The Salvage of Men

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Stories of Humanity
Touched by Divinity

By
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A world chaotic, formless, darkened, wild
Revolved in space, evolved no higher state;
This to achieve, and furnish earth's first child
Outer with intra forces must relate.
God's Spirit brooded o'er the seething mass,
Upforth leaped order, beauty, light and peace.
Now Man, God's greatest highest work, alas
With intellect unmeasured, doth increase
His perverse way which caused him first to fall;
The impress of the God almost effaced,
His majesty and strength is withered—small.
Can steps so wrongly walked e'er be retraced?
Divinity which darkness changed to light
Is still abroad transforming wrong to right.

W. F. P.

Preface

SOME years have passed since the reading world shuddered over Frankenstein—the creature which was supposed to be a scientist's greatest triumph in its perfect imitation of man and his bitterest defeat in that the immortal elixir had eluded his alchemy, and his creation remained soulless.

To deprive the Salvation Army of its Divine origin and mission, and divorce its social from its spiritual energies is to reduce it also to the level and danger of a Frankenstein. Bereft of the significance and power of religion, all this mighty machinery and growing influence becomes but a menace in the realm of social ethics; shorn of its soul its seemingly most secular operation miserably mocks the needs which knock at its gate. Only through the eye of its faith can its import to the sociology of to-day and to-morrow be adequately interpreted.

With this thought in mind the following pages have been written, suggesting the Army's

work in the United States wholly from a spiritual aspect. Its manifold agencies for the reformation, rehabilitation and regeneration of man are revealed here in the story of their products, for are not converts ever the most reliable demonstration as well as the most conclusive argument for any organization? Up-to-date figures regarding these results are continually offered for the public's perusal, but figures alone can never tell the whole story. We are of the opinion that the mathematical view of work which deals with the live woes and wants of humanity is a very cold and inadequate one. As we read the Gospel's narrative of the Master's ministry, we are impressed with the details given to the cases of individual converts and the summary way in which the blessing of the multitude is recorded. Christ never saw or saved by the thousand, and the hand which reaches and wins men to-day is that which goes out for the salvation of the unit. Undoubtedly it is this personal touch which has so largely stripped from the Army's institution the cold name of charity which deals with the erring in *crowds*, and crowned it as mercy which deals with them as *individuals*.

In widely-differing histories of men and women who through this medium have experienced the miraculous effect of the Divine Touch, its Social and Industrial, Field and Relief, Women's Rescue and Children's Orphanage, Prison and Open-air branches are disclosed; a composite picture which goes to show that all the Army's means point to one end—the redemption of the soul, which whether it is carried under broadcloth or homespun or a ragged apology for raiment these people persist in thinking equally valuable and worth saving. Upon this stage of real life, the more or less tragic experiences of the drunkard, the parasite, the criminal, the prostitute, the neglected child, the professional gambler, the wife-deserter, the would-be suicide, the betrayed, the prize-fighter and the college-bred are enacted in characteristic habiliments, until exchanged for the garments of righteousness.

As is inevitable with any work dealing with the peoples of this Union, a cosmopolitan strain runs through the narratives, some of these "living epistles" being drawn from the Scandinavian, Hebrew and Latin populations, as well as from proud descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers.

Above and through all, these sketches portray the irrefutable existence of Divinity abroad —that dynamic force which is as much extant in our world as ever to one who can read its signs, that force which alone is stronger than a man's besetting sin or bewildering circumstance, that force which is throughout the ages past and to come the first and last hope of wrecked humanity. This and this alone explains the otherwise unexplainable transformations described in these pages. It is the same Divine Energy at work, producing varied effects according to the differing character of its subjects. Thus under its power the self-centred miser becomes a spendthrift in the interests of others, the drunkard's destitution becomes sober prosperity, the ambitious student becomes a lowly Salvationist, the professional trickster becomes a tower of integrity, the prize-fighter becomes a man of peace, the criminal becomes a good citizen, the wife-deserter becomes a model of marital constancy, the toil-loathing prostitute becomes an industrious, self-respecting woman, the parasitic hobo becomes an example in honest work, on the brink of infanticide the betrayed shoulders the care of her little child,

the dethroned genius is reinstated and the neglected little savage is tamed into normal adolescence.

Again, these stories should give an emphatic and conclusive reply to the oft-repeated challenge, "Do such converts stand?" We believe that the work of to-day is best demonstrated by the existence of the work of yesterday, and surely such is the most trustworthy of all guarantees for the work of to-morrow. In the preparation of her material, the writer has steadfastly resisted the fascination of more recent cases, feeling that, remarkable as they are, the time is not yet ripe to give them voice. With the single exception of "To-morrow's Man," which is the story of a child, many years have set their seal to these spiritual revolutions, some of which date back to the quarter century mark.

It will be obvious that the identity of the heroes and heroines is not disclosed—to them the past is a closed book, opened only for the glory of the Divine Hand by whom life's history has been rewritten.

A. L. P.

Contents

I

THE INCORRIGIBLES

Appearing on the police blotter over two hundred times as "D. D."

"HA, ha, ha, ha!" the parrot's scream rang out. "There goes John and Clara, and they are both drunk. Ha, ha, ha!"

It is said that a parrot only repeats words which it has heard hundreds of times; therefore news thus circulated is usually common property. In this case what the parrot said the world knew.

Clara was the town's permanent humiliation, and her devoted spouse did nothing to diminish the notoriety. Other sinners of the community, it is to be feared, sank into undeserved insignificance, their misdeeds appearing as mere peccadillos by the side of such high-handed transgressions. The couple had long lost all sense of shame—they cared only for the estimation of each other, for sordid though it was, of

its kind theirs was and had remained a true love match. Their attachment to each other, both in and out of jail, became proverbial.

In the cup of their dissipation they had long drowned all social disparity, but those who noted Clara's delicately-formed hand and, when unembellished by profanity, her excellent English, conjectured a very different upbringing for her. In a neighbouring city she had indeed been educated at a select private school, and at this, the time of her degradation, her brothers were professional men; but it was pride and not shame which kept Clara silent regarding her relatives and antecedents.

The attraction of opposites probably accounted for this matrimonial alliance. In three weeks from the hour of first acquaintance the two were man and wife, John bringing his bride for her dowry a ten dollar pension and an insatiate appetite for drink. Up till her marriage Clara's only taste of liquor had been a sip from her father's wine glass, and the young husband little knew the thirst he awakened when, coming home on wash day to find Clara's fair hair hanging in moist curls around her exhausted face, he suggested:

"A drop of whiskey would help you through wash days, my girl."

The advice taken, that drop of whiskey did much more than help Clara through wash day. It helped her through her savings, through every instinct of birth and every barrier of breeding; it helped her out of her home, and out, far out, on the dreary way of a drunkard's degradation and destitution. In a few months after that first drink, Clara had caught up her husband on the downward road, passed him, and was soon dragging him after her into further depths, for whether for weal or woe neither would let the other out of sight.

On the police blotter their names broke all records, appearing over two hundred times with the same comment, "Drunk and Disorderly." To this degree of D. D. they were certainly entitled, for however reserved in their rare intervals of sobriety, one glass of whiskey loosened babel within them, and night and day were made hideously noisy by the rejoicingly naughty pair. The local press referred to Clara's lung power as "the champion howler," and one of her piercing yells in jail is said to have so unnerved a boatman passing on the river

that he almost wrecked his craft on the abutments of the bridge. Nor were her muscles far behind her lungs—not for nothing had she been parented by the spartan blend of Irish and Pennsylvania Dutch, and with her blood on fire with whiskey she was a tough handful to arrest. It was almost a civic event for one to be in jail without the other.

"I hear you have brought Clara in," would be the warden's comment. "Well, get ready for John—he'll not be long following."

Both of them many times deliberately broke the law, so that the other should not be incarcerated alone.

But when their crimes carried them further, the penitentiary was not so easy a problem, for here, unlike the city jail, their legal tie could not hold them together. Thirteen terms Clara served in such durance vile, and John eleven, and only once did they manage to outwit their jailors by a meeting. Clara was on some errand for the matron within the grounds of the institution, when she heard her name called from behind a wood-pile, and the next minute she was in John's arms. In the penitentiary every window has an eye as well as every wall an ear,

and the matron received Clara with a face of frozen horror and a mouth of steel.

"But, ma'am, he's my husband," explained the prisoner.

"That makes no difference," said the matron sternly. "You are a prisoner here, not a wife. Never let it happen again."

If one was in freedom the liberation of the other was an incentive to keep sober till the fine was paid which would reunite them. Both were well able to make good money when away from their curse, and the amount they paid in fines would have purchased one of the best blocks in town; but their love for toil was not unlike that of the tramp who said, "I'll never work while I have my health!" With our heroes it was rather, "I'll never work while I have whiskey and Clara"—or "John" as the case might be.

Once for four days the man not only slaved but starved to pay his wife's fine. To a job he had procured on the roads he carried each day an empty dinner pail, appeasing his hunger by unripe wayside fruit and the satisfying thought that it was for Clara's sake. He was proud indeed when he walked away from the peni-

tentiary with the object of his self-sacrifice on his arm, who exclaimed as soon as the last gate clicked behind them:

"Oh, John dear, they've worked me dreadfully hard, and it's awfully dry I am."

And what the fine had left of John's hard earnings soon brought them both again to intoxication, and again to jail!

But so long as he lives, John will always feel that he deserved one more jailing than he had, and that would have been a long sentence. Despite the unbroken front of good fellowship which the two maintained for the world's eye, the wretched hovel for which they travestied the name of home was the scene of many brutal combats. When whiskey drove from their hearts all idols but itself, Clara did her share of the fighting, but being usually the more intoxicated as well as the less quarrelsome she commonly came in for the worse beating. One night the black wing of murder brushed their door—its trace is still left upon the floor, for though Clara tried many times to scrub the evidence away she never succeeded in effacing it. "They say you cannot get human blood out of wood," she explains. It was her own blood.

This particular altercation began over a bottle of whiskey—the last in the house. As usual they had shared it together—but John, already "well-soused," declared she had drunk it all, and flew at her in fury. Clara fought like an animal with teeth and nails, but John broke the bottle on her head, and with the drunken yell, "I've settled yer!" threw himself on the wretched bed and slept. When he woke she had dragged herself beside him, bruised and battered almost beyond recognition, and covered with blood.

"Told you the whiskey would do for you some time, old girl," he said with a maudlin attempt at endearment.

"It wasn't the whiskey made this hole in my head, John," she answered. "It was you."

The shock sobered him at once, and he burst into tears.

"Oh, Clara," he cried, "if I done that to you, and I guess I did, you ought to send me to State prison. For five cents I'd give myself up."

But woman-like she hid his crime, though erysipelas followed the wound and she nearly died. Two years afterwards she pulled a piece

of the bottle's glass out of her head, and the deep scars she will never lose.

Those twenty-two drunken years were not without attempts to straighten up, but each was doomed to dismal and swift failure. Local philanthropists had yearned and toiled over them until made to feel that words were waste breath upon these incorrigibles. A generous clergyman sought in his own and original way to remove the town's standing reproach. He interviewed John and Clara, and promised to buy them a house and lot if they would keep from whiskey six months. But to keep from whiskey six days would have been a superhuman task for them at this time, and the good man's great opportunity dropped out of sight, and left scarcely a ripple upon their drunken memories. It was the general opinion that they were hopelessly past all impression.

Once both had a spasmodic inclination to "live like folks" and John bought forty-five yards of "factory," which Clara's quick fingers soon made up into sheets and pillow-cases. She surveyed her new possessions with pride and then said:

"Oh, John, you don't know how badly I feel.

If you don't mind, I'll take a pair of sheets and two pillow-cases, and get a bottle of whiskey. That will be just two drinks apiece and then we'll quit."

Of course John acquiesced. The sheets were pawned, the whiskey drunk, and Clara said:

"Oh, John, I don't feel any better than before I drank that mouthful. If you don't mind, I'll take another pair and get us another drink."

John growled that he did not care—he could lie on the bare mattress as well as she could.

Before night fell they had drunk up every one of the forty-five yards of "factory"!

Without any exception everything that the couple owned was pledged for whiskey—Clara's wedding ring early sharing this fate. One small inexpensive treasure the poor creature pawned and redeemed over and over again—a little apron given her by a lady of the town one Christmas. Something in the whiteness and neatness of the trifle appealed to Clara and she never lost track of it.

"I've raised more dollars than I can count on that apron," she says, "but I always managed somehow to redeem it after a spree."

Twice during that long night of dissipation did Clara emerge for a few short weeks into the sanity of her womanhood. That was when maternity came to her, and with the birth of each babe she vowed she would have done with drink forever. But what vitality could such offspring know—their feeble flames of existence soon flickered out, and the mother abandoned herself to such comfort as could be found in her curse.

Thus the passing of the years pressed them lower and lower in the social scale until they were shunned and scorned by all except each other. In looks and living they became less and less human. The sacred temple of their bodies was more and more defaced without and within. For years they never bathed, while whiskey devoured their vitals. When it was unprocurable they drank plain alcohol. They ate little or nothing; a box of crackers would keep the two in food three weeks; all and every craving was satiated in drink.

Then the doom of the inebriate fell upon the man, and for days he writhed in a delirium of torment, Clara cowering over him in horror while she fortified her own courage by more

and yet more whiskey. When at last he emerged from the snaky coil, he turned a shaken face to his wife and gasped :

" Clara, I've got to finish with drink or it'll finish me. You'll have to get somebody else to drink with you."

" Sure I'll give it up too, honey," she assented, half drunk at the time. " I'll promise anything you like, if you will go with me somewhere to-night."

John swore he would follow her to perdition, and Clara confided to him her plan for their latest spree.

That night the chief of police met the couple going up-town arm in arm, John still shaky after his sickness, Clara with just enough on board to cause trouble.

" Where are you off to ? " said the kindly official, who had more than once himself taken them home rather than arrest them.

" We're going up to see the new Army that's come to town," said Clara.

" You'll get run in if you go up there," said the chief. Clara had only once been inside of a church in thirty years, and then had had to be forcibly removed by a policeman.

"Well," said Clara, "I guess if I stay out I'll get run in just the same, so I may as well go anyway."

But to her own astonishment she sat through the meeting almost in silence. She listened to the simple heartfelt words and beautiful singing, and something new and strange began to work away at something else in her breast which she had long forgotten she owned. Yet her awakened conscience did not prevent her wrath rising as she saw John lay a silver piece in the collection plate.

"You old fool," she growled in a very audible whisper, "throwing away our last quarter when we needed it for whiskey! Oh, if I only had you outside ——!"

"You'd get run in then for sure, Clara," returned John smiling in his security.

But Clara had been run in for the last time.

A miracle has been described as something beyond human power and we do not hesitate to designate as supernatural the events of that week. For twenty-two years this woman had been the slave of alcoholism in its worst form, until mentally and physically she was saturated with it, and those who had exhausted every

means of reformation upon her mercifully declared her curse to have become an incurable disease. Any newly arrived philanthropists who essayed an interest in her had been warned not to squander such upon one who the whole town had regarded for many years as absolutely hopeless.

Imagine this outcast suddenly rising from the moral mire which for years had obliterated her womanhood, imagine her throwing the last whiskey bottle out of her door and never bringing another into it, imagine her setting about with her husband to rebuild the home which had been wrecked almost from its establishment and you will have some idea of the transformation which astonished and finally convinced an incredulous community.

"Just one of Clara's whims," they said at first, but as the whim outlived days into weeks, and passed from months into years, the wonder and reality of the change has been universally acknowledged.

To minds out of tune with the Infinite, Clara's conversion will forever remain a matter of mystery; they are, however, bound to admit that something greater than they or she or her

curse must have kept it a substantial fact for eighteen years.

"God got hold of me, and kept hold of me," is Clara's own simple definition. "I had often wanted to straighten up, though nobody would have given me credit for it, but there seemed no help or hope for me till the Army came. Their love for me and interest in me made me feel God cared, and when I took my poor whiskey-soaked heart to His feet, bless Him, I found that He did."

