate his train of thought, and closing his eyes, the man lay for some minutes as if

in sleep; suddenly he opens them and they meet the boy's.

"John, that was an unpleasant affair which happened between us last summer at Mr. Watkin's, but I hope you won't think any thing of it."

"O no, sir, no, sir," said the boy, earnestly. "But don't talk about that now, Mr. Young; the doctor says you must be quiet. I don't care any thing about it. I have learned something since then, I hope, sir, and I don't think I would do so again. Try and go to sleep, Mr. Young," and a tear rolled down his cheek as he spoke.

What is that! Is it a quiver about the sick man's lip? And look! Does there not seem to be a slight moisture about his eyes?

No one could say, certainly. The wife's handkerchief was over her face as her husband turned with a sigh in his bed, and John had found relief in the picturesque scenery of the wall.

CHAPTER XVIII.—*The Runaway Match.*

RAP! rap! rap! "Who keeps house."

"We shall have to accord you that honor, Mary," said Mr. Watkins, rising, "but in this case at least, I must occupy the post of doorkeeper."

As the light shone out through the open door, the minister discovered a party of three persons standing in the piazza, a lady and two men. The lady was hanging on the arm of one of the men, while No. 3 appeared to be acting as a sort of rear guard, standing a little back, and armed with a murderous looking stick.

"Good evening, parson," said the gentleman in advance, "we 've come to get you to do a little piece of service for us, and as we are rather in a hurry, I hope you will do the work first and ask for explanations afterward."

The shrewd minister had guessed, at a glance, the nature of the business, and this speech only served to strengthen his suspicion; he therefore promptly asked them into the room, secretly determined, however to have the explanations first and the work, if done at all, second in order.

Now getting married is sometimes like the pursuit of knowledge—"it is consummated under difficulties." Marriage is indeed the natural state of man, having for its authority the highest divine right. People always have got married, and always will, it is pre-

sumed, in the present state. But somehow, in this contrary world, while all acknowledge its propriety as an abstract principle, yet in certain applications there will serious opposition be made. Indeed, in some cases, cold, unimpassioned prudence seems justified in protesting against the measure, while on the other hand, still colder selfishness or pride is altogether unreasonable in its demands. So that, like many other things, no uniform rule in regard to its observance can be laid down.

In practice, however, love generally laughs at laws and locksmiths, be it ever so demure in the presence of frowning opponents. Many have doubtless read the story of the youth who was forbidden the door, but crawled in at the window.

In the "Palmetto State," too, lovers have less trouble in effecting their purpose than in less favored localities; less favored, we mean, in the facilities for getting married. No publishing of bans, no license from the court. The marriage service, too, whether performed by priest or layman, judge or constable, being equally valid. The "officiator" may, to be sure, be prosecuted, but the parties not separated. Nevertheless, there is generally a good deal of pride in having the thing done respectably, and hence the services of an ordained minister are decidedly preferred, and some would not like at all the suggestion to be "married by a magistrate."

But it will not do to keep the impatient party at Mr. Watkins' waiting, so we must recur to the conversation between them and the minister.

"You wish to get married you say, William? Why then did you not have the ceremony at Mrs. Giles' house? I do not like to marry runaways, and have almost determined several times to give notice to that effect."

"Why you see, parson, they object to the match, but I hav n't got time to tell you about it now. I 'm looking out every minute for somebody to come."

"Well," said the minister, "I know you both to be orderly, respectable young people, and I do n't see why there should be any objection to the match, though I can't know what private reasons there may be for it. However I will ask you one question, and if that is satisfactory it will settle the matter. Are you both of legal age?"

"Yes, sir, we are," answered the bridegroom expectant, much relieved that all obstacles were now removed.

"Very good, then; no one has a right to prevent your union; and if you are determined to marry, the sooner the better. Take your places on the floor."

The parties instantly stood up facing the minister.

"Julia, stand up beside the lady, dear; and you, sir, (addressing No. 3,) take your place beside your friend. Let us go through in due form."

"And do make it short, parson," said the gentleman.

"I call all persons here present," began the minister, "to witness the union of this man and this woman in the bonds of a matrimonial engagement.

"Do you, William Owens, promise and agree to take this woman to be your wedded wife?"

"I do, sir," responded William Owens.

"Let me get through, first, before you answer," said the minister, trying in vain to command his features. After a little he began again, and making up a short extempore service, "the silken tie that binds two willing hearts," was soon indissolubly woven. A few words of prayer concluded the form, and Mr. Owens and Miss Giles were one.

"Now they may come," said Mr. Owens. "I reckon they can't untie the knot."

Slam went the gate. Miss Gi—no, Mrs. Owens—started and turned pale, but Mr. Owens assumed all the important bearing of a married man, and told the lady "not to be frightened—they were too late and he would protect her to the last extremity."

Mr. Watkins himself felt a little uneasy, fearing there might be an unpleasant scene, and was not a little gratified on opening the door to encounter a no more wrathful countenance than old Cyrus' physiognomy presented.

"Must I tek dem horse at de gate and put 'em way, Massa?"

"I suppose so. Hey, William, we have had the marriage, we must now have the feast."

"No, I thank you, Mr. Watkins. They're fixing up for us at home. Can't you all go and take supper?"

Mr. Watkins politely excused himself and family, but said John could go if he wished.

"Well, come John, catch your horse. No backing out, you must go."

John had never attended any thing of the kind, and he knew, from Mr. Watkins' manner, he rather wished him to go. So asking daddy Cyrus to saddle Bob, he proceeded at once to get ready; and by the time the horse was brought round, they were all prepared to leave.

"What's the fee, Mr. Watkins?" asked the now bridegroom *de facto*.

"I never make any charge, William."

"Yes, but that ain't going to do. You've done me a great service and I will pay for it. I have'nt got much you know; but it shan't be said that William Owens did n't pay for getting married. Sallie here would be ashamed of me."

Mr. Watkins would willingly have resigned his perquisites in favor of the newly-married pair, but he knew it would not be pleasant to Owens, poor as he was, and he therefore received the bill which was extended to him.

"Come, let's go, Sallie; I know they're anxious to see us."

"I hope you won't be so bad scared as you were coming," said No. 3. "Would n't wonder now if you had some dodging to do yet."

"I can take you through a by-path if you wish," said John.

"Any way you please; all ways are the same to me now," replied Owens.

Mrs. Watkins adjusted the bride's shawl for her, and Mr. Watkins claimed the privilege of escorting her to the gate.

Owens led the horse up to the block and saw his wife safely seated. All the party then mounted and John taking the van, the bridal pair occupied the center, while No. 3 brought up the rear. "Good night," all round—kind wishes for a pleasant ride—and the clatter of hoofs died away in the distance.

"How much did he pay you, father?"

"Ah! Julia, your first thought is about the money, hey?"

"Well, father, mother wants a pair of shoes and a new bonnet *so* bad. She has been wearing her old bonnet ever since I can remember, almost."

"Well, let's go to the light and see."

"Five dollars! Father, did you ever get so much before for marrying any body?"

"Not often," he replied.

"Dear me; why that, with what mother has got, will buy ever so many things—shoes for Tommy, and stockings for Susy, and bonnet for mother. I don't want any; mine will last all the winter." The father looked with noble pride on his noble child.

"How I do dislike runaway matches," remarked Mrs. Watkins. "I wonder you don't refuse to marry them."

"Well I should under ordinary circumstances, but there was no cause why that couple should have been driven to the necessity of running away; they were of age, and Owens is a steady, industrious young man."

His wife could not gainsay the truth of his reply, but she could not help thinking it was a strange way of doing things.

"Do you think you would run away, Julia?" said he, smiling.

"Why father! you astonish me! But I would, too, she added; "if you and mother ever run away I'll run after you."

Mr. Watkins thought of the saying of the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

CHAPTER XIX.—*Raising the Salary.*

THE church at Sandy Run had been in the habit of paying very little for its preaching, which might have been accounted for in several ways. First. There might have been a covetous leaven affecting the leading members. Secondly. They had never been *taught* to feel themselves bound to pay a preacher any thing for his services. Thirdly. Some were opposed to paying for preaching on principle; and, Fourthly. The larger part, perhaps, had never thought any thing about the matter, because it had never been brought to their notice. When, therefore, the subject was formally brought before the conference of raising a salary for the minister, it produced an uncommon sensation.

The usual form of business had been gone through with when Deacon Bryan rose and requested the pastor to retire for a short time, as he wished to offer a resolution which he might not like to hear discussed.

After the minister had left the house, wondering what the resolution could be, a moderator, *pro tem.*, was called to the chair. Bro. Bryan remarked that he might, perhaps, better than in any other way, bring the contemplated business before the conference, by reading the following preamble and resolutions:

"WHEREAS, Our brother Watkins has faithfully served this church for several years, and had for said service received but a very small compensation; and,

whereas, said minister's increasing family involved an increased expense in providing for them a living; and, whereas, our brother's means of support are known to be quite limited, therefore,

"*Resolved*, That this church proceed to take such steps as in its judgment will be best adapted to secure for Bro. Watkins a suitable compensation for future services.

"*Resolved further*, That a committee be appointed to carry into effect this measure, and that they be instructed to report at the next regular meeting.

"(Signed) B. C. BRYAN,
A. A. CARTER."

The Chair then announced that the subject was open for discussion, whereupon Bro. Bryan spoke to the resolution as follows:

"Bro. Moderator: If it were not that this matter now before us is a new feature in the history of this church, I should not deem it necessary to say any thing in support of the measure. I know, though, that it appears strange to some of the brethren, and to forestall any prejudice in their minds, I request the attention of the meeting for a short time.