John's religious experience has not been quite the radiant one of his wife, but like her he has never touched a drop of liquor since the Army came to town. Once after a bad accident when many stitches had to be taken in a terrible scalp wound the doctor said, "We must give him a stimulant to keep up the heart action," but John overheard and with a vehemence which threatened to unpick all the doctor's sewing, cried:

"No, you don't. I remember the rotten hole I was dug out of—and nobody shall throw me back into it again."

Sitting by her fireside in the clean and cozy little homestead upon which every cent of pur-

chase money has long been paid, Clara told me the story of her life. She has told it many times upon the platform, her sweet face framed in its Army bonnet.

"Folks wonder how I can tell of those dreadful years," she says, "and indeed it's not easy. But while it may help somebody, seems like I must go on telling it!"

And the world said—in the voice of one of Clara's prominent co-citizens:

"You thank us for our sympathy, but it is we who ought to thank you for what you have done for our town and our townsfolk. The Army which can show a standing case like Clara's is a good deal more than ornamental; and if it had only changed that one life, all its years in our midst would have been more than worth while."

II

TO-MORROW'S MAN

Hungry as the prairie wolf is hungry, cold as the mongrel of the street is cold

THE adult who dismisses the unwelcome problem and escapes the unwelcome responsibility with the excuse, "It is only a child," makes of himself a spectacle too foolish for censure. Happily to ignore the imperial importance of nature's unfinished handiwork is going out of fashion; the world is waking out of its somnolent indifference to this vitality of the moment, realizing that it can no longer as patriot, parent or preacher thrust out of its consideration hands which hold every destiny of future history. Preparation of the people of to-morrow cannot be safely left to take care of itself.

Therefore the eye which looks beyond the confines of his own contemporary, be it eye of sociologist, scientist or saint, sees in any child widely divergent possibilities of good or evil,

and in any effort, individual or organized, which aims to protect and develop the former, the worthiest work in the world.

Nat was nobody's boy. His parentage was decidedly conjectural; he supposed he had had a mother some time, but he had his doubts on the point—fathers were luxuries altogether out of his class and consideration. Unlike the usual chronology of childhood which dates its remembrance by domestic epochs assisted by the parental memory, Nat divided his history simply and economically into three periods which backwards read as follows: the time when he couldn't jump a freight; the time when he couldn't "cadge a weed"; the time when somebody kicked him and he couldn't kick back. Beyond this last there was space, into the mystery of which Nat never bothered his imagination to enter. One thing is certain: he had never had a home, and his vocabulary held as little synonym for the word as that of a native Patagonian.

To say that he was lonely or unhappy would be overstating the case. The qualities which create sensibility to the reverse of these conditions were entirely undeveloped. His joys

and sorrows were bounded by the satisfaction or thwarting of his appetites as a young animal. Questions of right or wrong conduct held no meaning for him, since conscience was wholly negative. He bid fair to grow up into a perfect specimen of that new-found species—the unmoral.

Paradoxically his most human aspect was his devilishness. To hide round the corner watching a pedestrian fall over his dropped banana skin, to outwit the cunning of a "cop" in a hazardous game of hide-and-seek, to badger and bait a drunken man to the danger point, to jeopardize his own life and others laying miniature hurdles on the track of the locomotive—these things were to Nat the spice of life.

Of course sometimes he was hungry and sometimes cold—hungry as the prairie wolf is hungry—cold as the mongrel of the street is cold. But vagrancy has its own philosophic outlook, and even at ten years old Nat had learned to act the part of a small stoic when an empty stomach gnawed, and not to squeal over a frozen foot—unless somebody in a decent coat was passing, when squealing was both advisable and profitable.

There were other much less desirable things which the young gamin learned—his schoolroom the box cars in which he roosted, his tutors the professional tramps who shared the "doss"—things in which his aptitude caused his instructors a fiendish glee. They agreed that young Nat was going to be a "live one all right." He was also qualifying for early graduation as a criminal, but of this the boy did not know and the men did not care.

At well-dressed, well-fed children whom he passed on the street Nat stared curiously. They might have been Martians, they seemed so remote. But one day a connecting link reached out and united the boy's world of utter destitution and friendlessness with a world of undreamed-of plenty.

The connecting link's discovery of the small waif is not material to our story. Suffice it to say that one wonderful day Nat found himself in a bright warm room at the top of a tall city building, looking into the kindest eyes he had ever seen.

"Hully gee," he ejaculated, "but you make a fellow feel warm right down to his trotters."

The owner of the kind eyes smiled—a smile

with a tear in it. She thought of her own bairns at home surrounded from their first breath with the warmth of love, and the hand that she laid on Nat's head was a mother's hand. Never having known a mother Nat did not know what it was in her touch that thrilled him.

"Gee," he said again, "but you does make a fellow feel good."

The lady caught at the word.

"Would you like to be a good boy, Nat," she asked, "and live at our home in the country where Jesus lives and lots of good boys and girls?" Then seeing his blank face she explained, "A good boy is honest and clean and does not tell lies."

"Oh, that's all right, missus," cunningly catching at the last word. "I guess I'm good enough —I only tells whoppers when I has to."

The Army's guardian for waifs and strays has not had experience with half a dozen children of her own and hundreds of other people's for nothing. She saw that surroundings would preach much quicker and better than any verbal sermon, and without any more embarrassing questions as to his morals Nat was despatched

to a country Home. We use the capital letter because others shared it with him, but it was a "really truly" home all the same.

The ten-year-old tough was transported to fairy-land—of which by the way he had never even heard. Those 120 acres of grass and wood teemed with delightful mystery. The market garden was a field of magic and the carpenter's shop a conjurer's box. Not quite so enchanting seemed the schoolroom with its discipline, when the unrestrained atom of vagrancy at cost of some struggle to himself and much patience to his teacher learned to keep his body unusually still and his mind unusually active. But again the philosophy of his vagabond apprenticeship consoled him with the thought that everything must have some drawback, and the compensations were many—a bed, softer and whiter than he had imagined anything so terrestrial could be made, and food of the finest three times a day—the bell which called to it just corresponding to the call of something within Nat's anatomy to which he had never before been able to give regular attention.

"They seem to guess when a fellow wants grub," he confided.

But for his years he was old in many sorts of wickedness, and his Army guardians were warned that he might prove an awkward problem to manage among that crowd of young people.

One day there was a commotion at his table in the dining-room, and before the officer in attendance could reach the corner, Nat had one opponent down and another tottering, boys older and heavier but no match for the little tough's furious rush. The two explained with great volubility they "hadn't said nothin' to nobody"; they had only "kicked" over so much rice pudding.

Nat was already back in his place and busy with his dinner, but halted his heavily-laden spoon on one of its journeys to say in disgust:

"If yer don't get a licking it ain't 'cause you deserve none. Youse fellows don't know when you has it good. You had ought to have slept in a box car and root round for yer scraps—then you'd think this was some eats."

And there are those who say that a child has no sense of appreciation!

When the motherly officer who had undertaken his case visited the home, she scarcely

recognized the plump, rosy cheeked youngster for the scrawny little street urchin whom she had interviewed in her office. She asked:

"Are you lonely here, Nat?"

"I guess *not*," with emphasis. "How could a fellow be lonely with all them flowers and trees and chickens—and"—a wave of the arm indicating the entire estate—"and all of everything?"

And what about the small soul?—for the religion of the Salvation Army is ubiquitous in its work for all ages as well as all classes. When Nat arrived he early displayed his heathendom, and incidentally his retentive memory, by remarking to one of the staff:

"I reckon I've sized most of you up, but I ain't set eyes on that Man yet."

"What man?" asked the officer.

"Why, that fellow called Jesus," answered the child. "The lady told me He hung out here."

Then, very simply and lovingly, the story of the Good Shepherd was told for the first time to this most ignorant lamb, and as time went on the quick little brain began to understand that Some One beyond the sky watched both

bad boys and good, and that it made a lot of difference to Him and to oneself which one might be. But an ineffaceable object lesson of human love won Nat's heart for his Heavenly Father.

One day Nat was taken sick. His head ached, his hands burned, and his throat hurt so much that he could not eat his supper, which hurt him in his feelings. The doctor was called, and his one word, "Diphtheria," made the matron turn pale as she thought of her big little brood. Nat's fever was already high and the public hospital some distance.

"Couldn't I take care of him in our own sick ward?" she asked.

The doctor looked relieved yet anxious.

"You can if you are willing to be shut away with the boy for two months."

So it happened that when Nat awoke out of what had seemed a very long and very bad dream he found the quiet, gentle face bending over him. Being sick was rather jolly, he thought, for he had no idea how seriously ill he had been, and enjoyed being petted and amused as every boy does, and as every boy pretends he does not. But one day his nurse

frowned—on his generosity it was too. While her back was turned he had thrown the window open and shouting to some boys below to hold their caps and catch, he was about to throw out to them a handful of his pictures and games. She explained that he must not do this, because he had been very sick and that anything that he had touched might make other boys sick too. Annoyance, wonder and horror succeeded each other in Nat's face.

"But, nurse, you've been shut up with me all the time, and touched me ever so often. You might have got sick yourself."

Taking the weak, terribly light frame in her arms she told him that God had taken care of her—and that anyway she had been quite willing to run the risk to take care of Nat. She concluded:

"You must thank Him for making you well, dear boy, and for keeping me from getting sick. God has been so good to you. Don't you want to love and live for Him?"

Nat's reply was characteristic.

"You bet!" he said. "If He's half as good as you He'll do."

There was no blasphemy behind the sincere if

crude confession of faith, as the new conscience and high standard of right and wrong with which Nat came forth from his sick room demonstrated. And because they are what they are, his Salvationist guardians pin as much faith to his love for prayer as to his aptitude in the schoolroom and market-garden in their hopes for this man of to-morrow.

III

A SON OF ABRAHAM

A Jew either works others, or is himself worked—to the death

"JEWISH dog, take that!"

A heavy stone thrown with the force of hatred emphasized the words, and a curse which lost none of its horror, because hurled by a child against a child.

One against many, the little Hebrew stood at bay, his dark face purple with rage, his small hands clenched, while his tongue spat venom at his tormentors who from their ambush among the waving wheat mocked him in safety. With his blood's ascendant trait, Ezra was not so much crushed by the cruelty as stung by the cunning which outwitted him. Emboldened by his impotence to retaliate, the hidden cowards renewed their fire; many missiles missed their mark, but a huge brick from the hand of a bully found the boy's forehead, and with a savage yell he fell unconscious to the

ground. Boy's or man's, the hand which unseen fells another is rarely brave enough to discover what damage it has wrought, and when stunned and sore Ezra struggled to his feet, he was alone.

Half blinded with blood and rage, he threw himself into the serenity of his mother's room, and finding the healing haven of her breast gasped out in sobbing incoherence the story of his wrongs.

Little did she know that her face of swarthy beauty held all the brooding significance of a Madonna's, as she bent over her bruised firstborn, bathing, bandaging, and caressing him until hysterical sobs died away in shuddering sighs, and he lay in her arms spent but quiet "as one whom his mother comforteth."

But when the quick boyish brain came into its own again with the vehement question, "Why should these things be done to us?" the pride of her blood which untainted ran back to the best of Judah drove all gentleness from her voice and face, and in words harsh as a whip lash she told him the story of the Impostor, whose clever deception had deceived a world, and caused all the wrongs which had

befallen the chosen people of Jehovah. It was, she said, in the name of this Man Jesus that these Christian boys laid wait for him in the wheat fields, and flung the brick which might have killed him.

"Then," exclaimed the child jumping from her arms and stamping his foot, "this Man Jesus is my Enemy, and I hate Him forever and forever!"

The mother scarcely caught the vehement words, nor noticed the immediate fruit of the seed she had sown. Already the anger had faded from her face, replaced by the mystic calm which only a daughter of Miriam's ever wears, and her eyes shone with prophetic exaltation as she murmured:

"But such persecution is not eternal, my son. There comes a day when the horn of Judah shall again be exalted, and the way of the ungodly shall be lost in confusion. Patience, my Ezra—it will be all right for thee and thine when the Messiah comes."

The boy gazed with awe upon her mood of transfiguration, but outside the door his puny fists again clenched, his teeth ground like an animal's and he hissed to himself:

"He is my Enemy, and I'll hate Him forever."

It was not the first time his school fellows had waylaid him in the treacherous wheat, not the first time his body had borne marks of their vindictiveness, and the molten anger of that childish vow hardened year by year into a steeled hatred towards the Christians' Christ.

Yet, cradled as he had been in its most rigorous orthodoxy, Judaism did not retain a strong hold upon Ezra's heart—the livest phase of his religion was his hatred of Gentiles. Sometimes from her place in the women's gallery in the synagogue the mother looked down with troubled eyes upon the stern frown of her son. Little did she imagine the fires of vengeance to which she had put the torch years since in his boyish heart. It only seemed to her as if of the mighty economy of the Mosaic Law he had ears only for the curses of Ebal and no hearing for the blessings of Gerizim.

Upon the Day of Atonement a youth of seventeen turned with contemptuous steps from the temple of his fathers. He knew something of the crooked lives which spent three hundred and sixty-four days in sin, and then squared

matters with the Judge of the Universe by one day's fasting and confession.

"Jehovah lets His accounts run too long," sneered Ezra, and from that hour his chosen god was that other Hebrew divinity—gold.

Twelve months later, the birds of prey which haunt the docking of immigrants flapped their wings vainly against the self-sufficiency of the young Austrian whose innate distrust of all men made it hard to win his acquaintance. Ezra's one credential was a letter of introduction to a questionable female member of New York society, his entire linguistic equipment the mastery of several European tongues which did not include one word of English, and his sole wealth a ten dollar gold piece sewn for safety into his vest pocket. It was characteristic of the young man that it was eight months later before he pulled out the stitches of his bank!

Any student of the Hebrew race is struck by the significant fact that a Jew either works others or is himself worked to the death. Ezra soon made personal and painful experience with the sweating system, though his apprenticeship was not served over coats and trousers.

"He's a greeny and a Sheeny." The proprietor of the gambling house was proud of his little joke. "We'll get our money's worth out of *him!*"

They did. Ezra's hours were from six in the morning till midnight with occasional overtime; for this he received the proprietor's munificence of ten dollars a month with board thrown in, more often at him. But one must rise earlier than six in the morning to get ahead of a son of Abraham. He also was "getting his money's worth"—getting it without spending any. From the men after whom he swept and dusted he absorbed the first principles of professional gambling; from the newspapers they left unheeded for the cards he picked up the language which would enable him to ply their trade with a velocity which astonished his associates, and reversed the proprietor's designation to "That Sheeny's no greeny, you bet!"

When quitting time came, he walked out with his entire wages unspent in his pocket, nearly $100. The weight of his fortune was sobering on Ezra's spirits; he felt himself a man of means at last. His hand was continually

pressed to his left breast as if in pain, an involuntary action borne of an insatiable desire to feel the pleasing crackle of the paper money concealed there. Yet the occasion was one worthy of celebration, and Ezra made up his mind to be reckless. The brilliant store windows beckoned to him alluringly, ice-cream parlours and show booths flaunted their attractions in his face, while saloons and dance-halls were not without their fascinations. At last he stopped at a street corner, and not without reluctance parted with one of his crisp ten dollar bills, receiving in exchange nine dollars and ninety-eight cents. Ezra's celebration had been two cents for apples!

But in his objection to money-spending Ezra more than all hated to pay it out for religion. Only once did he hesitate upon the steps of a synagogue. It was again the Day of Atonement, and old associations and early training, outliving the infidelity of his later years, made him seek a Jewish house of worship. It was a fashionable synagogue on a fashionable street, and a uniformed official halted Ezra upon the threshold saying:

"Tickets, please."

With a disgusted curse the young man turned on his heel.

"Guess they make a fellow pay even for his religion here," he growled. "Then I don't want it."

He never entered a synagogue again.

Seven years later, the Pacific rollers, rushing up through the Golden Gate to break in noisy chorus upon the beach, played around the quiet feet of a solitary figure reclining as if in reverie upon the Cliff House strand. The waves which have hid so many mysteries and washed out so many problems left him undisturbed and unchallenged. Not so visitors to the famous resort who looked with curiosity at the quiet figure so often to be found upon the sand. Sometimes he would stretch himself to his full height and removing coat and cap throw his shoulders back to the breeze, inhaling the ozone with which it was laden.

"There stands a sensible man!" exclaimed a tourist. "A true lover of nature, I am sure. See how he bares his head to the ocean—letting Neptune blow all the cobwebs from his brain."

"Perhaps there are some men who would prefer he let some cobwebs remain in his

brain," was the reply of the better informed. "That man may be a lover of Nature but he is a foe to human nature. He is a professional gambler, and hell help the man who falls into his clutches."

It was indeed a professional gambler—it was Ezra. With assiduous application he had mastered every ruse and trick of his trade, and with the cunning of his species resolved to outdo the best by holding every faculty subservient to his game. A regular visit to the Cliff House where he appeared to commune with Nature was his systematic preparation for his profession. Every Friday he left the city for the seaside, spending the time in the open, breathing in the strong air, eating little, drinking nothing, sleeping much and letting his mind lie absolutely fallow. Then late Saturday he returned to town, going straight to the gambling room where his victims were already played out physically, and many of them befuddled by drink. His mind was clear, his time was come. Once more it was a case of "the hour and the man." Because he was as cool as he was keen, and as steady as he was shrewd, Ezra pocketed many a man's fortune—

with special satisfaction when it was from a Gentile wallet, for the old old wound opened by that brick in the wheat field had never wholly healed.

Ezra saw the weak joints in other men's armour and felt the security of his own. He saw how soon great winnings were lost when men gave the rein to any controlling appetite, and he made up his mind to focus all his powers. The dissipations of other men, however, were little temptation to him—gambling was his one passion and it became all-absorbing. He ate, drank, slept, dressed, breathed to play —and win.

One Saturday, having an engagement for the evening, he started earlier than usual; night came but he did not move. Sunday dawned and passed. It was Monday 9 A. M. before he rose from the table, having sat there forty-three hours. Unshaven and tired he mingled with the crowds on their way to work. He looked at the clean faces healthy from sleep and ready for honest toil, and a great self-disgust swallowed for the moment self-respect. It was in one of these fits of despondency that a name flashed across his mind like a star in a

dark sky—Los Angeles—"City of the Angels." He had never been there; he knew nothing of it. But there seemed magic attraction in the name. For four years, amid much sordid gaining, the word shone before his mental vision as a talisman, and at last he resolved to see the city for himself.

Very far from angelic felt Ezra as he sat in his boarding-house that first Sunday in Los Angeles, and faced the problem of a place which shut up tight one day in seven. His lack of resource would have been amusing if it had not been so pathetic. He appealed to the landlady for suggestions.

"With such a real nice room," she said surveying it with complacency, "seems like a body might be contented just sitting there; but folks that wants something else most generally reads books."

Ezra tried books. He read the first chapter and the last, shrewdly made connections between, and the story was told. By this method he finished about a dozen novels in an hour, and again sought the landlady.

"If you men aren't the curiousest creatures!" she ejaculated. "'Pears like there ain't no en-

tertaining you nohow. Why don't you go to the park? There's a band concert there Sunday afternoons."

The prospect was not particularly alluring, but Ezra had nothing better to suggest, and started out in the direction indicated. Like a drunkard without whiskey, like a morphine fiend without dope, like a glutton without the table, is a professional card-sharper without a hand and a victim. A life devoted to the game of chance is all the time keyed up to a pitch of unnatural excitement; defraud such of its chosen food even for an hour, and existence becomes at once indescribably stale and tastelessly flat. Ezra was experiencing every symptom of the gambler's ennui.

The distant beat of a drum brought his languid saunter to a standstill. It came from the opposite direction to which he was headed.

"Guess the old lady must have told me wrong," he thought, as he turned on his heel to find a few blocks distant the music to be no park concert, but a few inferior instrumentalists playing in a group. Singing followed, and to his surprise the affair proved to be some kind of a religious meeting. To the Hebrew mind the

idea of making a synagogue of the public street was strange, indeed repulsive. He thought to himself:

"The Gentiles must be hard up for advertisement!"

As he passed the singing ceased, and a man in the group stepped into the ring and began to speak. His first words halted Ezra, for he announced himself as an old gambler and profligate whose life and heart had been transfigured by the Blood of Christ. An involuntary shudder shook the listener's frame at that Name, but the story held him like a spell. Some power unfelt before seized him, and forgetting time and place he lost himself in a mood of great retrospection and of great remorse. When he came to himself, he stood alone in the street, the distant throbbing of a drum the only evidence of the scene which had so shaken him. Without a moment's thought he turned in the direction of the sound, and began to run like one frenzied towards it.

For thirty-six days the man travailed for his own soul. A seared and smothered conscience sprang up to torture night and day; the memory of the Hebraic purity of his boyhood scorched

by comparison his later much stained years. Yet the illuminating torch in a Gentile's hand, and the Remedy to which it pointed, were alike repugnant. He was horribly perplexed—his wretched life had forfeited his hold on old moorings. He dared not stretch out his hand to grasp the new.

From the Army meetings he could not keep away, although they were a source of much condemnation and confusion to him. Perhaps only a Hebrew mind could understand the poignancy of his struggles. "In the Name of Jesus" he was told to seek salvation—the Name he had been forbidden to utter—the Name in which his school fellows had persecuted and pelted him. Once he had known the Old Testament almost word for word, and of all its verses there flared luridly before his mental vision the command, "Honour thy father and thy mother." He felt they must turn in their graves should he acknowledge that Jesus was the Messiah. The very attitude of these prayers was foreign to one trained in the Jewish rubric, which provided that men should stand on their feet to approach their God.

"I cannot do it—I cannot say it," he groaned

to the patient woman officer pleading with him. "I was raised a Jew; I will die a Jew. Farewell."

But he went to return.

At the last it was an appeal from the ruling passion which brought about the decision. His contact with the Salvationists had awakened in him a spirit of generosity hitherto unknown. As Ezra himself put it, "I commenced to throw my money away." Every night the collection was enriched by a dollar from his pocket. But his sharp eye was on the alert for the love of money in others. Little did the officers know that he shadowed them for weeks, listening to their conversation on the street, hanging round their quarters, and even following them into the saloons to discover if they were after money or the souls of men; for the keen though troubled mind thought, "If gold is not their object then it surely must be Divine." Hitherto he had imagined the instinct to care only for one's self and one's own universal, and as the conviction that these people loved and lived and toiled for the interests of others became a fact in his mind, the prejudice of a lifetime weakened, and dimly he conceived the

possibility of One who saved others yet Himself He could not save.

One night there was a special appeal for the Army's Rescue work, and in its aid, at the officer's request, Ezra paid five dollars for some trifle, not without hopes that he would by reason of this be immune from personal probings for the evening. But not so; as soon as she could depute her platform work to another, the girl was again beside him, gently, earnestly pleading as she endeavoured to explain away all obstacles and rebuffs. That moment Ezra's opposition snapped as if cut with a knife.

"She knows she will get no more money out of me to-night," he thought, "yet she comes again. She must really care for my soul. What if her Christ cares too?"

That was the beginning of the end. Ezra went to his knees, the officer with him, and incidentally the devil; for while he tried to seek deliverance in the name of Jesus evil suggestions tauntingly reminded him again that it was in this Name he had been cruelly beaten. Bewildered he rose from his knees, telling the Salvationist that he had made a clean sweep of

everything, but that all was dark. "Courage," she said; "the Light will come," and pinned upon his coat the Army's badge. It was a daring thing to do, but subsequent events proved her trust was not misplaced, and as her spirit looks down from the revelation of another world she has no cause for regret over her action. The badge lay like a burning thing upon Ezra's breast. He went straight back to the flashy hotel where he had been working, his professional gambling having ceased with his advent at Los Angeles, and told the proprietor he must leave. Asked why, the young man pointed to the little badge and said simply:

"This business and your business don't go together."

Then Ezra entered upon his final Gethsemane. With all his bridges burned behind him, with his earthly prospects lost, his nefarious profession abandoned, the faith of his fathers forsaken, he yet lacked the Divine Revelation without which a man's religion, however irreproachable, is but a mechanical thing—without which, to a man of Ezra's long-thwarted spiritual cravings, life would be a tragedy. All next day he struggled

alone; at night he again sought the Army and one of the comrades spent hours trying to help him. Till 2 A. M. they walked the streets, Ezra in agony crying again and again:

"I want to hold out—God knows I do—but I don't seem to have anything to hold on to."

Alone in his room, he opened his newly purchased Bible, and throwing himself on his knees before it, burst into passionate supplication. It was in Hebrew he prayed again and again, "Show me, O God, show me;" and while he prayed, the answer came. His spiritual eyes were opened and with a clearness which he can still describe but not explain he saw, as Paul of old, the One Who he had been persecuting—saw His cross, the nails, counted the blood drops as they fell, and heard a Voice saying, "Go in peace and sin no more."

His earnest companion of the night before was still in a sound sleep when there came a furious knocking at his door. Rushing to his window, he saw the young Hebrew standing in the street. His face was transfigured with the Light which was never on land or sea, and as the other raised the sash he shouted:

"Brother, it is all true. The Messiah has come—He has come to me."

A knot of gamblers standing around an open air meeting some years later were discussing the last speaker.

"When the Army got him the gaming-table of the West lost one of its best brains," said one.

"A typical Jew in those days," returned the other. "'To have and to hold onto,' eh! But I can't quite make out his present game. Folks say that he has given everything he had away —his diamond pin, his gold watch, his country estate—and that he is working for fifty cents a day. Say, boys, who would have thought of old Ezra doing that?"

But *old* Ezra was not doing it. It was a new Ezra who said, as he handed himself unreservedly over to the work through which God's revelation had come to him, "I guess He who carried those millions of my forefathers through the wilderness is to be trusted with my little all."

Our last look at Ezra finds him with whitened hair leaning over his desk. The hour is late, as it often is with Ezra, but the bright eyes and fresh colour above his uniform collar give

the lie to impaired vitality. He is adding up money, or rather figures which represent money —money which is to mean bread to the hungry, shelter for the homeless, deliverance for the bound and salvation for the sinner. "It has been a good month," he ejaculates happily as he looks at the total of over seven thousand dollars brought into the Army work through his efforts, and then he turns with a brighter smile to the well-worn Bible always ready to his hand, and finding the forty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah reads again the words marked as his life's motto many years before:

"Seekest thou great things for *thyself?* seek them not."

IV

BROKEN WOMANHOOD

Seared and scarred with sin's branding iron

"AND now unto God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost——" The preacher's resonant voice dropped to the monotone of the Episcopal peroration, and there was the usual subdued rustle as the congregation rose to its feet. But with the benediction more than the usual subdued whispering followed—the flutter of comment, the stir of criticism.

The Sunday services had been dedicated to the cause of social righteousness, and from the pulpits of that city burning words went forth to plead the claims of purity and of mercy. At this fashionable down-town church, the clergyman had eloquently epitomized the subject. Earnestness whether in learned or illiterate is always the most moving factor in public utterances, and there was not one of his hearers

who had been exempt from its spell, but many concealed their involuntary agitation by affecting to be shocked at his plain speaking, while others professed their belief that such a statement of the case was grossly exaggerated.

"Of course," said one haughty voice during the slow progress from pew to door, "we know such creatures do exist, but there was no need for the dear doctor to bring them quite so close to our imagination—altogether uncalled for."

The speaker drew her vinaigrette from her glove and used it all the way down the aisle, as if to disinfect some foreign element from her aristocratic nostril. A few steps from the sanctuary door the vinaigrette was hastily exchanged for her lorgnette, and after one horrified glance my lady precipitately crossed the street. The objectionable problem itself confronted her.

There in the gutter lay an outcast woman, drunk or drugged, within a block of the church door. The noonday sun pitilessly exposed the bedraggled plumage of this bird of night, unsparing the wretched upturned face, seared and scarred with sin's branding iron.

The lady with the lorgnette was not alone in her avoidance of the unpleasant sight. Refined lips curled in scorn; coarser mouths leared past her.

"What a shame for a woman like *that* to lie on a street like *this!*" exclaimed one.

"Poor devil!" murmured a man, while another rushed to telephone for the police patrol.

The modern priest and Levite had gone their several ways, when another church-member, not without surprise to herself, assumed the rôle of Samaritan. This good woman, who was a practicing physician, half in speculation, half in confidence, and wholly as a last hope, called up the Salvation Army Rescue Home.

Two poke bonnets and the patrol wagon arrived simultaneously, but there was never any question as to which of the two had the right of way. The patrol officer gladly abdicated in the Army's favour.

"She's yours, ladies," he said swinging back on to the vehicle step. "Youse people are the only ones for the likes of her. Get back to the station, Joe. We ain't wanted here."

Three days later the lady physician sat by a bed in the cheerful sick ward of the Army

Home. For more than forty-eight hours the patient had writhed in convulsive violence, during which trying period an Army nurse had not left her side. Now she lay in still exhaustion. The doctor looked curiously at the picture of broken womanhood before her, and then as curiously upon the vision of clean sanity in uniformed white bending over the other side of the bed. She wondered what would come of the connection between these two types which she herself had effected. The Army's sincerity had long since claimed the doctor's admiration, but she had been frankly sceptical of its methods, and in her own mind had resolved to make this a test case.

The girl stirred and with a heavy sigh opened her eyes in consciousness. Then the heavy lids again fell and she groaned:

"Nobody cares for me. I had it gay enough once, but even the devil won't have anything to do with me now. Why didn't you let me die and be done with? Nobody cares."

The Salvationist's lips parted to reply in pity, but the doctor forestalled her.

"But I think somebody must care for you still," said the even professional tones. "Open

your eyes again; look at this white bed and white room—isn't this better than the street from which these good people took you?"

The girl looked round upon the snowy coverlet, the spotless walls, the open window through which the city's noises were hushed to a sonorous hum, then upon the vase of flowers by the bed, lastly upon the nurse's face bending over her, and there her glance rested. A big tear gathered and obscured her wondering gaze.

"Oh, it seems as if somebody must care even for me," she sobbed.

Artistically the story should stop here, but practically such conclusion would be both unsatisfactory and inadequate, for the wisdom and patience of poor Flora's saviours was much more taxed after her convalescence.

Flora and work were natural enemies. The girl's inherent laziness of disposition had been fostered by her all too easy and terrible vocation. She had entered the ranks of prostitution while yet in appallingly tender years, and although she came out of her long sickness heartily sick of her past life, she was disposed to trade upon the generosity of her new friends.

The working out of her own salvation was not included in her calculations. Her actions spoke louder than any words:

"It's up to you to keep me or I'll keep myself in the easiest way I know."

The doctor still paid occasional visits to the Home, and unknown to the object of her scrutiny watched her protégée with growing scepticism in her eye.

"Can the Army make good with the girl now?" she soliloquized. "It was easy enough to work upon her feelings but can they create a conscience in her?"

And her distrust increased as she detected unmistakable signs of restlessness and hankerings for freedom.

One day Flora stood sullenly in the dormitory, her arms in a locked fold. Bed-making had been assigned to her, but she refused to speak or move. Then developed the tact of her officer. She forbore to scold, threaten, or even insist—her mission was to make, not break, this already broken woman. She said pleasantly:

"Oh, don't you care to make beds? Well, every one has their own likes and dislikes. Come down-stairs, and I'll show you a work

which I think so pretty and interesting that it is almost like play."

In the laundry a dainty apron was picked up, and with apparent abstraction the officer began to smooth out the ruffles as if their glossy undulations were far more important than the willfulness of the girl who stood watching in stolid silence behind her. Flora became interested against her will; at length her arms slowly unfolded and she asked for an iron that she might experiment herself.

That day Flora did her first honest work for many years; did it happily, with a will, and the watching eye of the doctor saw some subtle change in the delinquent's demeanour when she passed her on the stairs next morning. Flora's still attractive head was held higher than usual, but there was now something wholesome in her pride.

When after many months of pruning, preparing and proving Flora was ready to leave for an outside situation, the Rescue matron had arranged for the girl one of those little loving surprises which make her institution a veritable home to its inmates, and herself their veritable mother. Flora had come to the Army's care

without a rag but the bedraggled finery on her back which had been promptly destroyed, and the neat little outfit now awaiting her acceptance quite overwhelmed her. She burst into grateful tears.

"Oh, nobody ever cared for me like this before," she cried. "I will make good—I will."