"The support of the ministry is a thing clearly taught in the Scriptures. Our Savior said, 'the laborer is worthy of his hire;' and the apostle Paul repeatedly enjoined upon the churches the propriety of contributing to the carnal wants of those who ministered to them in spiritual things. Somehow, though, we have never properly considered the subject, and

our minister has never urged the duty upon us; but knowing as I do, and as we all do, that he stands in need of help, I would like to see some relief extended to him by a cordial passing of the preamble and resolutions, and a corresponding action in carrying them out. I should like to hear the views of the brethren on the subject."

Bro. Bryan, at the closing of this short speech, took his seat, and a dead silence of several minutes ensued. It was getting rather awkward, if not embarrassing, when Bro. Bryan repeated his desire to hear the brethren.

"O, yes, brethren," said the moderator, "speak out. Let there be a free expression of opinion."

Hereupon there were several whispering conferences begun in different parts of the house—three or four heads grouped together, apparently in earnest conversation. The moderator stood it a minute or two longer, when he broke out a little impatiently:

"Brethren, these private consultations amount to nothing; at least they benefit nobody but yourselves. Speak out and let the church hear what you have to say."

The seconder of the resolutions here mustered sufficient courage to rise and say that "he agreed entirely in the views of Bro. Bryan, and did not see what could be said against them;" and joining in the desire to hear the others, he sat down.

There was a drawing off of heads from a circle, which had been discussing, in a low tone, some project known only to itself, and the attention of the

several members was directed to an individual who appeared to be meditating a speech.

He first blew his nose, the sound of which somewhat resembled the sound of a tin trumpet (twate); then he cleared his throat (ahem); this was followed by the ejection of a huge quid of tobacco, and a contribution to the coffee-colored pool under his feet.

Another blast of the trumpet, another clearing of the throat, another contribution to the pool, (it was a little dryer this time, and somewhat frothy,) and Bro. Jennings was fairly "up." He began very deliberately:

"Bro. Moderator! I don't like this movement, (ahem); I don't believe in preaching for money, (twate); the gospel is a free thing, and should be preached without money and without price, (spit.)

"More than this, sir: our custom has always been to do things according to Baptist usage, and I think we ought to stand by the old landmarks of the denomination. We've got along very well on the old plan, and it's a good rule to let well enough alone. If, sir, we get to having new-fangled notions among us, there's no telling where it will stop. The next thing we'll have a singing master, with his 'law, sole, faw'—that'll call for money; then there'll be a parcel of agents, and they'll want money; and, in a year or two, the preacher will find that his pay is too little, and he'll be wanting still more money; and instead of the gospel being a free thing, it'll be the costliest thing in the whole country: and, for my part, sir, I want this matter stopped at the start."

Ahem, twate, spit, and Bro. Jennings took his seat, and looked around with the air of a man who felt that he had demolished at least one threatening evil.

The ice being broken, several others on the same side were emboldened to speak, insomuch that the moderator, instead of having to urge them to an expression of opinion, was compelled to decide the claims of parties to the floor. It did not, however, require much to be said by the no-pay party "to exhaust the argument," and they determined to stand by their votes—which, at this stage of the business, appeared to constitute the majority.

But Bro. Bryan was resolved not to give it up without a struggle, and at least get some *satisfaction* out of the leaders of the opposition; so he proceeded to catechise Bro. Jennings after the following fashion:

"Bro. Jennings," said he, "if you were to engage a man to come and repair your house or reap your wheat, would you not expect to pay him for it?"

Bro. Jennings seemed to think the deacon was preparing a trap for him, and he answered slowly and cautiously,

"Yes; but what has that got to do with it?"

"Well," returned the deacon, "is it not of as much importance that your spiritual house should be kept in order, and your spiritual man be fed, as your temporal house and carnal man? What will it matter, after a few years, if you have lived in a leaky house, and been stinted in food? If our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of

God, a house not made with hands eternal, in the heavens."

"O, that's a different thing. Beside I'm not able to be paying so much for preaching. Paul said he 'preached the Gospel without charge.'"

"So he did, but he had no wife or children to feed and clothe; and he specially charged the churches that it was their duty to minister in carnal things to them who ministered to them in spiritual things. So that he certainly did not intend that his peculiar case should be a precedent to encourage the churches in starving out their preachers."

"Who wants to starve out the preachers? Don't I give every year to his support?"

"Yes, I believe you do. I know you subscribed five dollars this year."

"Well, then, what are you talking about?"

"Bro. Jennings, how much have you spent this year for tobacco?"

"That's none of your business."

"But it *is* my business in the present connection, and I have an object in asking the question; though it is not necessary to do so, for I brought a supply for you from town last spring, and that I know cost twenty-five dollars. Now you profess to believe religion to be most important of all things, and you treat it as if it were of less account than a useless habit. Let me ask you again how do you expect Mr. Watkins to support his family?"

"Why, work as I do."

"He does work, and that much harder than you

do. And he is compelled, moreover, to lose more or less time every week in attending his appointments, and is often in his field when he ought to be at his books."

"Well, I don't want any book-preaching. Just let a man get up and preach as the Lord gives him light and liberty. Didn't Christ tell his disciples to take no thought what they should speak?"

"Yes, he told them so, and also told them to 'take no thought for the morrow' in providing for their wants; but I don't think all the members of this church follow this last injunction very closely. Bro. Jennings," he continued, "you ought certainly to know that the circumstances under which our Lord said these things were peculiar, and not intended for literal and perpetual observance. Else, how could Paul, speaking by the same Spirit, say 'if a man would not work, neither should he eat?' and write to Timothy to give attendance to reading?"

Here the moderator interposed by saying he was sorry to see a division on so plain a matter of Christian duty, and thought it would be better to let the whole matter lie over to the next meeting, so that the brethren could think about it. He could not but hope that there would be entire unanimity if it was properly considered.

"I will not throw any obstacle in the way of your suggestion, sir," said Bro. Bryan, "though I feel a good deal like bringing the matter to a test. I wish to know if this church will vote down the preamble and resolutions before us."

"Bro. Moderator," observed a member, "I approve of your suggestion, and move that the matter lie over."

"I second the motion," said another.

"Brethren, you have heard the motion: what shall we do?"

All seemed waiting to hear what Bro. Bryan would say.

"I shall not make any objection," said the deacon, seeing the general attention directed to him. And on putting the question it was decided that the matter lie over until the next regular meeting.

"I wish Jennings could be a poor man, and a preacher for one year," remarked the deacon, as he walked down the aisle.

"Would you like to be one of his audience for that length of time?" asked one at his elbow.

"O, I did not think of that. That's a new feature in the case."

CHAPTER XX.—*Clouds Gathering.*

WHY is it so often the case that after a long course of prosperity a man will make one false step which ruins all? The newspapers announce the "unexpected failure of George Grimkins, Esq." This Mr. Grimkins had risen, by industry and management, from a state of poverty to one of affluence. His name could command the control of money to any desirable extent. Nobody suspected that there was anything wrong about his business, and Samuel Bones, Esq., as he reads the account at the breakfast table, in gown and slippers, utters an exclamation of astonishment, throws down the paper, and pulls on his boots. He has n't time to answer the question of his wife as to his sudden surprise, but simply points to the paper as he slips into his coat, and hurries down street to learn the particulars.

"What 's this about Grimkin's failure?" he asks of a knot of men gathered on a street corner.

"Disasters at sea, decline in cotton, indorsements for the house of Wily & Co.," etc., etc.

Such was the talk on the street, while in other circles it was thought his wife and daughters were "carrying their heads too high." To think of their keeping a coach and footmen in livery! And then, such parties as they gave!

"Was he not insured in any way?" asked Bones of his informants. "I thought he was too managing

a man to neglect that. And then he should have taken collateral security for the use of his name."

"Of course he ought," all replied, and all thought how differently all would have acted. Strange, is it not, that the same telltale newspaper should, in the course of a few months, chronicle the same thing, varying only in circumstantials, of several of these same "managing men."

Many will remember the story of the captive king who was drawing the chariot of the conqueror—how he philosophized on the turning of the wheel.

But these disasters are not confined to kings, nor merchant princes, nor lordly planters. All conditions of men are subject to them, though it is true that the chances against them are in proportion to the absence of any thing to be lost.

Our friend, the minister, was about to pass an ordeal of the kind. He was, as we have seen, in limited circumstances, but had continued to keep his family in comfort, and notwithstanding his small means, his credit was considerable; his neighbors knew that he would not promise more than there was a reasonable prospect of his being able to perform. Hence, when he was induced to sign a paper with a friend who wished to buy a tract of land adjoining the "Farm," there was no difficulty in the purchaser's becoming legally possessed of said land. The minister did not like "going security" to be sure; but then was he not going to have a pleasant neighbor? He could not tell who might come and settle down by him, and neighbors are sometimes troublesome. Be-

sides, Charlton was an enterprising, managing man, and he assured Mr. Watkins that one crop, or at least two, would enable him to "take up the paper."

The preacher did not sleep as soundly as usual, the night after the transaction, but these feelings wore off after awhile, and he finally settled down in the persuasion that "it would be all right."

There would, indeed, come a misgiving over his mind now and then, as passing the farm of his neighbor, he observed an air of neglect about the premises, and the more so, as Charlton had during the summer, bought another tract adjoining. He thought he had land enough already for his "force." But people said Charlton was an enterprising man, and no doubt had an eye to the rise in land to take place when the projected railroad was done. So his apprehensions were quieted until the fall market opened with a decline in cotton, and prices continually tending downward.