That promise is several years old, and the girl who uttered it is still "making good," and as the doctor describes the result of her test case she usually adds:

"The Army that can deal successfully with a forlorn hope like Flora is equal to anything."

But the Army she apostrophized would be the first to disclaim its ability to deal with the least of its living problems apart from the Divinity which is the Motive Power behind all its machinery.

V

THE BRIDGE BUILDER

No prodigal may eat his husks alone

FEW who read these lines will have heard the name of the man of whom they speak but many will have seen his work, for to reach one of the largest cities in the Union it is inevitable one should pass either over or under a bridge which he has built.

There is no work in which a man so merges his individuality and yet with which his individuality is so inseparably identified. Some tunnels have borne the name of the man who bored a highway through rock, braved noisome gases and fought the forces of the underworld, but no bridge builder needs thus to label the work of his hands. No matter what community may own it or use it, its every inch is forever his own. Whether five or five thousand men have helped to plunge its piers, span its arches and stretch its revetments it remains the concrete thought of one, for, as this man puts

it, "a bridge builder must see his bridge down to its last screw and almost walk over it before ever the first pile is driven."

Thus the work—what of the worker, the solitary figure often in oilskins, sometimes at giddy height or dangerous depth, always with plan in hand and brain, who has shouldered the safety as well as the convenience of those who work and those who hereafter shall walk on his bridge? Sometimes he is a man from the toiling ranks below—one who has himself driven piles, manipulated "nippers," pulled the levers of a "donkey engine" and mastered the scientific while he has accomplished the mechanical —a valuable combination. Such a bridge builder is the subject of this sketch.

"The most dangerous work in the world," was Miles' first impression. "The most fascinating" was his second, outweighing and outlasting the other. Chilled to the bone, every thread on him reeking from the river, his hands torn and bleeding, Miles finished his first day as a bridge hand with the conviction that here was his life-work. Much ingenuity made up for little education and a few weeks later his inventive faculty had seen the need of, and per-

fected a better device for, the pile-driving engine —a patent which is in use to-day. So lost in love of the work was the inventor that, poor though he was, it passed as a detail that another man secured both the credit and the cash. All the same, Miles rose rapidly, as is bound to do the man for an emergency. One Thanksgiving Day the engineer failed to put in an appearance; most of the crew were on hand and with just seven more piles to complete his part of the contract the section boss profaned the air with his irritation over a wasted day.

"If you will risk your engine," said Miles, "I'll risk myself."

It was an audacious proposition both for the maker and assenter, but the situation was desperate. Very slowly Miles put into practice the observation which he had been storing for months past, and feeling his way among the levers with the caution of a blind man on a new road he drove the seven piles. It was not the last occasion when this man poured into the sand box the hold of his own grit. Once he secured a good job as engineer when he understood so little about his engine that he did not know how to get water into the boiler. His

fireman little suspected the ignorance of his chief who ordered him to perform this duty while he was conveniently busy with the oil can. It seems not unlikely that many were in more danger than they dreamed in those days of experiment. But without a mishap Miles pushed his brilliant way ahead, and the proud day came when his savings permitted him to buy a sunk scow and donkey engine. In his spare time—very spare it was—he raised his bargain out of salt water, removed the rust, put in the many necessary repairs and was ready to start in business on his own account. Paradise seemed to open for him when he secured his first contract, the "sealing" of a reservoir against the encroachments of quicksand—an undertaking which brought him one step nearer his goal, for bridge making is a trade of many in one. An old bridge builder said once, "Not one man in a thousand makes good—the one who does has made himself an expert in a hundred professions before he qualified for this."

The day when, for the first time, Miles' feet passed from shore to shore on his own span brought him a joy the essence of which is only tasted by creators. His ability to organize

secured the best work out of his men who caught their leader's enthusiasm while they followed his plans. When night shifts were necessary he schemed so that every man should get two hours' sleep, and thus the work was not half done because drowsily done. Partnership came and passed; Miles' associates secured the profits, but Miles retained the tools, to him the better half of a bad bargain, for he was in this work for the love of it—it became his life. Larger and more important contracts passed through his hands, and despite great liberality and a large outlay occasioned by experimental inventions financial success demanded his acceptance. In seven years he had amassed a net fortune of $100,000.

Then into the garden of his content—for heaven on earth exists for the man who does the work he loves—there entered the serpent of temptation. Alas that we must chronicle its introduction by a professed servant of Christ. Worldly associates had laughed at Miles as a man of one idea, saying that he did not get his money's worth out of life, and he had shaken his head and turned with happy absorption to the only recreation he relished—work. But

when evil presented itself at the invitation of a man whose beautiful voice had attracted Miles' worshipful though not avowedly religious feet to the church, he was taken off his guard.

"Take a drink with me, old fellow," said this man as they walked home from service. "The water is bad here and you don't want to drink much of it."

Miles hesitated—it was hard to break through the abstaining habits of many years, yet from such a source the request looked innocent enough, and for courtesy's sake he entered a saloon for the first time. Although held neither by temperance pledge nor religious scruple he felt the vigour of his strong manhood tremble as he lifted the glass, but when he had drained it he set it down with a steady and reluctant hand. The flavour was pleasant and familiar as if answering to a thirst which he had always carried unknown and unslaked within him.

"Another," he said with kindling eye.

> "First the man takes a drink,
> Then the drink takes a drink,
> Then the drink takes the man."

The old Japanese proverb was never better,

more bitterly verified than in Miles. All his life he prided himself on keeping his appetites under; but now from being master he became slave. First he took one glass a day, then one in each barroom, then he could not get the barrooms close enough together, and grudged the steps he must stagger between them. Soon the strong mind began to muddle, the strong hand to shake and the strong will, which had so easily dominated others, to lose control. There is no work in which any weakening of the master mind quicker shows itself than in bridge building, and a business associate ventured a protest.

"Forgive an old friend's anxiety, Miles, but you are drinking too much. You are well up in the profession, and we would all hate to see you go down."

But Miles with new surliness swore that if he chose to go to perdition it was nobody else's business, and the friend warned him no more. The heretofore courteous man had spoken in liquor—sober moments were becoming rare occasions, occurring at less and less frequent intervals. Once again John Barleycorn, that drummer on the fields of the defeated

sounded the retreat—the hands of Miles' clock began to lose time, while his whole nature coarsened and shrank.

Then commenced a ghastly retrograde. Dangers that he could have foreseen and avoided created catastrophe and weakened confidence; accidents refused to be hushed up; hints even of death through his carelessness leaked out. The employees, who would have sworn by their master, now under their breath began to swear at him. The humanity which had brought him as much love as his ability had commanded respect was replaced by a brutal indifference. The man who once would have made a tourniquet of his own shirt sleeve to staunch the blood of the wounded now looked on unmoved at crushed limbs and torn bodies—sneering away pitiful cries for medical assistance. So does drink destroy and disfigure all that is best of a man's character, while its ruthless claws pick clean his career.

Existing offers were cancelled, no new work came to his hands. He who had been master sank to the level of man. First the work of his brain was outlawed, then the work of his hands found no market. Where he had been

the moving factor he was now unwanted in the lowest place. Soon the prosperous bridge builder had become a drunken destitute.

Into the home his sin had entered like a thief. Comforts followed each other in disappearance, the glow of health quenched upon his wife's face, a great horror dawned in the eyes of his boy and girl. Vicarious sacrifices, they "began to be in want," for it is one of the saddest facts of human life that no prodigal may eat his husks alone.

Once during those hideous years Miles swore off drink, signed the pledge in his own blood. He was that night just sufficiently intoxicated to feel irritation at his daughter's tears, and with the drunkard's ready petulance demanded:

"Why the h—— are you snivelling, Rose?"

His wife answered through tight thin lips:

"Rose is crying because people are calling after her, 'There goes the boozer's girl.'"

Stung to the quick the father turned on his heel, climbing to his once luxurious, now bare, chamber to have it out with himself.

A few days afterwards his wife discovered the fruit of his remorse, a piece of original doggerel:

"Oh, here's farewell to whiskey.
I've known you too long now.
And thanks to my own will power,
To you I will not bow.
I'll never taste of you again
While I'm above the sod.
I'll never drink of you again.
No, no, so help me God."

Miles had evidently thought to make the pledge more final by writing it in his own blood, but a bitter smile crossed the woman's face as the sound of a ribald song and stumbling footfall floated up from the floor below. Miles' sanguinary contract had not held him a week!

And now before the curtain falls upon her for the last time we turn the spotlight upon the most pathetic character upon this tragic stage—the thin figure bowed with the burdens of others, the face filled with the poignancy of much love and much sorrow. Hats off before one of those mothers of men who have seen the fulfillment of that most significant prophecy, "a sword shall pierce thine own heart also."

Of all her large family Miles had been the son of her heart. Before ever she held him in her arms she had set this child apart for the kingdom of God, and for his second name

chosen that of a great evangelist, in whose footsteps she pledged him to follow. "Mother's boy" the others called him, and from their persecution the little fellow ran away one night, but her tearful voice calling his name brought him out from his hiding-place. When his father thrashed him she protected him with the folds of her homespun dress. Her faith was tried by his small concern for religious matters, but many times her heart swelled with pleasure over him—notably when but as a stripling he freed the old homestead from debt, and again when he had risen to eminence in his chosen profession she came to live in pride near her prosperous son. When he fell, the shock shattered her health, but could not shake the confidence of her spirit; year after year as he drank himself out of all resemblance to her joy and pride she clung to the promise made to heaven concerning him. She said:

"You may laugh your fill at it for an old woman's fancy, but though I may not live to hear it, you'll preach the Gospel yet. You are breaking my heart, Miles, but you cannot defeat God's purposes nor my prayers for you."

Next day she fell upon the spot where she

had spoken. The arms that had so often held him he now held in his—dead. But at the funeral he shed no tear—he stood drunk at her grave.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord and from hereafter, yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Eight years after the world saw the fulfillment of that promise.

Miles' downward course now became a headlong rush. Drunkenness is of all sins the most gregarious; it refuses to live alone in any man's heart, introducing devils of its kind to bear it company. Adultery, murder and suicide took possession with drink. From actually severing the silver cord of life Miles was as a miracle withheld, but what difference in the scales of God where intent is weighed equal with action. The lust to kill consumed him, and for months he hunted his two brothers as a hound hunts its quarry. The insanity of a drunkard's revenge is the hope of his victim, for while many unpremeditated deeds of blood are undoubtedly done

under intoxication, those deliberately planned under its influence are often foiled. The opportunity to slay again and again slipped through his unsteady fingers, and while many times the pistol was loaded and the knife pointed, the stain of the fratricide which was on his soul forbore to disfigure his hands. The miscarriage of his fiendish plots drove Miles to frenzy. In vain he drank himself into bestial depravity—he found no comfort in his curse, and he resolved to throw away the life now worthless to himself and every one else.

Midnight found him upon one of his own bridges. With curious aloofness he observed the small mark time had left upon its appearance, none apparently upon its stability, and noted the patent specialities in its structure which had featured his work of that time. He thought bitterly, "Yes, the bridge will stand scrutiny but the builder won't bear inspection," and with a groan pushed his way on.

The moonlight looked down in cold disdain upon the wild-eyed man, so carefully setting his stage for life's last scene. Right in the centre of the mighty arch which had been his just pride he stopped and leaned over the para-

pet for the plunge. With a sudden cry he recoiled and staggered back smitten by the reflection of a face in the water below. It was his own, but to his disordered fancy it seemed that of his mother—he had flung her love back in brutal taunts, he had blasted all her hopes of him, he had kicked the sod of her grave with a drunken foot—he could not throw his dead body in her face! He ran from the bridge as from a haunted thing.

From his curse there now seemed only one escape—back into its burning, blistering heart. Perhaps he might drink himself to death.

But a Will long denied and forgotten had decreed otherwise; a Force resisted all his life was about to make itself felt. In twenty years, ever since the church singer had betrayed him, he had not entered God's house. He was an outcast alike from respectability and religion, but once again through the mouth of a merciful militancy Divinity chose to give voice.

One day Miles sat drinking with two companions—three of a kind; all had fallen from good positions—one a lawyer, the other educated for the ministry. In the midst of

their carousal, the latter suddenly clapped his hands in drunken exuberation exclaiming:

"Say, fellows, did you hear that big Peter's been converted by the Salvation Army? He's taken to preaching instead of punching, they say."

"Then I'm going to hear him," said Miles.

"Nonsense! They'll turn you out. Mad Miles turning softy! Nothing worth seeing there, old boy!"

But with the uncertain temper of a drunkard, Miles swore he would take his fun where he liked, and they could all go—a long journey!

That night, for the first time in a score of years, the man found himself listening to the voice of prayer. Once there he forgot all about big Peter; his half-fuddled brain could only remember his mother and he asked for her favourite hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," which, with the Army's knowledge when and when not to take a drunken man seriously, they proceeded to sing softly and tenderly.

He stumbled out to curse himself for going, for he felt considerably worse than before. To his horror he found neither drink nor debauchery could shake off the impression. It was as though

the torturing knife had been turned in an open wound. Remorse devoured him but not at once for his sin. First he began to grieve over his lost money, then for the misery brought on his mother, wife and children, and at last for his own wrong-doing which had caused it all. He still drank, but bravado slipped from him. He could no longer carry sin off with a high hand. He shunned the mirror's reflection of his face, dreading the new abasement written there. He did not realize that while

"Shame is a shadow cast by sin, yet shame
Itself may be a glory and a grace,
Refashioning the sin-disfashioned face;
A nobler bruit than hollow sounded fame,
A new lit lustre on a tarnished name,
One virtue pent within an evil place,
Strength for the fight and swiftness for the race,
A stinging salve, a life requickening flame,
A salve so searching we may scarcely live,
A flame so fierce it seems that we must die,
An actual cautery thrust into the heart
Nevertheless men die not of such smart;
And shame gives back what nothing else can give,
Man to himself—then sets him up on high."

The poetess might have had our wrecked bridge builder in her mind when she wrote those

lines, but for many months out of his humiliation Miles cursed his choicest blessing.

"Oh, if time would only turn backward twenty years," he groaned out of the depths, yet blasphemed the patient, compassionate Army folk toiling over his torturing and tortured soul. He would do without them and their God. Rousing all that was left of his once splendid will power he determined to have done with drink. For some days he fought his foe with exhausting ferocity. He ran past barrooms, he held his breath that he might not inhale temptation, he shunned old companions; night and day the combat knew not a moment's truce. Big veins stood out on the man's forehead. He felt the strain telling on his mind —then thirst broke its leash. Before he could climb it seemed he had to fall once more, for it was in an agony of self-disgust that he fell drunk at last at the Army's penitent form. Again there came the memory of mother, and scarcely knowing what he prayed, his first words repeated part of the hymn she had loved, "Help Thou my unbelief." Who can say that her spirit was not near her boy's, as for over an hour he writhed in agony of soul, the faithful

captain by his side praying, believing, and, to his credit be it said, weeping over him, for while on occasion the Salvationist has been known to take the part of avenging angel and goliath of valour, his best and most lasting work is done as a "brother born for adversity."

As the drink cleared from his brain Miles became more and more desperate.

"Oh, God," he cried, "I'll stay here till I die or You save me."

Then that mighty upheaval which is a stronger argument for its Divine Originator than all the theologies shook and freed him. Miles' second prayer scarcely left his lips for many months to come.

"Oh, God of my salvation, help me to make restitution—give me strength to work night and day till it is done."

But it is no easy or quick matter to regain the lost footing of twenty years. Restitution began at home—reconcilation with his wife and prayers by his children's bedside, asking them as well as God to forgive him. Then with love replacing hate in his heart he hurried to find those whom he had sought to kill, and left them looking with dazed faces at the hands he

had clasped. During his attempt to sober up he had had a summons out for payment of an old bill; now he called it off saying, "Let the dead past bury its dead. I don't want to collect a cent." But his own debts he shouldered —every one. He felt only so doing could he show God and the Army his gratitude for the miracle of his conversion, with its utter annihilation of the thirst which had consumed him. Before that first glass his signature would have been good on paper at any of the city's banks; when the Army crossed his path no one would have given him credit for twenty-five cents. His debts amounted to twenty thousand dollars. Some of this money was outlawed, but the first dollar paid on such debts renewed them. Miles' conscience could only be satisfied by the fulfillment of every moral as well as legal obligation, proving the Divine origin of the impulse which controlled him. It looked a herculean task for the man who had worn out all confidence and who did not own a cent in the world.