To mend the matter, the banks "contracted"—shut off the streams of money. Creditors became alarmed, and such is the perversity of human nature, that at the very time the poor debtors wish to retain their funds, the creditors are the more exacting. While "de grand confidence" continues, they don't want the money—would much rather have it in circulation, "only pay me the interest, I have no use for the money;" and the foolish debtor, pleased at the thought of his "credit," will hold on to the money and make additional purchases. Conscience will sometimes whisper that such a course is not exactly

right—securities may suffer by it. But conscience is a bothersome sort of a thing, and will sometimes get stirred up unnecessarily. Anyhow, every one is certain that nobody will suffer by *him*. We can not say, then, on the whole, that Mr. Watkins was *much* surprised on reaching home from an appointment, just before the sitting of the Court of Common Pleas for his district, to find an "invitation" to attend the session of said court, and answer, as security, to the complaint of one of his friend Charlton's creditors.

His wife observed the troubled countenance with which he read the instrument.

"This comes of standing security," he remarked, when he had reached the end.

"But you won't have to pay the debt, will you?" asked Mrs. Watkins.

"That remains to be seen. At all events, I regret having run the risk."

"O, well, my dear, don't let it trouble you. It will no doubt be all for the best; 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' I don't see how you could have avoided helping a neighbor who asked you to do so."

"I could have refused to sign the paper," he answered, with a degree of pettishness that was quite uncommon.

"Well, but you have done it now, and fretting over it will not mend the matter. All of us are liable to make mistakes, and all we can do is to learn wisdom by experience, and above all, to trust our Father who has said he will never leave us nor forsake us. You

will see, I am satisfied, that this matter, which is at present so trying, will work out for good."

The subject was again discussed after supper, in the presence of all the family. John Waters listened attentively to the conversation, but said nothing until he gathered from it a clear understanding of the state of affairs.

"If the case goes against me," said the minister, "I can only sell out and look for a new home elsewhere. We are young yet and healthy, thank God, and I trust we shall be able to get along."

"Well, all I've got to say, Mr. Watkins is, that go as it may, I'll take my chances with you. You've done a heap for me, and I'll stick to you. Would you go to the West, if you sold out?"

"I can't say as yet, John, what course I should take, but it is probable I should go West."

"I wish you would, sir. I've heard great accounts of the country out there. William Jones has been out to Mississippi and Texas, and he says the land is very rich, and a fine chance to raise stock. He told me, too, that land could be bought for a dollar and a quarter an acre."

"Yes; that is the government land. But you, perhaps, do not know that it is all in a wild state, and it is a good deal of trouble to settle it. You have to go right into the woods or prairies, and put up a few cabins and clear land to work. The wild animals are sometimes pretty troublesome, and Indians are found in some places that are more troublesome still."

"I did not think of all that, sir; but other people go there and I reckon we could manage to get along. I should n't care about the wild beasts, though, because we could hunt them, and the bears and deer would be good to eat while we were raising some cattle and hogs; but I had rather not go where there are Indians."

"O, no," said Julia, "don't go among the Indians. They scalp people and burn their houses."

"It is n't that I'm afraid of them, but I'd hate to kill the creatures. But some of them are friendly, are they not, Mr. Watkins?"

"Yes; and perhaps they would all be so, if it were not for the bad conduct of the white settlers."

"Father, how long before you will go?"

"We have not determined to go at all yet, my dear."

"No, sir; but I mean if we *do* go."

"That will depend on circumstances; though I confess that if I find it necessary to break up, I should be for doing so soon as possible."

"The reason I asked," replied Julia, "was to know if I could not do something to help along when we get out there. I might be large enough in a year or two to keep a little school."

"Keep school for bears and Indians, Miss Julia? I 'm afraid you would find them dull scholars," observed John.

"O, no; but I don't think father would go to such a wild place as that. Do you think so, mother?"

"I can not say, my dear; perhaps he could not do

any better. But I must say I hope we can find some situation more desirable."

John rather thought he "would like a new country, but was willing to any arrangement that suited the rest—he could get along any way."

"If we keep talking about it," remarked the minister, "we shall get into the humor for moving sure enough. So I think we had better dismiss the subject for the present, and see how we can get on here for a while longer, at least." And asking Julia to hand him the Bible, the preacher proceeded with the evening devotions, in which, with a thankful heart, he acknowledged the mercy and goodness of his heavenly Father in surrounding him with so many blessings, in giving him a family which was a solace to him in time of trouble. And committing his ways unto the Lord, he rose from his knees with a full assurance that all his steps would be ordered aright.

A few minutes were then spent in promiscuous conversation, though it was plain that one subject occupied for the time a more prominent place in their thoughts than any other.

Mrs. Watkins retired to her room, whither her husband and Julia soon followed; and John, as he was going out, asked if "he cared if Jac brought some hounds for him to raise. Jac said he could get some firstrate puppies from Mr. Whiston's."

Mr. Watkins smiled, as he replied: "Fixing up for the bears and deer, hey John? Well, tell him to bring them along; they'll do to chase the rabbits away from the garden, anyhow." And the boy went

to his bed to form gigantic schemes of hunting and farming in the "Far West." Whether the "visions of the night" partook of the complexion of his waking thoughts, we can not certainly say, but a sudden start as he was sinking to sleep, and the words "Towser," "buffalo," escaping from his lips, seemed to indicate that the scene of his dream was not laid about "Pine Farm."

CHAPTER XXI.—*The Progress of Events.*

Mr. Watkins did not delay to secure legal advice in a matter so important as one which involved nearly all he was worth. He accordingly left home the next morning for the Court House, and arriving there proceeded promptly to the office of a lawyer—a man of profound legal knowledge, and correct moral principles. The writ was submitted to his inspection, and at his request, Mr. Watkins gave a clear, straightforward statement of the whole case. When he had concluded, the lawyer frankly told him it was a gloomy prospect, and he was afraid Mr. Watkins would have to suffer for his kindness; "he had himself issued writs against Charlton for as much as he was probably worth, and had understood that others had also sued him. The revulsion in trade also had much depreciated the value of much of the property which Charlton had bought, and on the whole Mr. Watkins would be a loser to the full amount of his indorsement."

"Then," said the minister, "let me at once confess a judgment and have my property sold and pay it. I can not afford to pay interest and the costs in addition to the debt."

"That is honest and honorable, sir," replied the lawyer; "but as you have consulted me in the case, I must advise against the course you propose to adopt. There is nothing wrong, legally nor morally,

in availing onesself of the privilege which the law allows in such a case as this. Indeed it is absolutely necessary that sufficient time should be allowed to settle such matters. I, therefore, advise, if you can do so, to borrow the money from some judicious friend and settle the debt. This will give you an opportunity to sell your own property, and not let it go off, at half its value, under the sheriff's hammer."

"If I only knew who to go to," said the minister, musingly. "There is a great scarcity of money in the country, I think, and it is always a hard thing to get when one stands much in need of it—so at least I have been informed."

"Very true, Mr. Watkins; but the only way is to *try*. You may, perhaps, find it easier than you expect. If you can not do so within a month, come here again, and we may be able to devise some other plan which will answer the purpose."

With this understanding the minister left the office, and mounting his horse, proceeded on his homeward way.

During his ride, his mind was disturbed with unpleasant thoughts. It was pretty well reduced to a certainty that he should have to lose a considerable sum of money—to him, indeed, very large. It would seriously diminish his little property: his family was increasing in number and expensiveness. The mortification, too, of riding round the country trying to borrow money, was exceedingly humbling. If it was to buy property with, it would be a different matter, and nobody would think any thing of it—perhaps

several would be rather anxious to make the investment. But he wanted the money to save his property from being sacrificed, and this was altogether another affair.

As the lawyer said, though, the only way was to try—there was no crime in it, if it was mortifying; and thus ruminating he approached the house of a man whom he knew was in the habit of lending money. It was getting toward dinner time—he would stop and dine with him, and try his chances there—it would do for a beginning, anyhow; and riding up to the gate he alighted, and walked toward the house.

The man was sitting in the piazza reading over the sheriff's sales and other advertisements in the district newspaper, and though he received his visitor politely, there was not much of cordiality in his manner. He seemed to have some misgivings as to the object of his visit.

"Been up to the Court House, Mr. Watkins?" said he, after the usual salutations had passed.

"Yes, sir; and it's a jaunt which I never fancy much."

"Any news about there?"

"I heard nothing, sir; my visit was one of business, and having dispatched it, I left immediately."

"I'm told there's a good deal of sueing done this court. The deputy sheriff stopped here the other day, and he had a bundle of writs—several, I think, for your neighbor Charlton."

Here was an opportunity at once for opening the

matter of borrowing, and the minister determined to avail himself of it. It would be better than spending an hour or two beating the bush in uncertainty, and if the man refused he would feel better on the road than in his house, and he had time enough to reach home to a late dinner.

"That was the business which took me to the Court House, sir. I am security for Charlton for a tract of land, and my lawyer advises me to pay it and save the costs. Can you let me have the money, sir?"

"Well, ahem, I have n't got any by me, or very little. How much do you want?"

"Twelve hundred dollars, sir."

"O, I have n't got nigh that much; but maybe I might collect some at court. What security will you give?"

"A mortgage on my place, sir; I consider that ample security, but if it is not, I will give no other."

"My rule," replied the money-lender, "is two good names beside the principal, and ten per cent. interest. If you will give that, I will try and see what I can do. I may be able to raise it, but money is very scarce."