"How *did* you do it?" he was asked years after it was done.

Grateful tears started to his eyes.

"I had these," holding out his hands, "and

this," pointing to his head, " was getting better. God had confidence in me, and I knew He'd see that the world would give it back to me one day."

Heaven is pledged to make good such assurance. A few days later a friendly bridge builder said, " I hear good things of you, Miles. 'Nuf sed. If you want a new start, you can have it with me."

That first job was significant—the remodelling of one of his own bridges. Reconstruction of work and reconstruction of character went on together. Miles had not a tool; he hired them all, making the stipulation that if the work was completed in a certain time their rent would become part of the purchasing money, which showed that business acumen was coming back to him. The making over task was not easy on bridge or man. Traffic went on both above and below all the time of alteration, two trains passing every ten minutes, but the work was done in less than schedule limit without a single mishap, and Miles' hymn of praise had a new, firm note in it as he felt his feet gaining ground. How he worked those days! Old companions who watched said that

he was drunk again—but with work. It seemed that he had superhuman power given him to toil as he had prayed night and day, without tiring, till the last of that twenty thousand dollars was paid off.

That is five years ago and the saved bridge builder has never looked back. His business during the last twelve months has increased four hundred times and his men, who come to the meetings sometimes to hear their hallelujah master, nod their heads, saying, "That's no mere talk as we who work for him know. The boss is just as good when he is building his bridge." Drinking and swearing are at a premium among his hands as a consequence.

It was a foregone conclusion that Miles should become a Salvationist. He feels he owes to the Army a debt which a lifetime's gratitude can never repay. His automobiles, of which he owns five, have done thousands of miles on Salvation service in the hard week ends which sandwich his six days "on the bridge."

We close with an incident which to Miles' delivered soul sets the seal upon his rehabilitated manhood. It has already been stated that he is of the inventive faculty. Just before

the crash of his downfall a new device of his brain was in course of construction. Many times the invention seemed nearing completion, but always something essential to its working evaded him. For twenty years the uncompleted model lay useless. Then one day the new man found it and began to finger the component parts. As he slowly put them together, like a flash there came to him the missing link of the proposition. It now seemed the simplest part of the whole problem, and in a moment the patent was perfect.

VI

THE CO-ED

Nothing left of the Bible but the covers

FREDERICA was a born student. From babyhood, books were her delight, although in earlier years they had perforce to be stolen pleasures. An elder sister had overstudied to the limit of brain fever, and the alarmed parents vowed that sooner than jeopardize her health their other daughter should be a dunce. Till the age of nine all printed matter was tabooed, and when at last school was permitted the tall, proud girl was put among the infants of the first grade.

"I can't, I won't stay with those babies," she cried passionately, and with a celerity which astonished her teachers she mastered her rudiments and left them. Then commenced a record-breaking run through the grades. It seemed to her school-fellows that Frederica absorbed knowledge like a sponge absorbs water, but they could not see how much her strong

will helped her good head. Every play hour was "study period" with her, and through all her school days there was not a vacation which she permitted herself. Thus a certain commencement exercises found the girl who had begun school with such a serious handicap graduating as the youngest member of her class.

But Frederica's troubles were not all over. Her father frowned when she spoke of high school as a matter of course, and said he would not buy her a single book for such nonsense.

"A common grammar school education is good enough for any woman," he said, "and when I put my foot down, the family knows what it means."

The family did, and Frederica wasted no time in attempting to argue the point with him. But she had all her father's determination, with a great deal more ingenuity, and by the time high school opened, she was ready equipped to start with the rest. How she had managed it, how she had slaved and saved, doing odd jobs for the neighbours for a pittance, or sacrificing money allowed by her parents for necessities cannot be detailed here. To the father's credit be it said, that when he saw how his daughter

had outwitted him his admiration smothered his chagrin.

Before the high school principal Frederica stood perplexed, fingering the parents' suggestion card which had just been given her. She knew that to take it home would open the old difficulty and possibly create new and stammered:

"My parents don't—they leave it to me."

Asked then what language she would take Frederica answered without great thought:

"I'll take that which will best help me to be a missionary."

The professor who belonged to the Roman Church looked at the pupil narrowly, and seeing in her a possible proselyte suggested Latin. The choice proved momentous, for this language, being the gateway to the classics, naturally inclined the girl towards a college career.

No great spiritual conviction had prompted Frederica's reference to "missionary." From early years her conception of religion was a debt which had to be paid, and her idea was that some years as a missionary would cancel her obligations—too it would necessitate study and promised travel, both loadstones to the girl's

ambitious mind. Her mother was an Episcopalian, her father a Unitarian; but the fervour of neither was sufficient to cause any clashing in the children's upbringing. Conscience was never used as an argument to keep good. "Nice people do that—nice people do not do that" was the code of religion and morals laid down by this typical Bostonian pair.

During high school days Frederica made her first religious experiment, for it is no sacrilege to call by that name her rather jaunty trial of a school-fellows' church. Her understanding of the requirements of membership was threefold in its simplicity—she must read the Bible, pray and give up theatre-going. The first two were easy as she made up her mind to rush through a single verse, while she told herself she could gabble through the Lord's prayer as fast as anybody. The embargo was more than she had reckoned on, but she ruefully reminded herself that something must be paid somewhere and that she might find some amusing shows within the sphere of the church!

The present day Frederica would be the last to blame the pillars of the church for the ease with which, while entirely irreligious at heart,

she slid into prominent membership; their investigations may have been superficial, but any one might have been misled by her apparent zeal. Frederica always had a passion to teach, but there was no Sunday-school class for her, so she soon manufactured one for herself—all she asked of the superintendent was a couple of benches and a class book. Then the young lady recruited from the neighbourhood three of its worst young toughs under the promise of giving them the time of their lives. The class soon doubled and trebled, and old teachers marvelled at its rapt attention, every head bowed with the teacher's round, as they thought, the Bible. But more often the object of such enthralling interest was some queer insect or rare plant, for Frederica was imparting with the zest of a born teacher no Scripture but botany and zoölogy. It was a very lively specimen which at last almost literally "let the cat out of the bag."

About the time the Salvation Army commenced work in her native city, Frederica, en route for the university, took a temporary position as teacher of science in a theological seminary. She was always on the lookout for some-

thing of interest and amusement to apply in her teaching, and the newspapers' rather garish report of the peculiar ways of this peculiar people suggested, "Why not conduct a mock Salvation Army meeting in the class of methods and pick it to pieces afterwards for the edification of the students as an example of preposterous and unseemly methods of work?" The plan was carried through amid shrieks of merriment, for Frederica was a natural mimic, and although she had never laid eyes on a Salvationist she let her imagination have full play. But her triumph was short-lived. Next morning she was summoned to the principal's presence and severely censured for ridiculing a religious organization.

"Religious!" Frederica scorned. "They are just a show, and I don't think you should reprove me for making fun of them."

But the professor held his point.

"They are good people," he declared, adding with a smile, "You may be one of them yourself one day, young lady."

"Never!" exclaimed Frederica disgusted. "I'd die first."

So unrepentant was her attitude that the

good man ended the interview with prayer, but Frederica stood up and drummed on the window-pane.

Vacation time came round again—always too long it lasted for this girl whose world was her class room. Having exhausted every respectable means of entertainment, she astonished her friend one night with the suggestion:

"Let's try Boston's latest, and see what fun we can get out of the Salvation Army." The problem was a bold one to relieve the tedium of a night's ennui, but Frederica's chum was "game" and they sought admittance at the Army hall.

"We'll sit on the back seat," they planned, but they were not destined to do so, for the door opened at the front instead of the rear and they had no choice but to take the first seat. On such small things do great differences turn. Had Frederica sat at the back among the gang of toughs gathered there, she might have gone out disgusted by their presence at a place of worship and missed all the true significance of the scene. As it was, she came at once into the heart of the meeting and the girl's rather cold, calculating nature was

gripped immediately by the almost alarming earnestness she felt breathing there. Her impression was greatly deepened by her astonishment over some of those who occupied seats on the platform, for there, clothed in the vestments of the organization, and evidently in a new and radiant change of mind, sat some over whom she had exhausted much thought—and means—during some slumming experiences of her own in that locality, gone about discreetly in a black silk dress. Her experience with such had been that they went fairly well while her tickets for entertainment and blankets lasted, but that when her bounty ran out so did their good resolutions, and their lapse had usually been to a state worse at the last than the first. They were apparently receiving no charity here, and yet they stuck. Had the Salvation Army exorcised over them some spell?

"I must study this," said Frederica with one of her downright conclusions and she proceeded to do so. She bribed the maid to let her out of the house without waking the family early Sunday morning so that she might see the Army in its first meeting of the day; that she thought would catch them off their guard, for they

could not possibly be at their best at that ungodly hour. She listened outside the closed door of the Soldiers' meeting hoping to learn their secrets; she surreptitiously subscribed to the *War Cry* and bought a copy of their doctrines which she pulled to pieces without finding a flaw. But above all impressions were the personal ones made by the Salvationists. They upset all her preconceived ideas as to religion being a debt which must be paid with as little surplus as possible—here was a religion which was not so much a creed as a life, a passion which claimed one's all and then left one wishing there was more to give. Frederica gasped at the revolution such a belief might work in her life, but conscience and reason told her that here was the real thing at last—the kind of faith which matched a far-off and fading contract of her own made with God alone in the pine woods some years before.

That was an eye-opening vacation, and Frederica went back to college to make reparation. No greater penance could have been imposed upon her proud spirit than this self-imposed eating of her own words, but she felt she had wronged truth, and astonished her class by

publicly apologizing for the misleading statements she had made about the Army during the previous term.

Thus it developed that Frederica's university career found her an avowed friend of the organization. In those days and in that place it took a good deal of moral courage to publicly proclaim sympathy with such unconventional religionists. The debating class furnished an immediate and excellent opportunity for showing her colours; suggestions for topics were solicited and Frederica's was given without any hesitation.

"I submit as topic the Salvation Army; shall it have the support of the churches?"

"But, my dear young lady," replied the amazed professor amid the excitement of the students, "entertaining as no doubt we should find such an original topic, who could we possibly ask to undertake the affirmative?"

"I hoped to take the affirmative myself," said Frederica quietly, and her audacity carried her point.

All the same it was not without some nervousness and great care that Frederica prepared her paper in support of the unpopular side, for

she anticipated the criticism that would be levied against it and her; all the more so as she had to compete with the finest debater of the college. But the reward of moral heroism was hers. Clarity visualized the whole argument to her mind; liberty took possession of her tongue and for the first time casting her manuscript behind her back she took the debate orally. Words leaped to her lips, as illuminating thoughts flashed themselves into utterance, and when she sat down the class of one hundred students burst into tumultuous applause.

Months afterwards when the principal reviewed the year's work he said of the debating class, "We have had only one debate this year —that upon the Salvation Army," and the whole college echoed the cheers which the class had given. But neither then nor previously did Frederica feel any personal pride in the achievement—it was rather as if she had made her confession of faith.

By the time Frederica became one of the faculty, every one in the college called her a Salvationist. But in reality she was far from being one either in name or spirit. To cham-

pion a despised cause was very different to allying herself once and for all with its despised followers. For such a decision Frederica was not prepared. Her life was still controlled by the student's thirst for knowledge; she was well on the way for the honours of more than one degree and the only idea she entertained of possible mission work was something on conventional lines in accord with academic principles. Again, her heart was far from simplicity. A gifted professor had initiated her into the insidious fascinations of the higher criticism, until even the fundamentals of her faith were fast slipping out of mental grasp. She shared the feelings of her fellow student, who in a burst of mutual confession exclaimed:

"When I entered college I believed every word of the Bible. But now I have nothing left of it but the covers."

Poor Frederica! Despite all her glowing prospects of scholarly advance, despite all her brave championship of good work done by others, she had wandered far into the famine land of doubt and her soul was trying to appease its immortal cravings upon theological husks.

One morning an anonymous envelope brought a form of application for the work of the Salvation Army. Disgusted, Frederica crumpled the paper in her hand and threw it into the waste basket. Next morning the maid drew her attention to a carefully smoothed out sheet upon her desk with the remark:

"Something you threw away by mistake, miss."

When she went out walking, the offending paper went with her to be flung contemptuously among the bushes, but it turned up again the worse for wear with a fellow student's laughing:

"There's only one person in the college who owns Salvation Army stuff."

Something prevented the girl from tearing it up, and each time she tried to lose it some unexpected hand brought it back. At last she gave up the thought of getting rid of it, and let it remain in her possession where it tortured her continually. A warning within told her that this was the call of God and that obedience to it was the last chance for her faith. At last she compromised, and sent in her application so worded as to make it almost im-

possible for her to be accepted, but still Frederica's conscience was unsatisfied and her shrewd mind recognized that the line of least resistance is at best but a palliative measure. She knew that sooner or later the dreaded issue must be faced with all the added complications of delay.

The crisis came one night in a very small prayer-meeting in the Army Hall. Frederica remembers no special persuasion that was brought to bear upon her—it was rather as if she came to an end of herself and put into practice a watchword of the Army she entered, "Let God have all His own way with you." The Divinity of the Hand which pointed to this particular path was the one rock of certainty in the shifting sand of hopes and fears, courage and cowardice.

It is a characteristic of all great emotions of the soul that they overturn the temperament, and that under their influence the least expected takes place. Thus under stress of overwhelming passion the cautious man takes the leap in the dark, the timid woman manifests amazon courage, the ignorant confounds the sages in wisdom and the most self-sufficient

spirit loses itself in the submission of a little child. Frederica in the crucial hour of her consecration was no exception to this rule. The habitual calculation of her attitude was abandoned, her keen sense as to the profit and loss of any decision forgotten, the clearness of her vision as to a second step forsook her. At the same penitent form which had welcomed the forlorn hopes of her silk-dress slumming, she now knelt in blind abandonment to the Will of God, her spirit that of the greatest scientist of his time who thus epitomized his repentance:

> "Not the Pardon given to Peter,
> Not the grace vouchsafed to Paul;
> But Thy pity Crucified,
> To the robber at Thy side,
> For my guilt exceedeth all."

Feeling herself less than the least, she rose with no great flood-tide of joy, but the inborn consciousness of an eternal transaction made, of a readjusted relationship with the Divine, and of all strife ended against the purposes of God. In God's school once again Frederica sat in "the first grade."

Through the years that have followed Frederica has maintained all the attractiveness

of this childlike spirit. Associating often with comrades born in rougher cradles and educated in experience's sterner school, there is never any hint of superiority in her attitude. How can there be when none exists in her mind which sits at the feet of any who live near her Lord ?

By her parents her conversion was regarded as a case for alienists, while her new associates scarcely understood at first the Salvationist co-ed who brought her cherished microscope as part of her outfit when she came to the training home. But time has shown her relatives the sanity and saintship of her character, while she has more than won the full confidence of her fellow workers.

The work she has done and is doing is peculiarly her own. With the Army's facility for finding square holes for square pegs her capacity for imparting knowledge is not lost, and she mingles education and religion in a way which is delightfully typical of the student and the Salvationist—using her favourite Gospel of St. John as a text-book in her German class. The grace of her humility again manifests itself as she gathers gratefully deep truths

dropped from the lips of her small Army scholars. Let Frederica have the last word as she tells of one—a boy whose fiery temper had again and again brought the quick tears of repentance.

"The last time I prayed with him," she says, "asking God to forgive him, he cried, 'Oh, teacher, don't pray that way—that's no good. Ask God to take the want to kick out!' Looking back upon God's call to me through this dear organization—the path I had so long kicked against and fought from following—I thank Him and it most of all for the hour when the 'want to kick' was taken out of me."

VII

K. O.

His gods were his own two fists

BILL asserts that his uncle initiated him as a pugilist when as a toddling infant he lifted him up by the ears, and letting him down with a bang exclaimed to his horrified mother:

"Here's what will make the best man you've got."

The little fellow set his teeth and refused to scream, but clenched his baby fists, and squared up to his relative like a bantam rooster, much to that worthy's sinful delight.