Mr. Watkins started to say, with habitual politeness, that he was "much obliged to him;" but recollecting that it would be hypocrisy to do so, he remarked that it was "not worth while to say any thing more on the subject."

"The day is passing," he continued, "and I must bid you good morning."

"Good morning, Mr. Watkins. Call whenever you are passing."

Mr. Watkins thanked him, and said he "would, perhaps, take some opportunity of doing so."

"My first experience in money borrowing," he muttered to himself, as he rode away; "would that it were the last."

A ride of an hour and half brought him to the Farm, and Mrs. Watkins having delayed dinner a little in expectation of his return, the family were just sitting down to the table as he rode up.

There was an illy concealed desire to know the result of his trip to the Court House, but the minister seemed not to be in a communicative mood. His countenance indicated fatigue; despondency of heart, too, might have chased away the smile with which he was accustomed to salute the household on his return from a journey. No questions were therefore asked, and having bathed his face and hands, he sat down in silence to the refreshments spread before them. The meal proceeded in silence, and at the conclusion the minister leaned back in his chair.

"Well, Mary, we shall have to pay that security debt I suppose. Charlton, I find, is hopelessly involved."

"All I have to say, then, is let us try and pay it, and go on the best we can. 'God will provide.'"

Who can estimate the worth of such a woman? No reflections upon her husband's imprudence, no reproachful croakings about coming distress. How different from one who is ever fretful, complaining,

and "does n't know what in the world we 're going to do," in whose eyes all the troubles and inconveniences of life assume the shapes of "Gorgons, Hydras, and chimeras dire." God's richest blessings be upon the hopeful, truthful, Christian wife.

Mr. Watkins laid before the family the plan proposed by the lawyer, at the same time expressing his doubt of its practicability.

"I know some," he continued, "who would cheerfully render the necessary assistance if they could, but unfortunately they are not the kind of people that can do much in that way."

"There is nothing like trying," replied Mrs. Watkins, "and if you can not succeed, the wide world is before us. Dark dispensations often come, doubtless, to work out designs which can not be known at the time."

"It would come hard to sell the Farm. How do you think you could stand it to see it go into the hands of strangers?"

"Stand it! Why, do like thousands of others who have been forced to the same necessity. I have no doubt but that we can get another place somewhere, and that is better than many who have gone before. that 'had no continuing city.'"

"Father, I think I should like to go to the West and teach school," said Julia. "Besides, we might settle near our friends that have gone there. I can hardly remember them, but would like very much to see them."

John said nothing, but he thought if hounds and

hard work would be of any avail, he would try and do his part.

From his inmost soul Mr. Watkins thanked the Giver of all Good for giving him such a family. What was the wealth of earth in comparison with it, and what were misfortunes to a man thus blessed? With a light heart he arose from the table and accompanied John to the field, the latter burning with desire to render some service to the family to whom he owed so much.

The minister did not delay in his exertions to raise money. He diligently canvassed the neighborhood where he thought there was any probability of getting it; he applied to all whom he could approach without a loss of self-respect, and at the end of the month reported himself at the lawyer's office.

"I can not get the money from any one individual, sir. I can make it up from several persons, but I will not give personal security, because I intend to keep clear of going security myself hereafter. So I have determined to sell out and move away."

"How did you expect to secure the lender?" asked the lawyer.

"By a mortgage on my farm, sir."

"Is it worth the money?'

"Yes, sir, I could have sold it several times for nearly double the amount; though to force it on the market now, I do n't know what it will bring."

"Very well, sir; just execute a paper for me, and I will advance the money."

"Yes, sir; but—I have determined to go, and while

I sincerely thank you for the kindness, I am compelled to decline it."

"But you do not intend to move at this season of the year, and it will take some time to wind up your business, I suppose."

"I would rather not go until the fall, but perhaps I can make arrangements to rent the place for the balance of the year. But if not, my neighbor, Jones, will give my family shelter until we can get off, and also let me have some land to plant."

"That all may be," replied the lawyer, "but it would be better to reserve the Farm and sell it yourself. You can then advertise it, and have time to make a better bargain."

Mr. Watkins thought a moment, then got up and walked across the floor.

"That certainly is true, sir," said he, stopping suddenly and addressing the lawyer, "and I could make a better crop on a place that I am accustomed to. Please draw up the paper."

The lawyer at once addressed himself to the business.

He was in the act of writing the words "This Indenture," when he turned to the minister.

"Excuse me, Mr. Watkins, for asking if this is all the money you owe, and if your property is free from incumbrances. My reason for asking is, that this is not my money which I advance you; it belongs to an estate, and by lending it I become your indorser, and I only take this mortgage as collateral security."

"I may owe a hundred dollars beside, sir; but not

more than I can pay on demand, and my property is subject to no claims that I am aware of."

"That is sufficient, sir."

The paper was drawn up, signed, sealed, and delivered; the money paid over, the debt settled, and high twelve o'clock found the minister on his way home.

"Lawyers have a bad name," he soliloquized, as he rode out of the old Court House town, "but my experience so far does not justify the imputation

CHAPTER XXII.—*Emigration.*

VARIOUS are the schemes adopted as a means of relief from trouble. The broken merchant, his money and his credit gone, his family, reduced from stylish opulence to humiliating poverty, seeks for solace in the exciting fumes of liquor. The poor, degraded wretch, inured to toil, does the same. The frail, confiding victim to seductive arts, drowns her shame in dissipated and abandoned revelry, or desperately puts an end to her existence. Again, the hard necessities of life, or the desire for ease and position, whispers in the ear of depravity that wily cunning or bold robbery opens the way to their attainment; while in a few instances stern virtue and determined resolution bends to honest effort in order to repair the ills of life.

To none but the Christian, though, comes the consoling reflection of a treasure in the heavens—bags which wax not old, where no moth nor rust can corrupt, and where no thieves can break through and steal. Yet while in the flesh, in common with others of like passions, the Christian must do something to make a living. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." And so even the Christian must work to feed, to clothe, to educate his children; and thus does he discharge the trust committed to him.

It is not surprising, then, that in the perplexity of his situation, Mr. Watkins should look round for

some avenue of escape, nor that in selecting it he should turn his face to the land of promise in the West.

Blessed America! where broad prairies and fertile woodlands, loftly mountains and green valleys invite the landless and houseless to independence, to happiness, to homes!

The oppressed subjects of priestcraft and kingcraft beyond the water, have heard the story of teeming plenty and boundless room, and by thousands and tens of thousands they have braved the terrors of the "vasty deep" to seek for bread, for freedom, and a home, under the ample folds of the "Star Spangled Banner;" and the cry is still they come. Hills and plains, lake and river, field and forest, have welcomed the strangers, and the invitation yet is, COME. Come one, come all. Come to freedom, come to abounding plenty. Come from the dominion of the despot's power. Come from the heavy burdens of exacting hierarchies—from "the Koran, tribute, or the sword," —from tithes, indulgences, and inquisitorial cruelty. Come and help to build up the People's Empire, where subjects are sovereigns, and rulers are servants, and under his own "vine and fig tree" each may sing the song of his Zion, and none may hinder his worship.

And as from afar the nations catch a glimpse of the symbol of civil and religious liberty, as it floats from the People's Temple and waves over the People's land; and as the jubilant shout of humanity, disenthralled from humanity's oppressive sway, rings in

their ears, the answer to the invitation comes back in vessels freighted with outcasts and the friendless. And as they crowd the shores of the Atlantic, the cry of "*Room—room*" is heard, and Westward, Ho! is the word.

What is the meaning of all this? Who knows but in the fullness of time these exiles may turn upon their oppressors? Who has so scanned the prophetic page as to say this will not be the means of casting down the thrones of prophetic vision? But let us "stand still and see the salvation of God."

Not only to the inhabitants of the old world, however, does emigration hold out the hand of relief. Our own people, their lands exhausted and their means reduced, turn with fond hope to the resources of the "Great West," and our friend, the minister, as already seen, had fully made up his mind to try his fortunes in that favored region. Having done this, all his arrangements were made with that view.

By the kindness of his lawyer friend, he was enabled to spend the year at home, and thus saved the trouble and expense of temporarily settling a new place. In planting his crop he had reference chiefly to what could be readily turned into cash, and cotton, therefore, bore a large proportion to other things cultivated—only enough provisions being secured to answer his purposes until he could get off. In order to increase as much as possible his slender means, the minister began early and attended diligently to his business. It was important that he should do this, for the sale of his place would but little more than

relieve him, perhaps, of his security debt. He must also have money to buy land with, and provisions for the first year, not to speak of traveling expenses. And thus, with a will, the whole household bent themselves to the task.

"But why," it may be asked, "did not his churches come to the preacher's relief?" Aye, why? The Green Mount church might have done so alone, and some of the members there would have willingly gone into the measure. But the large majority had by no means attained to such a point of liberality. And Mr. Watkins knew the people of his charge too well to expect much help from them. Moreover with his feelings of independence, it is doubtful whether he would have agreed to any thing of the kind, and so thought nothing about it.

An advertisement was put into the district paper, offering for sale a certain tract of land having such routes and boundaries as therein named. Said place could be bought on accommodating terms, and presented many inducements to one desiring to purchase.

This advertisement soon attracted several persons to look at the property, who were duly shown over the premises by the proprietor, and by John in his absence. But there was one man whom the family particularly wished to have buy the Farm, and that was good Deacon Jones. To many it would seem strange that people should care who might come into possession of a piece of property they desired to sell. "What difference does it make?" they ask. "So one gets a good price, it does not matter who is the

purchaser." Such people can not understand the sentiment of one who would rather receive a smaller sum from an approved purchaser, than a larger one from a person who can not appreciate the many little nameless charms which the preacher and his family had thrown around their cherished homestead.

Now Mr. Jones did not really need the addition to his landed estate—might not need it for some years. Yet the kind regard he had for his friends, and knowing how much it would soothe their regret at parting with the Farm, to know that it had not passed into the hands of strangers who had no sympathy with them, caused the deacon seriously to consider whether it would not be better for him to make the purchase. He tried to persuade himself and others that it was entirely a matter of interest with him, (doubtless it was so to some extent). "Who knows but he might get a bad neighbor, if the place was put up for sale. He had lived beside it too pleasantly for years, to be annoyed by a new-comer." And then William was nearly of age—he would probably soon get married, and would want a place. To be sure he did not have the money in hand to buy with, but the debt was in the hands of a guardian of minors, and the money would not be wanted for some time. On the whole he would ride over anyhow, and secure the refusal of the place—he was not obliged to buy if he did not wish to; so acting under the spur of these considerations, the worthy deacon saddled his horse and proceeded to the house of his friends.

It might have been all fancy, but one or two of the

neighbors that he met on the road, thought he appeared rather more in a hurry than usual. Somehow the old gentleman was not disposed to stop, according to custom, and "pass the health of the family" with those he met. Perhaps he was afraid somebody would buy the Farm before he could get there; or, perhaps, this was all imagination, though John would insist that he looked somehow suspiciously uneasy when he saw a strange man ride off from the gate as he himself rode up, and that he appeared a good deal relieved when informed that it was only a traveler, who had called to get some refreshment. At all events, it was observed that on his return home with the promise of refusal, he was much more deliberate in his movements—stopped to have a talk with at least two persons on the road, and to help a little darkey through the branch with a lot of unruly calves. But it was the old man's nature to help the needy, and it must be confessed that there was nothing remarkable in the circumstance.

CHAPTER XXIII.—*The Resignation.*

In leaving a place where one has long lived, there are many things which make the removal painful to a sensitive nature. The breaking up of old associations—the dissolution of ties, social and religious, however insignificant these may seem to the uninitiated, are serious things when the trial comes.

Among the severest trials to our worthy minister, was having to give up his churches, where for years he had preached the everlasting—the good news—of the provision, rich, free, and abundant, made for the recovery of fallen human nature. Many would think this separation a trifling affair when one had received so little compensation for the labor bestowed. But experience teaches that this makes not so much difference as would be supposed, as respects the pain of parting. Even people who have lived unhappily together, experience a degree of regret in separating, of which they supposed themselves incapable while there was no prospect of a disruption of their relations. Oh! the bitter compunction, the heartfelt sorrow for wrongs and injuries done to our fellows when the time and opportunity for making amends has passed! Many has been the man who would have given a kingdom to have a word unsaid, a deed undone—a little chance to confess a fault and ask forgiveness.

There were, to be sure, none of these things to add

to the bitterness of parting in the case of Mr. Watkins. True, he did feel that he had not been as faithful as he should have been—not as diligent as the nature of his work required, and he thought if it were to do over again he would try and do better. But he had injured no man—had "coveted no man's silver, nor gold, nor apparel." Yet he felt sad at the thought of leaving. His determination had become generally known throughout the country where he labored—at least everybody had heard of it; but it seemed an improbable sort of thing, and hardly any one thought he really would go. He had become a part and parcel of the country—a fixture which people scarcely imagine could be moved; and they thought some how or other, by hook or by crook, they could not tell how, something would turn up to prevent it. When, therefore, about midsummer he announced formally to the churches his fixed intention to go, and advised them to look out in time for another preacher, it caused no little sensation among them. "Then he really was going;" "well they were sorry for it—it would be hard to fill his place." Strange, though, that no effort was made in the only way which, under the circumstances, could be effectual. Some, truly, would have made almost any sacrifice to that end, but as usual in such cases the feeling prevailed chiefly among those who could do but little.

Of all the churches the hardest to give up was the one nearest his residence, where his membership was, and where his family worshiped, and where assembled the friends and neighbors he had known from child-

hood; and in tendering his resignation he felt called upon to give them some plain and affectionate advice; to impress upon them, if possible, the necessity of making an earnest effort with a view to a more frequent ministration of the Word. This he resolved to do in the presence of the whole congregation, feeling it was for the moral welfare of the whole community as well as for the church. Having, therefore, announced his resignation from the pulpit, he proceeded to speak as follows:

"I desire to say a few words, brethren and friends, which I trust will be, by the grace of God, for your present and future good; and I do so with the satisfaction of knowing that there can be no motives of selfishness imputed to me on account of it. A few months more and I shall be gone. Another will stand in my place to declare to you the unsearchable riches of Christ, and instruct you in the way that leads to heaven. This may be one that will be more faithful, and I hope more successful than your unworthy speaker, but I think not one who will feel a deeper interest in you; and it is from a desire that you may have one who can be faithful, and, by God's blessing, efficient in your service, that I take the liberty to speak as I do. It is highly necessary, then, to the prosperity of the church, that you should have a minister who can devote his whole time to the interests of this one church. Believe it when I tell you that preaching does not constitute the sum total of a minister's duties; and the plan adopted here and elsewhere, of having a preacher to come and preach once

a month, and then for him to know nothing more of the church for another month to come, is a serious error.

"A pastor should be with his people continually, and especially in times of affliction should he be present to comfort and counsel the sorrow-stricken. When your children and servants are dying, when you yourselves are dying, surely then, if ever, should there be one with you who can sympathize in distress, and from the Word of God bring consolation to the troubled.

"To have this state of things though, it will be indispensably necessary to make greater effort, and adopt a different arrangement for the minister's support than at present exists. You must feel that it is necessary to make sacrifices to attain this end.

"The most of you are poor, at least not what would be called rich, but you can do a great deal more than you have any idea of by a little effort and good management.

"First, give what you can in money, for a preacher needs money as well as other people; then select a situation within walking distance of the church (for many a poor preacher can not afford to keep horses enough to answer the requirements of a large family), build a comfortable house, have some fifteen or twenty acres of land attached, on which he can raise some provisions, and keep a few cows and pigs, and give him something to start with.

"Send the family such little articles of use as you may not particularly need; show that you feel an in-

terest in them; and thus doing, there will be no necessity for an outlay of much money, and the preacher who can not get along comfortably and be useful under such circumstances, must be the subject of afflicting dispensations, or lack the management in himself or family that is a necessary qualification for his office. To the former we must of course submit with humility, the latter can be remedied by a change of ministers. Let me affectionately advise you to try the experiment. Don't say you can't do it, but try, and God will help you. Begin now, at once, and in whatever way I can assist you I will cheerfully do it. At least begin about building a minister's house. It ought to be an invariable rule, whenever a meeting-house is built to have a parsonage beside it, or near it. Many a poor preacher might be thus induced to come to the service of the church, who, for want of such an arrangement, is compelled to decline a call; and if at any time you are so situated that your preacher has a house of his own and does not need the parsonage, it can be rented out, and the income go toward the support of the church. And so, my brethren, there will grow up a strong attachment between the church and the minister. They will feel that he is their minister, and he will feel that they are his people, and in days to come, when I am far away, you will thank me for the suggestion."

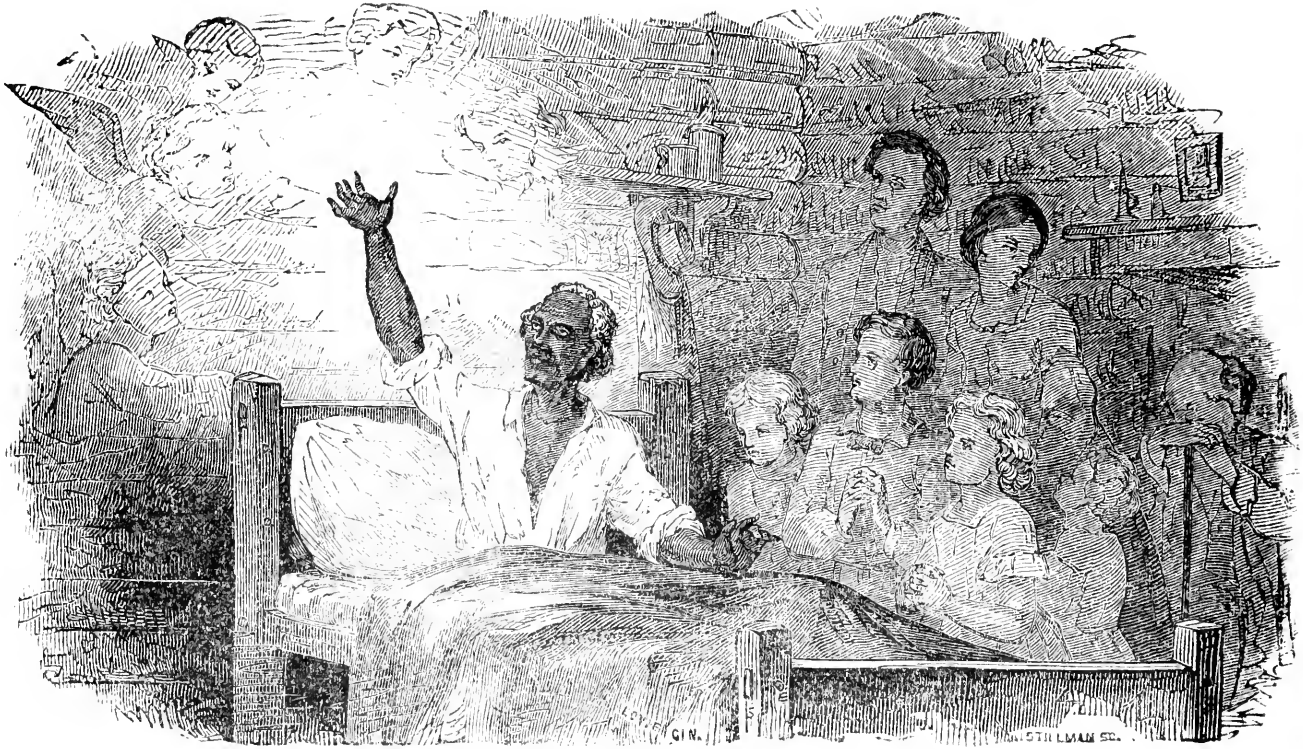
This address plainly told upon the audience, and with a feeling of sadness at the thought of parting with their esteemed pastor and friend, they testified their respect for his advice by appointing at once a

committee to carry into effect the proposed measure; and before Mr. Watkins took up his journey for the setting sun, he had the satisfaction of seeing the scheme in successful progress.