There were no truant officers in those days, and little did his people suspect that all Bill's study hours were spent in the ring of a boxing-school for which he paid the quarter given him each week as pocket money. No one noticed how tight the little jacket began to grow with the muscles swelling beneath it. He could al-

ways invent reasons for a black eye or a swollen lip, and had it not been for a row with his brother at the age of fourteen the secret might have remained one even longer.

With an intention one part jealousy and three-fourths pure mischief Bill had effected an estrangement between this brother and his girl. The plot was so cleverly thought out that both parties considered the boy their champion, but there was the usual belated disclosure and one day the elder boy came home with blue murder in his eye, and sought out Bill with the taunt:

"So you are the smart kid that came between me and Lizzie!"

"Sure I am," flared up the little fellow, "and what's more, I'm a better man than you."

At this the elder's anger lost itself in derision.

"You the best man—a little whipper-snapper like you! Come out into the yard, and I'll soon show you," thinking here was an easy way to give Bill the licking he so richly deserved.

The younger assented with disquieting alacrity, and in a few minutes the neighbours were all at their back windows looking down upon

two brothers stripped to the waist and fighting like furies—at least so fought the elder; but Bill showed remarkable coolness and remarkable skill, first in parrying the other's thrusts and then in getting in blows of his own. Sam was head and shoulders taller, but he was no match for the scientific fight put up by Bill, and he was good enough sport to take his beating well.

"Wherever did you learn it, kid?" was all he said as he wiped his bleeding nose.

News of the fight spread like wild-fire through the place, and the following day a stranger gaudily dressed drove up and invited Bill to take a ride. As soon as they were out of earshot, he disclosed himself as a "promoter," said that he had heard of the whipping the boy had given his brother Sam, and asked how he would like him to get up a fight for him with Ty Lawters. Ty Lawters was at that time the champion bantam-weight of his country, and Bill's jaw dropped in amazed rapture at the offer. Without a second's consideration he exclaimed with enthusiasm:

"Count me on."

Next morning Bill's mother was astonished

and delighted by her son remarking thoughtfully:

"Mother, will you let me go over to Aunt Jane's for a month or two? I think I'd like to go to school there."

The wily youngster knew this would be a trump card to play, for although he was nearly fifteen and splendidly developed from a physical standpoint, he could not yet write his own name. Aunt Jane, who lived in the next town, had always made a favourite of the boy and the mother never suspected any strategy in the suggestion. Delightedly she packed a little basket of lunch, and giving him his car fare sent him off for the noon train. But the railway depot saw nothing of Bill or his basket. They took a circuitous route to the "promoter's" house and vanishing within the door were lost to the world for six months.

Then began for poor Bill an experience stern and grim. Little had he bargained for the rigours of such training, but his contract was made, and he would have died rather than break it. Chopped raw meat and burned bread became his food, pommelling and kneading the daily treatment of his groaning body,

and baths, baths—endless baths which alternately boiled and froze him until only his love for the fight kept him game. The daily sparring bout with his trainer was the one joy of the life, and as the weeks wore on, and every ounce of superfluous flesh left his body in exchange for an iron-like substance, and as his quick mind mastered the rudiments of a pugilist's art the lust of conquest burned within him.

A week before the fight Bill cried himself to sleep and that same night prayed his first sincere prayer. The cause of his grief was his failure to desert the defense and follow up an opening left by his trainer which he had neglected because afraid to knock the instructor down. His prayer was:

"O God, if You'll give me as good a chance to-morrow I promise You I won't miss it."

Next day Bill watched his opportunity. By this time their skill was about equal, but the trainer was out of condition, while Bill was light now and fleet as a cat. He ran in and around the other, and at last when the unguarded moment came drove home a smasher. The trainer went down and laid still, and the boy, scared at his own accomplishment, fled from

the ring and down-stairs. He opened the first door he reached, and in his fighting togs created a sensation among the group of men smoking and gambling: Bill's own father, with a stack of gold and notes in front of him, betting on the chances of his son.

"What kind of tomfoolery is this?" exclaimed the fond parent. "Here am I putting up every cent I own on you, and you acting up like this. What is your trainer doing to allow it?"

"Come and see," cried Bill, leaping back to the ring.

They found the trainer just lifting his bruises from the floor, and as they entered he raised himself on one knee exclaiming in rueful triumph:

"Put all your money on that fellow. He'll never let you down!"

The day before the fight Bill demanded permission to see his mother.

"It's likely I'll either kill or be killed before I come back, and I want to see her," he said.

He was refused.

"All right," he returned with an air of finality, "then I'll lose the fight."

This was unthinkable, but his backer recognized how the odds mount up against an unwilling fighter and acquiesced.

Into a very happy and peaceful home interview, in which his mother asked and received much interesting news regarding Aunt Jane's affairs, invented for the occasion, his sister burst like a whirlwind:

"Oh, mother, the boys have just told me they are going to walk all night to Vixboro to see our Bill in a prize-fight."

His mother's agony and anger knew no bounds. She was a university graduate, a woman of culture and refinement, and such a fate for her boy sounded like a death sentence.

"Oh, my son, my son! Have I raised a prize-fighter—never! you shall not do this thing."

"Mother," said Bill in despair, "if I don't fight, pop will lose all his money."

But she scarcely heard him in the storm of her reproaches. At last she sent the boy to his bed, and locking the front door, put the key in her pocket and sat down for a knitting vigil.

Outside the backers whispered in horrified suspense.

"Never fear," said Bill's father who for reasons of his own had not ventured home that night. "I know the stuff that boy is made of—he'll make it somehow."

While he spoke a suppressed laugh startled them, and they turned to see their candidate among them.

"Boy, you are all right," exclaimed the promoter wringing his hand. "But how did you do it?" Bill, his finger on his lips, pointed first to the lighted window shade below and then to a ladder of blankets hanging from an up-story window.

The dawn was barely creeping over the hills when the combatants shook hands. It was broad daylight when the victor's hand was held up—the fight having lasted one hour and twenty minutes. The champion was at the onset rather contemptuous; he had told his supporters, "I'll go in to do him up." Round after round was fought but still he had not accomplished it. For fifteen rounds Bill played the defensive until his opponent's strength was pretty well exhausted and his temper too. Our hero was live and nimble as a young panther; it seemed impossible to catch him, and again and again the

crowd roared its glee as he ran through the other's longer arms. But there was one man who was dissatisfied with these tactics, and that was Bill's father who stood up at last and cried in anger:

"What's the matter with you, boy? Whip him, I say; whip him or never enter my door again."

Several minor blows had been landed on both sides, but a yell went up as the champion at last got in a smashing thrust. "Ha!" he cried. "How'd you like that, Bill? A few more will finish you up."

But Bill set his teeth and muttered, "Save your breath, man. I'm coming out of this ring champion." Now his blood was up, and like lightning he swung over on to the attack; for this Lawters was unprepared, and a fierce body blow sent him down for the first time.

"Double your ten to one on the champion?" asked Bill's parent of his neighbour.

"Nope," said the other expectorating in disgust.

But Bill's more deadly work was yet to be done, and a look of amazed horror came into the champion's blood-shot eyes as he felt his

head drawn into the deadly embrace of a chancery lock, and blow after blow rained down upon his defenseless face. "Time" relieved him for the moment but when they stood up again he was blind in one eye and his breath coming in jerks. "Ty," cried Bill who was bleeding himself, "I've got you now—my wind's as fresh as ever. Will you quit?" The other was nearly "all in" but gasped gamely, "Bill, I'll never quit." Three times Bill sent him smashing through the ropes and the third time there was no come back in him. Banty Bill was champion. But it was a very stiff and sore conqueror that was carried back to town, and it took two full months to properly patch him up again, for they were fights to a finish in those days.

Then Bill lost the championship—through love of Lizzie, his brother's old sweetheart. She loved Bill but hated his profession, and swore she would never marry him while he followed it.

"And if I promise to quit?"

Lizzie's answer was not verbal, but Bill seemed to find it wholly satisfactory.

Three idyllic years followed Both were

only sixteen. The fair little wife used to watch for her husband, and hand in hand come skipping back. Night after night they played marbles in the street together. Yet their love for each other was deeper though no sweeter than their years, and when a little Bill came they did not seem to grow any older, only happier.

Lizzie was a Christian girl, and under her influence the heart of the boy pugilist expanded with new love and reverence for what was holy and good. "My spoiled champion!" she would say in the voice which was like the music of the west wind in the spring woods. Bill always answered her that she had not spoiled but made him in all that was worth while. And so she had.

But from this dream of halcyon bliss there came a rude awakening. One day standing too near the edge of a chair to dust her favourite picture of the Saviour, the little housewife fell and grazed her knee against a nail. She hid the pain, but a month later her husband noticed she was so lame she could scarcely crawl around, and examination showed the limb terribly swollen and blackened. Bill

rushed for a doctor, but the crisis had already passed. "Blood poisoning," was his verdict, and the only chance for her life an immediate operation. Very bravely the girl submitted to the ordeal, but it was too late. Only ten minutes and she murmured:

"Bill, Bill, where are you? I cannot see you any more," and with her hand upon his head slipped forever away.

The world is strangely intolerant of the despair of youth, and the doctor, looking down pityingly upon the frantic young man, smiled inwardly as he heard him say:

"Lizzie, girl, I'll never put another in your place."

He was only nineteen when she left him, but he kept his word.

With the passing of his girl wife, all that was best in Bill's nature seemed to wither and die. Her parents took the baby, and there was nothing to hold the boy widower in the new paths of peace to which love had won him. He had no trade, he had nothing to work for, in his own family he was a discontented and disagreeable addition; instinctively his steps turned back towards pugilism, and one day the

"promoter's" face gladdened at the sight of Bill's and his words:

"I want you to train me for another fight."

Naturally the first aim of both was to get back the bantam-weight championship which he had lost during his three years' absence from the ring. This time it was no long-drawn-out fight, for sorrow had changed the good-natured youngster into a hard-featured, hard-fisted man, and he fought with a recklessness as to personal injury which sent his opponents down one after another. It is a strange thing in prize-fighting as in all else, that the man who cares nothing for his life rarely manages to lose it. In his first fight after his return to the ring he wrested the championship for his own again in fifteen minutes. There was no acting on the defensive now; his first blow told—on the other's jugular vein, and it was soon up with him.

Fight followed fight thick and fast. For twenty-five years Banty Bill kept a place in the ring. During the whole of his British championship, and the first part of his American experience, he remained a temperate man; not from any moral scruple but because he

knew only so could he keep in condition. Fighting was the spice of life to him; his gods were his own two fists, and he lived but for the fray, which many times came near being a mortal one—for the other fellow! A challenge from a vanquished compatriot brought him to the States. He was getting older by this time, and knew that age must give him the count sooner or later, and he thought what if that date came a few days sooner for a glass of champagne. But the drinking left its mark in flabby muscles, increasing weight and worst of all in a weakening of the deadly punch which had been the secret of his fame as a pugilist. Bill was only once knocked out, but he knew he could no longer stand up against the best. More and more champagne drowned his shame, as he hired himself to the proprietor of a Western dive sparring at fifty dollars per night. This meant no sleep, and Bill's blood-shot eyes became haggard for want of it. There are never lacking recommenders of the deadly opiate, and before long he was getting his sleep on opium through the day. The dose was increased again and yet again, until the broken-down fighter was not worth even fifty dollars

a night. Yet even as a drug fiend his muscles were some asset, and when sufficiently in his senses to keep his feet a saloon-keeper gave him five dollars to make a show for his patrons. It was a pitiful sight to see the sometimes drunk, more often drugged, pugilist thus standing at bay—his mighty strength like Samson's at the mercy of his enemies.

One Christmas night the stars looked down upon a huddled mass lying in the mud of the street which was all that was left of the ex-champion. The companions who had baited him the night before to give them sport had forsaken him—he was alone in his degradation.

Footfalls came and passed, sometimes with an expression of pity, more frequently with a shudder of disgust, but at last steps halted beside him, and a kind hand touched him. A little group of Salvationists bent over him, the starlight reflecting the glow of compassion in the eyes of all three.

"We cannot leave him here," said a woman's voice.

"He shall be our guest," said a man's.

Then the more than half-doped Bill felt him-

self hoisted on two shoulders nearly as broad as his own, although he did not realize that he was being carried on the Captain's back, much to the detriment of the Captain's uniform coat over which the mud was streaming. When he came to himself, he was before the stove of a hotel, the proprietor looking down upon him rather contemptuously.

"The Salvation Army Captain carried you here," he responded to Bill's questioning look. "He cleaned you off and paid for your supper. When you've had it I'm to take you to the meeting."

Surprise completely sobered Bill. People had been all too ready to rob him when he could not take care of himself, but such treatment as this was utterly beyond his comprehension. In the meeting that night he sat a poor, bewildered soul on the front bench. His mind, still heavy with dope, struggled over the problem—what could have made these people do so much for him? It was more than the men who made money out of him had ever stooped to do. Suddenly light broke; tears gushed out. The spirit of God connected the links of conscience and memory and crying:

"It's Lizzie's God—let me find Him," he fell at the penitent's bench.

There a power which he knew not laid hold of him. It cleared his mind, it melted his heart, and like a little child the strong, weak man felt the chain of his sins slip from him and underneath him the Everlasting Arms. More than a score of years have set their seal to the Divinity of that deliverance.

And what of the ruling passion? As clean living put him into condition again, and his muscles relocked their iron bands, as he saw at the age of forty-six he had yet to learn his first real trade, did Banty Bill feel the ring claiming him?

He never entered it again nor wanted to, but there came a day when he fought once more. Remember, condemnatory reader, trained in the culture of peace and the arts of self-restraint, that until middle life only the brute side of this man's nature had been developed, and do not sentence him too soon. He had only been converted a few months when one day a tough of the neighbourhood insulted the officer who had been the saviour of Bill's wrecked career. All the dormant chivalry of the man sprang into

resentful life, and he thanked God he had his strength again. The meeting was in process but Bill slipped out unnoticed and found his man, who reviled the Salvationist again in terms unprintable.

"Will you take that back?" said the new convert with set teeth.

With many oaths the man swore that he would not.

"Then stand up and take your medicine from Banty Bill," said our hero.

"But you daren't fight," sneered the other. "You'll lose your religion."

"Look here." Bill was not fighting in hot blood but felt himself the chosen avenger and could afford to be deliberate. Pointing to a window ledge, "See that? Well, I'll put my religion there on that shelf with my coat till I get through with you."

Those who witnessed that combat talk of it still.

Then, when the much cowed and frightened insulter had spat out his apology and four teeth, Bill washed his hands and taking his religion and his coat from the shelf, slipped into the meeting by the back door and took his place on

the platform again without having been missed from his place.

But who among us shall dare to judge poor Bill, and say that his religion was shelved that day?

VIII

THE RAPIDS

With the broken heart of our city street, the broken heart is the cause, the street the effect

THE eye's first sight of America's supreme spectacle is an event ineffaceable on the vision of memory. Second and third visits may reveal new wonders in the Falls and fresh aspects of their chameleon hue and form, but it is a question whether the instinctive impression created by a wonder of nature is not always the truest as well as the most lasting. With the writer, initial remembrance is not of the mighty cataract itself nor even of that more sinister wonder, the whirlpool; the mention of Niagara calls up before her mind that which from the first made the greatest impression upon it—the intervening rapids. Readers who have looked upon this awe-inspiring picture will remember the deep, swift waters which tempestuously make their inevitable way from falls to maelstrom. The lakes in mighty union sweep over their precipi-

tous doom, appear to halt for an instant's stupefaction in the cavern beneath, and then plunge headlong into the rapids which terminate in countless contortions of a bottomless abyss. These wrecked and despairing waters fascinated and fastened my gaze as if upon a living victim, and when my pen is lifted to sketch one of the saddest figures of modern misery the simile irresistibly suggests itself.

There is no fallacy more unjust and cruel than the premise that women who have wandered into the far country of a life of shame are eating iniquity's husks because husks are their depraved taste. Almost unexceptionally with the broken heart of our city street, the broken heart is the cause—the street the effect. The betrayal of a nature which has never learned restraint, the defenselessness of ignorance against the intelligence of infamy, the blinding, bewildering discovery of her own passionate heart—some such tragedy has overwhelmed her and she has gone over the falls. Frantic over the irretrievable loss of the pearl of her womanhood, urged onward and downward alike by the forces of her own utter despair and the bitterness of the world's verdict, the

only hands outstretched to her hands engulfed in the flood-tides of sin—with no retreat possible nor truce to be made with fate she surges down to the vortex of a life of shame. The most crucial hour of frail and falling womanhood is the hour of her first remorse—alas, that it should so often be her hour of all most calamitous.