A preacher had been called, the ground selected, and the erection of the building was going on! The plan of weekly contributions had also been adopted, each agreeing to give as the Lord prospered him, and those having no steady income nor deposits, pledging themselves to pay as soon as their means allowed.

As may be supposed, the church at Rocky Spring did not fail to reap the reward of its doings.

Why will not others "go and do likewise."



CHAPTER XXIV.—*Daddy Cyrus goes Home.*

To estimate properly the attachment which a Southern household learns to entertain toward old family servants, one must experience the subsisting relation. People living a thousand miles away from, and unconnected with it, can not appreciate it. They may reason, and philosophize, and write books, but they know little about it. It is a sentiment which can only be rightly known, by being "put in connection" with the parties; otherwise, they can only look on, like the spectators at a psychological exhibition, without sympathizing with those within "the circle."

To the dishonor of some it must be confessed that they seem to be incapable of being "impressed," even when the circumstances are favorable, but such cases are rare, and to those having the nature, and trained in the school of the preacher and his family, totally impossible; and an incident occurred just before their removal which stretched the strings of their sensibilities to a degree of painful tension. This was the death of faithful old Cyrus.

This old man had been the counselor and friend of the minister's childhood, the assistant in his efforts of maturer years for the support of his family. The earliest openings of his children's intelligence were associated with his benevolent countenance and acts of kindness. Often had they hung round him at the kitchen fire, or in the quiet stillness of the summer's

evening, listening to his tales of moving accidents by flood and field, "in de low country;" and had been lulled to sleep by his pleasant voice, as he sung the spiritual songs which were to him an antepast of the music of the "happy land."

It was the earnest wish of Mr. Watkins to take all the members of his family, black and white, with him to his western home. Especially did he desire that old Cyrus should go, so that he might still have his society, and smooth his descending way to the vale of rest by little acts of kindness, which the old man knew so well how to esteem. But Providence had determined otherwise, and the faithful slave was destined to find a resting-place amid the scenes with which he had long been familiar.

To him, notwithstanding he participated sincerely in the desire to follow the fortunes of his master to a strange land, it was "no matter when, no matter where" he was called to his account. "He knew him in whom he had believed," and having long since committed himself to One who "cared for him," he had no apprehension as to the issue. "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day," and the light of a better day dawning, scattered the darkness which too often gathers about "the valley of the shadow of death."

"Daddy Cyrus, you look sick," remarked Julia, as the old man came from the field with his head bandaged with a handkerchief, and walking slowly to his house.

"Yes, honey; de old frame gettin mighty shacklin; he can't stan much now like he used to do."

"Do n't you want some medicine? You had better let me ask mother for some for you."

"I tank you, missy, if you will get old nigger one dose of ile. I tink say I must bin ketch cold." And Julia went to get the castor oil, while he made his way to his humble bed.

The medicine was duly administered, but did not seem to produce any sanative effect, and the next morning found the patient in a high fever, and the symptoms such altogether as to make Mr. Watkins suggest the propriety of calling in a physician. Cyrus rather expressed a doubt as to the necessity of the step, "hoping he would be better after awhile." Mr. Watkins did not urge the matter, but charged him not to neglect informing him if he got any worse, and turned away with a feeling of misgiving as to the nature of his illness.

"Pneumonia, I fear," he muttered to himself, "and if so, it will go hard with him."

Mrs. Watkins called to see him soon after, accompanied by the children, each of whom carried something for him to eat. Cyrus expressed his hearty thanks, but declined taking any thing at the time except the cup of smoking coffee which Julia carried on a tray. He, however, received the other articles from the little hands of Susan and Tommy, and putting them on the hearth, promised to "eat um bimeby."

All day they were bringing something, until the fireplace became a perfect larder, and as Mr. Wat-

kins and John left him at bedtime, it was with an assurance from him that he was "better," though they both thought he tried to imagine himself so, and told them this to allay their anxiety.

A day or two passed in this way, his master in the meantime having sent for a physician, but with no decided change.

"Well, Cyrus, how do you feel this morning," asked the minister.

"I don't know, Massa. De old man aint get long well. I most fraid you have for leave me behind when you go to de new country."

His master fully shared in the apprehension, but tried to cheer him up.

"But if it be the will of the Lord to take you," he continued, "I hope you are not afraid to go."

"Hi, massa; fraid of what? To go home? Aint de Lord say he neber leave nor forsake dem dat trust in him. I hear you read dat in de Bible at prayers. O no, sir, I bin sorry to leave you, but de old man no fraid bout dyin."

Mr. Watkins thought of Paul's exultant shout, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will give me at that day.

From this time the patient steadily declined, and it became necessary that he should have constant attendance. This was a task which Mrs. Watkins and the children cheerfully assumed during the day, while her husband and John Waters discharged the

duty at night, relieving each other at stated intervals.

How anxiously did they watch that wasting old frame, and yet, "as the outward man perished, the inward man was renewed day by day." The patient had but little to say. He was suffering from disease, and sickness with the physic administered, but whenever he spoke it was generally to give a word of admonition, or exhortation, or to console the family in view of his departure.

"Betty try to serve de Lord. He do you good when nobody else can help you. What I bin do now if I no hab de Savior to help me! Massa can't help me, de doctor can't cure me, but bless de Lord, I feel de everlastin arms hold me.

"Chillun! you musn't forgit old daddy. Tank de Lord, massa Johnny and little missy is done put on Christ. Don't cry honey, you all be comin along after awhile I trust. I will keep lookin for you, and when we get on de oder side of de river, we no part agin. O dat such a sinner as dis should be saved! But den agin such a Savior he have!"

The physician who had assiduously attended him, finally dismissed the case, saying it was useless to annoy him with remedies—that exhausted nature would hardly be able to recover.

This announcement caused no distress to Cyrus. He was ready whenever the summons might come, and "had nothing to do but to die."

As evening came on, it was apparent that the patient was sinking, and it was agreed that all would

sit up and see the end. The family were taking supper, having left him for a few minutes in charge of John.

The old man seemed to be in a gentle slumber; so gentle that John bent over him to see if he was still living. Cyrus appeared to understand the movement, as he opened his eyes and remarked, "de old man here yet."

John wished to say something to him, and this was a favorable opportunity, perhaps the last he would have.

"Daddy Cyrus, you knew my mother. Do you think you would know her in heaven?"

"I can't tell bout dat. If she look de same as when she was here—but de glorified saints—I don't know, massa Johnny. But somebody can tell me, I reckon."

The old man paused, and the boy's emotion was too great to speak for some moments.

"Why, massa Johnny. You want me for tell um something for you?"

"I was thinking of something of the kind; but perhaps it is not right. The Lord can tell his people all that they ought to know."

Mr. and Mrs. Watkins now returned with the children, and in silence they gathered around the dying old man. It was a scene which the minister wished to have impressed on the minds of the family, that they might never forget how an humble Christian can commit himself to his God.

Mr. Jones, who heard of the old man's situation,

rode over to see him, and finding no one in the house, came, guided by the light, to the cabin. Without speaking, he at once approached the bedside of the dying man, and stood for a minute in silence.

"Cyrus!" he at length said, in a low tone. "Do you know me, Cyrus?"

The old man gazed at him a moment. "Yes, Massa Jones, and I glad you come to see me before I go."

"HE is with you," said the deacon, the tears starting down his cheeks.

"Certain He is, Massa. Ain't He bin say He would never leave nor forsake us? You know de Lord ain't promise and den not do."

The worthy deacon could say no more, but turning to a stool by the fire, sat down overcome with emotion.

Slowly and heavily the minutes passed, and the sympathizing spectators longed to have the scene close.

"Massa Johnny! Massa Johnny!" said the dying man, suddenly starting up, "what's dat? Hush! . . . . . Be easy; ain't you see um? I tink one look like your ma. How bright! dey shine like de mornin' star, and look like dey have wing! Hush! . . . . . Dey comin' closer, and beckon me to come. May be it bin de angels come for me! Lord Jesus, blessed Savior, I come." . . . . . The old man fell back on the bed, a slight tremor shook his old mortality, and all was over.

"Has he gone?" asked the deacon.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," replied the preacher.

We read in the Gospel of a poor man who was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom. Who knows but that a happy group of heavenly messengers, unseen, unfelt by all but the dying saint, were gathered that night in that lowly cabin?"

CHAPTER XXV.—*Unexpected Relief.*

Mr. Watkins kept no secrets from his family in relation to his business affairs, and the reason was that he had their entire confidence. They sympathized with him in prosperity and in distress. His wife, in the darkest hour, by her amiable nature, cast the light of hope around his way, and smiled when weeping would have been more congenial to her feelings. His children were always happy, and disposed to lend what little assistance they could, while John Waters would have gone to the ends of the earth to serve him. Even Betty would have taken her children and gone with the family, though it might have involved a separation from her husband, if Mr. Watkins expressed a wish for her to do so. But rather than do this, her mistress would have preferred to be left herself, resting in some quiet corner of a country graveyard; and how to keep Joe and Betty together formed the subject of an earnest consultation around the fireside a few weeks before their removal.

"I am greatly distressed," observed the minister, "at the thought of having Joe and his family separated."

"Separated!" echoed his wife.

"Separated, father!" said Julia; "why, what will Joe do if Betty is carried away? And then he thinks so much of Pompey."

"Separated!" *thought* John; but he did not know

what to *say*, and, therefore, like a sensible boy, he said nothing; but he could not help thinking it would be a dreadful thing.

"Why you all seem as though the thought had not before occurred to you," said the preacher.

"I confess it never did to me," rejoined Mrs. Watkins; "neither does it now."

"Indeed! Have you received information of a legacy having been left us by any of our rich relations? Or has John, in his rambles over the Farm, found a gold mine? This, however, would not avail us much, I suppose, as the Farm has been in due form, 'granted, bargained, sold, and conveyed,' with all its 'rights, tenements, and privileges.'"

"Well, I suppose the same process can be gone through with in respect to Betty and her children."

"What! sell Betty! And what will you do for help?"

"I do not know. God will provide, I hope."

From the character of the man, the reader will hardly suppose that Mr. Watkins really had any serious thought of separating the servants, but this cheerful manifestation of self-denial on the part of his wife, made him feel that he possessed in her a treasure infinitely more valuable than all the slaves in America.

"I suppose, Mr. Watkins," timidly suggested John, "that the sale of the Farm will not enable you to buy Joe."

"No, John; that will only bring enough to settle that unfortunate security debt and buy a small place for us to settle on. The crop and the sale of such

articles as we can not carry with us, I hope will furnish us with the means of traveling, and buy provisions for the first year."

There was no reply to this, and the party remained some minutes in silent thought. A sudden "click" of the gate-latch arrested attention, and presently the sound of footsteps were heard coming into the piazza.

"Open the door, will you, John."

As the boy obeyed the direction, he was confronted by a stranger, who asked if "this was the residence of Mr. Watkins?"

"Yes, sir. Walk in, sir." And as the stranger stepped across the threshhold into the room, his appearance attracted the earnest attention of the group before the fireplace. His stature was tall and erect, and the lower part of his face was enveloped in evenly-trimmed black whiskers, while a moustache over the upper lip, together with a somewhat peculiar dress, gave him rather a military air. Mr. Watkins rose to receive him, and as he did so, the easy and polished address of the stranger betokened an intimacy with polite circles.

"I regret the necessity, sir, which forces me to claim your hospitality at an unseasonable hour; but my business is urgent, and I have ridden a long way to reach here."

"Then, sir," replied the courteous minister, "I hope the pleasure of giving you entertainment for the night, will compensate for the trifling inconvenience to which we may be subjected. You will allow us to

have some refreshment prepared for you," he continued, as Mrs. Watkins was rising for that purpose.

The gentleman was "grieved to put them to any trouble; but his wants must so far overcome his modesty as to allow him to say that a cup of coffee would be very grateful, yet he would not, by any means, put the lady to any inconvenience."

"Who can the man be?" asked Mrs. Watkins of her husband, as he stepped a moment into the back entry for a drink of water.

"I'm sure I don't know. He seems to be a well-informed gentleman; but it was strange that he did not mention his name."

"There seems to be something remarkable about his voice."

"Like your father's, isn't it?" interrupted her husband.

The supper was soon after placed on the table, and the stranger was very grateful for the fragrant cup of coffee which the lady passed to him.

The minister's wife was not possessed with a very large share of curiosity; but somehow there seemed to be a singular fascination about the stranger; that voice — what strange associations it brought up! But of course "it could not be," and she blushed like a girl as his eye caught hers in earnest gaze on his face.

"Did there not once live a family about here by the name of Wilton?" he asked.

"There did, sir," answered the minister; "and I happen to be pretty intimately connected with them

through this lady. Do you know any thing of them, sir?"

The question seemed rather to disconcert the stranger. He attempted to answer—hesitated, and as he raised the coffee to his mouth, the quick eye of the minister's wife detected a liquid brilliant just starting down his face.

"Brother William, is it you?" she exclaimed, rising to advance toward him—yet shrinking away from apprehension.

The gentleman replied by abruptly wheeling his chair from the table and receiving her in his arms.

Here now was a scene, but we drop the curtain before it as something too sacred for strangers' eyes to behold.

When next it rises we find the party all reseated, cheerfulness on every face, and questions and answers passing back and forth with rapid impatience. The small hours of the morning saw them still around the fire, and the "Day Star" was almost about to impart a ruddy tinge to the eastern horizon when Mr. Watkins and William Wilton retired to catch an hour or two of repose.

John Waters had fed the horses, milked the cows, and built a rousing fire in the parlor, by which he was seated, pouring over his Natural Philosophy, as Mr. Watkins entered rather later than usual.

"Well, John, I hope Joe will go with us to the West."

"Will he, indeed, sir? I am so glad," and the boy turned his face away to hide his feelings.

"I wish you would ride over to his master's and ask him to come and bring Joe with him. He has repeatedly said he wished I could buy him and carry him with his family. I would like to get him at once, as he would be very useful in helping us to wind up our matters."

John thought "he would not wait for breakfast if Mr. Watkins would let him go—he could eat with a better appetite after he had told Joe." But the minister advised him to wait; in the meantime he could saddle the horse and bring him round to the gate so as to start immediately after breakfast.

A half hour later, as the family were collected for morning prayers, it was with difficulty that the preacher could read the psalm, beginning, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

John Waters, on his return with Joe, was met in the yard by the stranger brother, who informed him of the good account he had heard of him. "I hope to be able," said he, "to do something for you in the West for the kindness you have shown to my brother-in-law and his family."

John looked at him in silent bewilderment. "Kindness to brother-in-law's family!" He rather thought the kindness was on the other side.

CHAPTER XXVI.—*Winding Up.*

To those only who have some experience in the business, is known the stir and bustle attendant on getting ready for a "move." The crop must be gathered, and if of cotton, must be ginned, packed, and sent to market. If the "movers" are going far away, all the "plunder" which can not be conveniently transported, must be turned into money or notes. Special attention must be given to the live stock, so as to have them in proper order,—fat and sleek, to invite bids more readily and bring a higher price.

The most convenient way of disposing of the surplus, is to have a sale, due notice of which is given some weeks before hand, enumerating the articles to be disposed of; and it involves a good deal of "turning round," to have everything properly arranged, that there may be no confusion on the day of sale.

As our friends were going several hundred miles away, and as the railroads offered facilities for traveling far more expeditious and less expensive than private conveyance, they determined to make a "clean sweep" of everything which could not be packed away in the trunks. So Mr. Watkins' advertisement presented an attractive bill, from the variety of articles offered; corn, fodder, horses, hogs, cattle, sheep, household and kitchen furniture, farming utensils, with many other articles "too tedious to mention,"

would offer inducement to all sorts of customers, and on the day of sale the crier found himself surrounded by a large and anxious crowd.

He announced to the company as usual the terms of sale; "all sums under ten dollars, *cash*—all over, a note payable in twelve months, with good security," thus inducing many a one to bid for more than ten dollars, to secure the credit privilege. Cash is generally scarce in the country, and it's better to have a long rope, if one is hung at the end of it. So at least many seem to think. These preliminaries gone through with, the work began.

The auctioneer was a witty fellow (all auctioneers are), and managed, in various ways, to keep up a spirited bidding to the close of the sale; and at the conclusion the minister had the satisfaction, on referring to the account sales, of learning that a considerable amount was entered on the book. The auctioneer then announced for him that it "was very desirable to have the settlement made at once and the goods taken away. Moreover it was Mr. Watkins' desire to trade off the notes, as he was going far away and it would be very inconvenient to return to collect the money. This, however, he did not wish to do without the consent of the parties. But the auctioneer did not think any one could object to the arrangement."

There was some demur to this, especially when it was known that the purchaser of the notes was to be the man with whom Mr. Watkins *intended* to dine on his return from the C. H. the preceding spring: this gentleman, as usual, not having "money with

him, but in hopes he could raise it." But all, or nearly all, finally agreed to the proposal—the chief difficulty being in getting the security to suit the note-shaver.

It was the minister's intention to remain a week after settling his affairs, to take his family on a farewell visit to the neighbors, and with that view was making arrangements with some purchasers for the use of a few articles until they were ready to leave; but in the midst of the conversation Deacon Jones came up, and learning the case, promptly entered a protest against the proceeding.

"This is now my place, sir, and I hereby issue a writ of ejectment against you, and give you until to-morrow evening to get your baggage to my house. I have a carriage and horses, such as they are, and you can have the use of them until we go to plowing next spring. Your board I shall charge you with, and expect you to pay it punctually when you get rich by preaching."

There was no resisting this summary process, and the minister had to "surrender," though he felt as if he would rather linger at the old homestead.