The hospital door closed behind her. Already the cold officialism of its etherized atmosphere seemed kinder by comparison with the disinterested air of the street. She had been the only patient in her ward to whom the day of discharge had been unwelcome. Lucie shivered as she realized that she had nowhere to go—that there was not a roof under which she might claim shelter. A faint movement of the soft bundle in her arms made her shiver again—life's problem had been difficult enough before; it looked hopeless with this added burden.

Curious eyes halted upon the irresolute figure upon the hospital steps. She became painfully conscious of the child in her arms. "Come, come, no loitering," said a policeman, and aimlessly and listlessly Lucie moved on.

Home and help she had none. Only one message had come from her parents—a brief expression of their hope never to look again upon the face of the daughter who had besmirched an honest name. Kinder but more perplexing was a note from her late employer:

"I am willing to give you another chance, Lucie, if you come alone. I cannot have the child to advertise your disgrace in my kitchen."

Yet another voice rang in her ears, longest and most insistent—the voice of a fellow patient. This woman had flattered and commiserated Lucie when every one else had shunned her, and when she had loathed and hated herself.

"Of course," said this insidious comforter, "she could not go back to her old friends, but there were lots of new ones with whom she might make up. She must hold her head high and make the most of her pretty face while it lasted, and she might have a right smart time yet if she cared. The first thing was to dispose of the baby"—then followed a whispered suggestion which made Lucie's cheek flame and to which she shook her head.

But now alone and absolutely without re-

sources, this advice returned to her as the only course possible. The afternoon shadows were lengthening. Lucie was growing weak and faint, and the child moaned fretfully, awakening no pity in the breast of its unwilling young mother. She only felt irritated, and more and more impatient to be free to live the only life she thought left to such as her. Call her attitude unnatural if you will, but analyze the force of her circumstances and agree that the illustration is not strained which likens her and her kind to rapids on their way to the whirlpool.

That night before the door of an eminently respectable house in an eminently respectable street lay a little helpless bundle—the unconscious legacy of the wide-eyed girl fast fleeing towards the underworld of a great city.

"'Put the little fellow on his father's doorstep,' she said. Well, I've done it, and now for life—what's left of it," thought Lucie as she ran.

But Lucie's revenge was short-lived. In her calculations she had overlooked the fact that her betrayer, who had been an honoured guest in the home of her late mistress, was a rich man.

Wealth is too often equally powerful to hide and to discover, and the same means which shielded his name hounded hers down. Anyway, Lucie was too unskilled in the art of deception to successfully cover her tracks, and within twenty-four hours her frightened, pretty face showed white like that of a scared rabbit in the gloom of a police dock to answer a charge of desertion.

The Army's embassy in the police court is one of its best representations. Whether it appears as the champion of wronged childhood, as the last hope of dethroned and defaced womanhood, or as, in the present case, the friend who turns the scale of destiny for the betrayed, its presence is alike timely. In many instances the Rescue Home matron is herself a Probationary Officer—when she is not, the officials know how to find her and how well to count upon her.

"Can you give her a chance?"

A gentle woman with thirty years' experience of all sorts and conditions of sinners and "sinned-againsts" answered the court's appeal with eager assent, and before nightfall helpless twenty days and equally helpless twenty years

were sheltered under the roof tree which has in its merciful history so many times repeated itself as the synonym of protection and peace.

Dazed by disaster Lucie did not show herself immediately grateful. She was glad enough to get out of the clutches of the law but the restoration of her baby was a more dubious blessing. It had been so impressed upon her that life would be impossible with this encumbrance that it took some days' absorption of the home atmosphere to make her feel otherwise. Verbal sermons are few within these walls; even the meetings are chiefly composed of singing, but every officer's smile, every room full of healthful and pleasant occupation, every wall with its heart-lifting mottoes, above all the cheerful visits of old inmates who are making good, preaches many and effectual sermons, and the text is always the same—hope.

Lucie's disappointed, half-demented spirit was no proof against the sweet, sane influences by which she was surrounded. As is so often the case, the wholesale condemnation of her world had resulted in her own complete vindication of herself—the instinctive feeling of the wronged to exonerate itself from all wrong

being one of the most demoralizing effects of such situations. But now the compass of conscience readjusted, that magnetic needle of the soul pointed as it always does away from the sins of others to the sins of self, and Lucie's pity for Lucie lost itself in penitence. Less than a week after her rescue from the rapids, with the matron's arm round her, this girl who had expected every one to shrink from her bathed her wounded heart in its best balm—contrition.

What was the first impulse of the regenerated soul? The righting of her capsized womanhood. With the new birth came the dawn of mother love in her heart. Her first cry was for the child, and clasping him to her breast she cried:

"To think how nearly I lost you, my own little one. You shall never leave my arms again. God and these good people will help me to care for you always."

Seven years have sevenfold increased her joy and pride in the little fellow. The girl has refused every opportunity for his adoption, and many lucrative positions for herself where she might not keep him by her side. Every thought and hope of her heart seems bound up in him, and every year of her struggle upwards

her foot has been firmer and her brow clearer, while the shadow has faded from her eyes as she has looked into the clear young orbs whose smile has taken the sting out of shame.

"But this is only what we have come to expect," said the matron in telling us the story; "the hand of her little child is the strongest lever in lifting and holding the mother."

IX

THE BALLOONIST

"They're fine at fixing folks"

"WHAT do *you* know about aeronautics?"

Not even the dictionary definition of the word if young Gus had spoken the truth. But not idly had his mother called him her "eldest and sassiest," and he answered glibly:

"If that is Chinese for 'going up,' I know what it is by doing it."

"Where did you make an ascent?" asked the professional without taking his eyes from the tangle of silk and rope over which he was working.

"Franeham Fair last fall."

Then the balloonist lifted his eyes for the first time, and surveyed the aspirant for aerial honours, as he stood before him dusty from a long trip in a "side door Pullman."

"For your age, young man," he remarked leisurely, "you're a plaguey good liar. I worked myself at Franeham Fair last fall—I'm the only balloonist that's ever been up there. But I like your nerve, and as it's the big essential in my job I'll take you on. Start right in with the sewing."

This sounded tame, but Gus was too anxious to make good to raise objections. It was smoking hot in the aeronaut's parking place and as he perspiringly wrestled hour after hour with seemingly endless yards of heavy silk, all that was ease-loving in the boy's nature mentally pitied him for a fool. But when the afternoon cooling, and his work done, he stood aside to watch the filling gas transform the inert mass into buoyant life, then saw it, released, spring into the air and soar with majestic grace up into the blue, a slim, white-clad figure gracefully swinging by one arm, all the boy's adventurous soul swelled as he exclaimed:

"It's a bully job all right, and I've got to take that chap's place some day."

His chance came sooner than might have been expected. One day an illuminated night ascent was to supplement the usual afternoon's

performance, an additional sensation being the waving of a torch by the aeronaut when high in air. But the man under contract for the event managed to be missing. The manager was frantic—the rumour that one of his performers had "cold feet" would be suicidal to his business, as well as likely to exert a demoralizing effect upon other members of the small company. In his perplexity his eyes fell upon the roguish face of his new employee and half in jest he said:

"Boy, are you game to ride to-night in Sam's place?"

"Do you mean it?" Every feature of Gus's face was bathed with the glory of his feelings, and when he found that the manager would stand by his invitation, he nearly lost his chance by throwing his head back in one prolonged yell until the manager's hand came down upon his mouth with the stinging reminder:

"Let others do the yelling, boy, when you go up. You can do yours when you get safe down again."

That night without any rehearsal at all Gus made his first ascent, and when at a

giddy height waved his flaming torch above cheering thousands. After the first inward convulsion common to all who for the first time reverse the law of gravitation, and the short but sickening suspense between the drop and the opening parachute Gus suffered little inconvenience and his native pluck saving him from any suspicion of stage fright, he alighted with a composure phenomenal after a first ascent.

"Boy, you're born for a balloonist," said the manager. "This won't be your last experience."

"Can't keep a good man down," retorted Gus rather cheekily.

Some weeks afterwards a middle-aged man and woman made their way through the fair grounds to the aeronauts. Gus's face fell when he saw them, ejaculating:

"My stars, here's dad and mother—guess it's all up with me and the job now."

From which it will be seen that Gus was the prodigal of his family. Yet all his misdoings could be classified under one head—mischief. He teased the girls, and outwitted the boys, and "sassed" the teachers until his father had to appear before the school committee to per-

suade them to continue the culprit's education. "Your last and only chance," his father had said when the boy went up to high school. Gus lost it. Four days afterwards he let two white mice loose in the class room—the boys yelled, the girls screamed, the professor came in and stormed, and Gus was unconditionally expelled. His father's words were still in his ears—the only course open to him seemed to run away, which he did by the aid of some cash stolen on his behalf by a boy pal. For four years his parents had lost all trace of him, then one day a neighbour had recognized the youth ballooning in another town, and they had made haste to find and fetch him. But the prodigal looked anything but repentant, or, if truth must be told, glad to see them.

"Son, don't you think it's time you came home?" said the father in a choking voice.

The mother said nothing, yet her brimming eyes had that in them which nearly did for the boy's bravado. But after the man had had a drink all softness left his manner—he swore his son should make no more ascents, and that he would have the law on the manager if he did. They took Gus in tow to keep him in sight as

they went round the grounds, but a country fair is the easiest place to lose oneself, and while his parents stood open mouthed before some side-show Gus slipped away. When at the usual time the ascent was made, two of the spectators formed quite a counter attraction as they recognized their son in the ascendent.

"The young rascal has gone up after all," cried his mother.

The father's exclamation we will leave to the imagination of the reader—it was sufficiently illuminating as to his state of mind.

But Gus squared things by returning with them in apparent penitence. For two long weeks he stayed in but not of the home life; then the wanderlust which had fretted him all the time would not be denied, and he again disappeared. This time they did not seek to bring him back.

Gus returned to his chosen calling, and for five years played the part of a professional balloonist, sharing alike the fame and danger common to such a livelihood. His weight and build and absolute fearlessness all combined to make him an ideal performer. He became an expert at the "toe-hang" and the "teeth-hang"

and made descents by parachutes three and four in succession, besides being a regular acrobat and going through all sorts of stunts in the air.

The professional set was fast enough, and Gus was in for any devilment going round; only drink had no fascination for him. The only time he was ever drunk was once as a boy when some one put whiskey in a glass of ginger ale and the remembrance of his humiliation has been lifelong. Gus did not like anything that made him feel small, and of course his abstinence from all liquor increased his value as an aeronaut. But cigarettes he consumed by the score, and although he often made big money he had never a cent ahead, living the luxurious hand to mouth existence of his kind.

When the cold weather closed ballooning for the season Gus disappeared. For the winter months he left no address. During this interval he rarely did a day's work—his early experience after running away as a "kid panhandler" stood him in good stead, and the saying among his pals was, "The fellow that Gus can't bluff a dime out of is a skinner for sure." Such an adept beggar was often left to

collect for the gang. One day when he and a pal were "doing" opposite sides of the street the other man had not a cent to show against his own three dollars odd. Although this man had made a show of stopping all passers-by and had received something from the majority in order to "save his face" with Gus, he had simply asked for a match knowing that his companion would bring in enough for two!

During these days companions were of the toughest, for Gus had cut loose from all restraints of religion or respectability. The unmistakable marks of dissipation upon his still boyish face told that, like all who Phœbus-like snatch the reins from self-control, he was being dragged earthward by the "heavier chains of liberty," and though each season Gus went higher in his aerial flights, in his moral nature he was sinking rapidly.

For five years it seemed as if the sword of Damocles which hangs over such a precarious profession would spare him. Up till the time of his last ascent, his most serious mishap had been the loss of a tooth kicked out by a female performer with whom he has making what they call "a double," Gus in his celebrated "toe-

hang"; an occasion when his temper endangered his neck more than the accident.

But beside him he had seen many a pal fall to his fate. One of these men was the son of balloonist parents, both of whom had met the same tragic end. At one ill-starred exhibition in which he appeared, seven of his fellow performers, two men and three girls, were killed in as many weeks. But their places were filled and the show went on.

"We always knew that death might be part of any one of our day's work," says Gus. "Yet we thought less of it than the public." Gus himself never once suffered from cold feet, or, as professional parlance puts it, he never had a "hunch." But only one man in a hundred is immune from disaster, and Gus was one of the ninety-nine. Doing one day a fancy stunt that he had often accomplished with success, that of jumping from parachute to parachute, after making two of them successfully he was reaching for the third when in some unexplainable way he lost his grip on the bar and fell over sixty feet. A broken leg and arm, a smashed nose and chin and other injuries laid Gus in ruins.

At last he struggled back to a hospital convalescence and—despair. Intuition told him that despite the surgeon's clever patchwork he would never ride again, for he felt his nerve gone. The balloon troupe had passed on to another town—for the first time Gus felt himself stranded. He clung to the morphine given him for the pain of his wounds. A patient in a neighbouring bed, also a professional in a less legitimate line, eyed him curiously.

"Got anything to start on, old fellow?" he asked laconically.

"Nope," returned Gus. "Don't care much whether I ever start at all."

"Bad business," said the crook. "Here's ten dollars—never mind how I came by it. You can buy enough dope to comfort and kill you, or you can use it to get as far away from this town as it will take you."

Characteristically he offered no advice as to the choice, but outside the hospital love of life came back to Gus, and he celebrated his recovery with a spree that nearly put him on his back again.

There is nothing more dreaded by the horticulturist than the ravages of the parasite—the

vine or creeper which draws its sole nutriment from a hardier, more independent growth inevitably weakened by this thief of its vitality. No less menacing to the life of the community is the human parasite, the man who from inclination, habit or heredity has reversed the obligations of the primeval curse and eats his bread by the sweat of another's brow. The parasite is the professional sponger, whose art it is to play upon the sympathy and credulity of the public so successfully as to force it to supply his entire sustenance. Such characters are abnormal in their absence of any sense of individual responsibility, and they are admittedly the hardest class in which to inculcate any conscience worthy of the name. Of this class Gus now became a fully qualified member. In his case there was no hereditary excuse. The boy came of hard-working stock, and example and training ought to have endowed him with at least a normal sense of industry. As it was up till the time of his meeting with the Salvation Army Gus had never felt any real concern for earning his living, for his ballooning had been undertaken wholly to gratify an inborn love of adventure. Perhaps here was

some reversion to type generations old and long forgotten.

The ensuing months are no credit to our hero. Although but in his early twenties, he acknowledged himself a "hobo," and without the least compunction lived upon others, begging his way from town to town, subsisting entirely upon charity.

But freights and wayside bounty are alike precarious, and one sleety day he tramped into the capital city of the state, having been kicked off a train fourteen miles out. The cruel wind discovered every rent in his tatters; his shoes worn to the uppers were no fortification against the besieging slush of the street. Few would have recognized the young aeronaut who a few months before had held the admiring gaze of thousands. Now he was a "no-account bum" and nobody cared whether he ate or starved.

"Down on your luck?" The questioner was shabby but clean, and Gus turned at once to say that luck and he had long been parted.

"Well, I was in the same fix three weeks ago. But say, the Salvation Army Industrial Home took me in, straightened me out, and here I am holding down the best job I've had

for years. My boss only pays every two weeks, and I haven't any money or I'd slip it to you. But try the Army people; they're fine at fixing folks."

Some one has said that a reclaimed story becomes uninteresting after the tide of reclamation fairly sets in. We contest the point, but would remind any who find it so that it is possible to mistake for monotony the onsweep of the All-conquering Grace of God which, once it gets thoroughly to work upon a character, sweeps all before it, and rocks that might make both good "copy" and shipwreck, the life's craft leaves far astern. Again it may be suggested that the Salvation Army workers regard their special genius of infinite pains with each case such an every-day affair that observers are also apt to call it commonplace. But this cannot detract from the indelible achievement wrought upon the plastic clay of a wretched heart, nor from the glory laid up for the hand which has been pupilled by the great Remodeller of men.