How sad he felt, as, for the last time, he gathered his family about the old hearthstone, and looked around upon the familiar household objects, now passed from his possession. Once "monarch of all he surveyed" from his arm-chair, he now looked upon nothing he could call his own except his books —these he resolved at all risks to take with him, and that evening he and John took them from the

shelves and packed them in boxes for the long journey.

The evening devotions for the last time under the the roof that had so long sheltered them! How sad, how trying to sensibilities so acute as belonged to the minister and his family! Rougher natures even, into which the sentimental but sparingly enters, know something about it. No wonder then that tears flowed thick and fast, as memory brought the recollection of joys and sorrows passed. But with resignation comes hope, and they rose from their knees with an assurance that "all things would work together for good."

The next day was spent by the family in delivering the various articles sold to the purchasers, their own movables having been already packed away in trunks ready for shipment. They had learned that useful lesson—one which saves a world of confusion and trouble—"a place for everything and everything in its place; a time for everything and everything in its time."

This had proved a harder day's work than any they had performed in a long time, and they were glad to find in the evening a resting-place in the hospitable dwelling of Deacon Jones.

Mrs. Watkins and the children retired early to bed, and were soon followed by the members of the deacon's family, except William, who, over the kitchen fire, entertained John Waters with wonderful accounts of bear and buffalo, and rich lands in the far West.

The minister and the deacon spent an hour in talking over matters connected with the church—

the new start taken in settling and supporting a preacher.

"By the way," remarked Mr. Watkins, "I was a little surprised at not seeing Squire Young at the sale. He usually attends such places I think."

"Have you seen him lately?" asked the deacon.

"No, I have not, nor heard much of him either except that he stays at home more than formerly."

"I have heard it talked around that he is in a strange way—walks about continually alone in his fields, and frequently stays out half the night. They say he appears to be wasting away, and in his sleep now and then mutters something about RESTITUTION. He must have a troubled conscience, if these things are true, but it's chiefly "negro news," which you know it won't do to repeat everywhere."

"Well, John told me the other day that it was said Young had something to do with the burning of his still-house, and that he had been seen lurking about Bates' store at night. I do not know where he got his information, and rather discouraged him from talking about it; but if it be true, it is to be feared he is meditating some mischief."

"I should not wonder if it were true, for I heard at your sale that Bates was selling out, intending to move away. He has very probably received a hint of Young's movements."

"I hope no harm will come to any one, but it will be a happy riddance to get clear of Bates. He has been a curse to the neighborhood."

"Yes, indeed; and I am glad we have got him out

of the church. But you must be tired, it is getting late I see," looking at the clock.

"Yes, I would like to lie down. I feel uncommonly fatigued.

Mr. Jones then taking up a candle, conducted his guest to his room door, and they separated for the night, to "seek rest in sleep."

CHAPTER XXVII.—*Westward Ho!*

THE week preceding their departure was an interesting one to our friends in receiving farewell visits from the neighbors. The good deacon's house was a thoroughfare for several days together. Young and old, white and black, came by day and by night to say "good-bye" and weep. Mr. Watkins continued to get out with his wife and see a few who by reason of infirmity could not call on them. But these parting scenes were getting too painful to bear, and the worthy minister began to wish himself on the road, and felt very much disposed to hurry up matters and be off. Everything was ready, and it remained only to drive round the carriage to the door to take them to the railroad at any moment. He therefore called round and intimated to Joe, who remained at the old place, not to be out of the way, but to be in readiness when the wagon came for him.

"Massa, you know what massa Johnny doin? He bin down in de hollow yonder eber since yesterday, bin peck rock for someting noder. Aint you hear him now?"

"Well, let us go and see what he is after," and throwing the bridle reins over a post, he and Joe walked to where John was working away with a hatchet on a rough piece of sandstone, while another of similar size and shape was lying beside it, bearing the marks of an iron instrument.

John appeared a little confused at being thus unexpectedly discovered, and Mr. Watkins was just going to ask him what he was after, when his eye fell on the letters J. M. W. rudely chiseled on the face of the stone. The tears started to his eyes as the truth flashed over his mind and he stood gazing at the work of the poor boy's affection.

"I hated to go away, Mr. Watkins, without putting something at mother's grave so I could know it. Maybe I'll be able to come back sometime and put a better one there."

The minister made no reply; what could he say? Even Joe could only murmur, as he drew his coat sleeve over his face, "de boy lub he mammy for true."

"What is the other stone for, John," the minister asked, after his feelings had a little subsided.

"That is for father, sir. William Jones has promised to help me to have that set up. I am trying to get them done so we can carry them up to-night. We are to take the ox cart and get Joe to help us."

"Why do you do it at night."

"Well, sir, I did n't care about anybody knowing it, and the moon will shine so we can see to get along very well."

Mr. Watkins did not waste words in commending his conduct, but desired him to be ready, as he expected to leave sooner than he had at first intended.

"I shall be ready at any hour of the day or night, sir."

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the

earth," came to the mind of the preacher as he walked away.

The minister's and the deacon's families were assembled together for the last night. The next morning the emigrants were to set out for the railroad. Several persons had offered assistance in getting them off, but Mr. Jones claimed this as his peculiar privilege.

They were just rising from the supper table, when "Hello" was heard at the gate.

Mr. Jones went out to answer the summons.

"Good evening, Mr. Jones; is Mr. Watkins here?"

"Yes, sir, he is here. Won't you get down and come in, Mr. Young?"

"No, sir; no, sir. Please ask him to come here a minute, and you come with him."

The deacon stepped back and called the preacher.

"Bring a light with you, Mr. Jones," said Young.

As the two approached the gate with a candle, the Squire took a couple of packages from his pocket.

"Here, Mr. Jones, take this mortgage. I have entered satisfaction on it. Both of you look at my signature, and when you go back in the house sign it as witnesses, and send it to Waters."

"Here, Mr. Watkins, is something for John for his attention to me when that devil tried to kill me. That 's all I want;" and his horse's hoofs were heard soon after clattering over a distant hill.

"*That 's something*," remarked the deacon, as they returned to the house; "but it is not *restitution* yet."

"No; and I fear his covetousness will never let

him come to it; though there's no telling what the goadings of conscience may do."

On opening the package, John found a few words of thanks and a $100 bill.

"Well, Mr. Watkins, I'll go over and stay with them at home to-night, but will try and be back early in the morning."

"Very well, John: it is right that you should."

"But here, Mr. Watkins, you had better take a part of this money. You may need it on the way."

"No, no, John. It is yours, and you can do with it as you think proper. I have enough to pay all our expenses on the road." And John went away to take leave of his father, and make one more effort for his salvation. * * * * *

"All ready, William?" asked the deacon of his son the next morning, as he and Mr. Watkins came out from breakfast.

"Yes, sir, the carriage is at the door, and the trunks strapped on. The wagon has gone to get Mr. Watkins' boxes of books, and the negroes from the Farm."

"Very well; you and John can go on over there as soon as you get breakfast; and you can go on to drive the carriage back from the railroad."

"Yes, sir; I told Tom to wait there for us."

There were no "Good-byes" *spoken* between the friends as the minister and his family entered the carriage. Tears and embraces, and silent pressures of the hand, said plainly enough "Good-bye;" and as he drove off from the gate, the minister could only turn and point his finger heavenward, and say, "Up

yonder. . . . . Well, we 'll stop and take one more look at the Farm, as it lies right in the way," said Mr. Watkins to his wife. And driving up they found the wagon all ready for a start.

Getting out of the carriage, the minister helped his wife and children to alight, and in silence they approached the house. How strange the echo of the empty rooms which answered to their footsteps! The bare floors, the naked walls, the gossamer dwellings of the spiders already forming in the corners of the ceiling. How strange! They felt, indeed,

> "Like one who treads alone,
> Some banquet hall deserted,"

and as the light of other days came stealing over their memories, they wept.

"Let us have one more prayer," said the preacher; and kneeling down on the cold floor, they committed themselves to the care of a covenant-keeping God.

They look out into the back yard. How familiar seemed the objects with which they had been so long associated!—the trees, the well, the garden, the old kitchen, the clothes-pole stretched between the garden paling and the smoke-house.

Again they come into the front piazza. The vine over the door seems to droop in sadness, and the flowers planted and watered by the hand now about to be withdrawn from them. Would any other attend them as that hand h d done? Would it protect them from the frost and he drought with such assiduous care?

Those fields, too, smiling in the morning sunshine. how much of comfort had they yielded to the friends now leaving them! Would not the children like to take a few nuts, and acorns, and pine masts as mementoes of the dark forest where they so often rambled?

"But this will not do, Mary; we must make sure of the train, and we have not much time to spare."

Again they get into the carriage; but where is Julia, and where is John? Ah, here they come running round through the woodyard.

"I hope you will excuse me, father, but I wished to plant a rosebush on Daddy Cyrus' grave."

"ALL READY!" and the horses buckled to the draught—the old worm fences seem to be running by them—the fields are passed—a canopy of pines overhangs their way, and an angle in the road shuts off the scene.

Extract from a letter to Deacon Jones twelve months after the removal:

"Waters is running a vessel between New Orleans and Havana. He requests me to write to you to have a brick wall built around his dear Jenny's grave, the money for which I enclose. Also, to say to his second wife, if living, to write to him at New Orleans. I did not know of his whereabouts until his letter came, nor that John had given him that $100. Moreover, that he had written a pledge to abstain from liquor, and deposited it under the stone which John had prepared to mark his last resting place.

"Ever truly, L. T. W."