In the case of Gus the work was neither done in a day nor easily. The young man was already old in sin and shiftlessness. He did not like work—he had never had a vocation save

the one which he could never follow again. There was little ground upon which to build, but the Industrial manager refused to be discomforted, and when one string failed to respond in the boy's long discordant nature he tried another, and yet another. A place to sleep and food to eat was given him, followed by much less welcome employment. The Salvationists' triumph began when Gus showed that his sense of responsibility was sufficiently cultivated for him to want to work for his living. In between times there were many serious talks, and the conscience which had promised to sleep for a lifetime awoke, and showed Gus that while young in years he had come near wasting his life among "crooks and bums." Then in one of the meetings in which everything seemed pointed at him poor Gus knelt at the mercy seat, and into his still very dark heart a shaft of light was planted which has only changed to grow brighter and greater.

More up-hill work, but with Gus's own soul helping instead of acting as a drag in his elevation, and the manager, who had grown to love the young man almost as a son as he had borne with his shortcomings as a father, received his

crowning in the boy's decision to enter the Army ranks as an officer among the "down and outs."

But this is all past history, for although still among the young folk, Gus has put in several years of splendid officership, and has helped many a faltering way-worn foot on the ladder by which he himself climbed to redemption. Salvation has destroyed none of the mirth-provoking powers which made him a favourite in his balloon days, but it has discovered and developed in him a power which no one thought he possessed—an enormous capacity for work, hard work and plenty of it. He can tire out two men of his size. The compassion which lights his still boyish face as he deals with an inmate of his Industrial Home is very attractive.

"For," says Gus, "I remember what it was that finally fetched me. In my school days there was only one teacher that ever got the better of me and she did it by loving me, and the Salvationists looked through the bad of me and found all that might still be good in me the same way by loving me."

Not long since the shadow of a tragedy fell across the threshold of Gus's happy home, now

graced by a sweet young wife. An old pal of his professional days was doing a week's ascents in the neighbourhood and visiting Gus. The change in his friend was beyond the comprehension of the man Karl; he laughed at Gus "getting religion," but through the week his respect manifestly grew. His campaign closed on Sunday and over the breakfast table he said that after this ascent he had made up his mind to be through with the business. There was not enough money in it to make the risk worth while and he would go up for the last time that day. "Perhaps I'll get a job in town and board with you, Gus," he finished.

"Splendid, old fellow!" exclaimed Gus; "better still if you throw in your lot with us altogether." The thought made his morning prayer extra jubilant, and though the other did not join he listened respectfully to the petition to "keep us all safe."

"Gentlemen, you are here to entertain the public by taking your lives in your hands. Please be careful."

Only afterwards did the spectators remember any special significance in the announcer's words.

Karl's partner bowed in acquiescence but Karl's answer was only a smile of derision as he went up nonchalantly holding the rope. Something lacking in his appearance caused his companion to call as the two soared in air:

"Have you got your wrist lock all right, boy?"

But Karl only shouted:

"So-long, Tom."

At an altitude of two thousand feet Karl cut loose and like a meteor he darted downward. The parachute opened, but owing to the absence of or improperly fastened wrist lock the force of the man's weight broke his hold, and he fell seven hundred feet to meet instant and horrible death in a cemetery below.

The poor fellow had gone up once too often and lost his last chance of making a new start in life, and Captain Gus's heart was heavy as he made arrangements for the humble funeral.

"You see," explained Gus, telling us the story some time after, "Karl had reached the dangerous place where he thought he could dispense with safety. He liked to hear folks say he was a brave fellow and did not need a wrist lock. But every one needs one. The

wrist lock is the only hope of an aeronaut when a parachute falls a long distance before opening. It is fastened to the concentrating ring of a parachute where the ropes come together and keeps a fellow's weight from pulling him clear of the trapeze bar when the jolt takes place. I guess, though," Gus went on ruefully, "poor Karl was no more foolish with his balloon than I had been with my life. I knew the value of the wrist lock in the air, but I thought I could dispense with any safeguard for my soul."

"And what would you call your present wrist lock?" we asked, feeling reasonably sure of the answer. It came with emphasis:

"Salvation, and seeing that my wife," the twinkle which is never long from his eyes returning in full force, "my wife and I are one and she has got the same thing, why, you might about call this wrist lock a padlock, eh!"

X

OF VIKING STOCK

Like the granite sarcophagus rent by the penetrating tendril of a flower

IN the warp and woof of our cosmopolitan tapestry there are no sturdier strands than those which have come from the looms of Scandinavia. Their heroic heritage, stalwart physique, strong heads and stronger hands weave into a citizenship which is an adornment to the name. Yet these hardy characters are only revealed at their best by the divine touch—without this even the descendants of the Vikings may sink to the gloomy level of the commonplace—and worse. Thelma and her Captain Ester are concrete illustrations of the abstract point.

Thelma was cast for tragedy first on the stage and later for life. She never spoke the lines of an ingénue character—hers were always the heavy and sorrowful, and the tall expressive figure and fine mobile face gave her place at once in the profession. Yet her bearing in

private life was anything but that of a tragedy queen. She was the gayest of the particular theatrical Bohemia in which she moved, plunging into its license and excitement with an abandon which was the natural reaction from the confinement and rigidity of her strict Lutheran home.

It was one of the horrors of nineteenth century civilization that its most sheltered maidenhood was often its most defenseless; once outside the hedge of proprieties which had enclosed her girlhood, Thelma had neither course nor compass to steer her undisciplined barque from the rocks of infamy, and her shipwreck was pitiful and swift. Champagne flowed freely after every performance; in it she drowned all conscience and convention and at last the wealth of her womanhood. To save her good name and incidentally his own, a fellow actor offered her marriage, which the disillusioned and despairing girl accepted as the only way out. Alas, she found it a way in—to greater misery. With neither feeling nor professing any respect for the other, what could be hoped from such a union? Ten years of mutual unhappiness and the man freed himself.

As a divorced woman Thelma found life unendurable in her native land; her very presence there seemed a reproach upon well-born, well-living relatives—the pleasures of sin had lost their taste for a season. She had not the custody of her own child, and caring little whether her voyage terminated in New York or in mid-ocean, she crossed the Atlantic.

"The new world and a new life for me," thought Thelma as they passed Sandy Hook. But she was to learn how little after all environment can alter ego, and that the same foes to peace and integrity which had been her downfall in Norway she had brought with her to the United States.

Scandinavian domestics are never at a premium, and Thelma soon found a situation. But the rough work hurt her fingers, accustomed to the care of servants of her own; the confinement and restrictions fretted one who had lived so long in an artist's freedom and the society of her fellow menials was a poor exchange for the brilliancy of the professional circle of which she had formed a part. The nature which had breathed in from birth the strong clear airs of the fjiords could not bear the atmosphere of a

New York basement, and in desperate loneliness she threw up her job.

Then the publication of Nansen's famous book opened a new field of employment. Thelma was a fluent talker and of good appearance, and her natural patriotic enthusiasm made her a successful book agent among the Norwegian districts, as she spoke with pride of the man who had carried the flag of his country "Furthest North."

But the very freedom of her position was her peril. Alone and still noticeably attractive she wandered through the great city's "Little Scandinavia," and in her canvassing entered one day a gay hotel. She immediately made a sale, and the proprietor with some flattery offered her lucrative work in his restaurant. One of the customers, a few days later, struck by her refined and respectable appearance, asked under his breath:

"Girl, do you know that you are in the worst house in the neighbourhood?"

Thelma shook her head incredulously. She did not believe him.

A week later to the same question she would have tossed her head. She had ceased to care.

Eight years later into the orbit of Thelma's scarred life there shone the star of Captain Ester's sweet face. Her bundle of *Strids ropets* on her arm she passed unharmed through haunts which police officials shunned alone, and many a noisy quarrel was stilled by her soft Swedish voice, and many a prodigal from the fatherlands was led by her gentle hand into ways of repentance and peace.

But upon one heart her words seem to fall like crystal drops upon a boulder of flint. Of all the denizens of those dreary dives there was none who made stronger appeal upon the Salvationist's compassion. The woman was the most abandoned of her sex in that locality. Dirt and dissipation had lined her face until age was indecipherable. The horrors of her life had bowed a once splendid frame to a twisted stoop. Among the outcasts of that outcast street she was acknowledged by all, including herself, to be the lowest and the worst. "Bergen's Thelma" was a name not for respectable lips. Even the drunkards and harlots said to Captain Ester:

"Don't waste your time upon *her*."

But such arguments could hold no meaning

for the Captain—to her there was only one way of wasting time, and that was to lose an opportunity to bless or save, and seemingly upon fruitless ground she went on planting her seeds of love.

Weeks went by with no sign of an impression. Months passed but Thelma showed no softening. The end of a year found her only more abandoned. But Captain Ester's patience seemed inexhaustible; many another jewel had been added to her crown during the twelve months but nothing superseded her interest in the woman whom every one regarded—who regarded herself—as "hopeless." Many times Thelma struggled to evade her, escaping down a side street if she saw the Captain coming up the avenue. Sometimes she was openly hostile and abusive, more often stolidly indifferent to the loving interest which she seemed powerless to outtire, but the tender hand was still continually upon her shoulder and the tender reminder in her ear:

"Remember, Thelma, God is your friend, and I want to be—it is not too late for you to make a new start," or, "God will forgive and we will help you to forget."

This went on for six years. Oh, misquoter of the verses "pearls before swine" and "the king's business requireth haste," you who have wanted to see your seeds spring up overnight, and have impatiently forsaken one field for another because the harvest has tarried, listen, and learn from Captain Ester's example while we repeat those words—six years! Some hearts will never be opened by dynamic force, yet like the granite sarcophagus rent by the penetrating tendril of a flower they wait to respond to the persistency of gentler means.

Then one day in a filthy gingham dress, her tangled hair hanging round her shoulders, Thelma came to Captain Ester sobbing bitterly, telling her she wanted to be good. Hoping, praying that the time long worked for and wanted had come at last, the Captain took her to her own home, and with the fine practicality which is one of her strongest characteristics made a cup of strong coffee and set food before her long-anticipated guest. For two hours the two knelt together. Out of the wreckage of herself poor Thelma's soul at last found voice, crying:

"Oh, if you have troubled so much and so long, God must love me."

Then she put her much battered sin-spent self into Divine Hands and a new life began. But the fight was not all over; the forces of evil abroad all the time in war against the forces of Divinity swooped down upon her, and for two days Thelma went through a mental and spiritual combat which left her weak and faint—but a conqueror. During forty-eight hours she never closed her eyes in sleep—she said:

"I was so afraid of losing God again."

Then with a shining smile upon her thin, ravaged face Thelma told her Captain that all was well. For weeks her rejoicing saviour watched over her like a mother, building up her strength with nourishing food, keeping her heart and mind occupied with easy tasks, and literally loving her back to her womanhood again as only a soul steeped in Calvary passion can do it. For weeks she did not let her convert walk down the notorious street upon which she herself had been the most notorious. Then one day on an errand which necessitated a short cut Thelma found herself before she

knew upon the forbidden ground. When she reached home out of breath, with eyes dancing, she cried:

"Oh, Captain, I've just been down the old avenue. But I hardly recognized it—it looks like a new street; it's all so changed."

It took the Captain some time to prove to her protégée that the change was in herself.

Four years of salvation have lifted from Thelma's appearance many years. A middle-aged woman in actuality, an old woman in feeling and appearance, religion has almost made her a girl again. She lost fourteen years in sin but already her friends say she looks as if fifteen have been given back to her. Her figure has straightened, her face smoothed out and her eyes regained their brightness. Hard, honest toil makes her doubly appreciate the cozy little flat which her earnings can now afford and in which Thelma loves sometimes to play her new and delightful part as lady bountiful. She has all the Scandinavian's veneration for the feast of Noel, and although in her degraded years the season had passed without any celebration, as soon as religion transformed her she set about honouring the Birth-

day. The festivities of her comrades were not sufficient; she wanted to make her gift to the Christ child something more personal. So around a little Christmas tree of her own she gathered half a dozen destitute babies, and sent them away warmed without as well as within, clothed in new garments which she had sat up many nights to sew for them.

But her hardest, happiest work is put in at the Army meetings, where her still unquenched dramatic powers, and her well-known reputations, both old and new, make her words of invaluable service and blessing. Conversion has brought out all the latent vitality of her Viking stock, and out of the ashes of her miserable past her splendid intellect and strong soul has risen to crown the work which discovered and saved her.

The other day when selling *War Cries* she felt herself followed. Thelma is of stalwart proportions and amazon courage and turned to face the man who slunk back, evidently satisfied when her face was disclosed beneath its poke bonnet.

"Why, it is—it can't be ——" he stammered. "Forgive me, miss, but I took you for Bergen's

Thelma. There is such a likeness yet such a difference."

Writing for the first time in fifteen years to her brother who is a doctor in Norway she said:

"I am Thelma, your sister, she which was dead, but is alive again."

The Devil sneered on a field of time as he
scanned its wan waste over;
'Tis winter already for souls, he said, which
have spent their all for what is not
bread.
For Hope she is dead
And Chance it has fled
From the years that the locust hath eaten.

The Saviour smiled on a field of time as He
looked its new life over,
On the miracle spring had worked again,
the stripped tree bore buds and the
shorn earth grain.
For I will restore
To the soul and more
Than the years that the locust hath eaten.

XI

THE MISFIT

" *Broncho buster, dog fancier, gentleman rancher, has religion lassoed you at last?* "

THE eye of dawn is pitifully realistic. Through sunset glow we look often with glamour upon a renovated world —defects hidden by the lengthening shadows, beauties brought out and intensified by the pigments of nature's greatest colour artist. But with the day's awakening comes disillusionment and we see things as they are. Thus the new light mercilessly searched the Floridian scene for flaw and failure, and found both. The festoons of Spanish moss appeared like funereal drapings on trees where their parasitic ravages were already showing. The orange grove at dusk would have seemed fit setting for any Southern idyl, but now between its leaves there showed the small stunted balls hard as marbles, bitter, useless legacy of that rare tropical tragedy—frost. As a subject for a

painting the old log cabin might have invited the artist to set up his easel, but as a habitation for man its almost ruin was appalling.

But the picture was not one exclusively of still life, for up from the region of the little stream came a sound of lapping. There, bending over the same low trough, a man and a dog where slaking their thirst together. The dog finished first and frisked about his prone master, short barks expressing surprise at his awkwardness over an accomplishment in which he himself had been proficient since puppy days. But this was only one of many mysteries beyond the understanding of Snapper—why his master should have taken to walking on four feet like himself, why any stick he brought was no longer thrown for him but eagerly snatched for the fire, why from meat scraps and occasional bones the food of both had descended to an unrelieved oatmeal diet most palling to the canine palate—these were weightier problems.

At last the man lifted his face ; its contour was classic despite shaggy locks and unshaven beard, but tragic with its look of failure. Pulling two sticks to his elbows he commenced his painful return to the cabin ; so crippled he was

and so inadequate his crutches that the journey was made almost upon his hands and knees, Snapper meanwhile running to and fro, and covering a dozen times the distance. With a groan the man threw himself down upon the cabin floor, too weak to reach the wretched makeshift which served him as couch; the nearest neighbours fifty miles away, he thought himself dying, and as the little fox terrier licked his face he moaned:

"Poor, faithful little Snapper! If your master goes you will be better off; you are only tied to a failure."

"He has failed, he has failed, he has
missed his chance,
He has just done things by half;
Life's been a jolly good joke on him
And now is the time to laugh.
Ha, ha! he is one of the legion lost;
He was never meant to win;
He's a rolling stone and it's bred in the
bone,
He's a man who won't fit in."

Years later Robert W. Service was to write these lines, but he could never have found a fitter subject for them than the man who that

night lay friendless and hopeless on his blighted orange ranch. All Dane's fate and failure might be expressed in those words—he was a misfit.

Singularity more often than sin is the stone which starts the avalanche of such men's careers. Dane had been the one odd member of a particularly even family. For generations his race had run in a groove—a groove of talent, wealth and distinction, but a groove none the less. Each youth had gone to college primed with a sense of his responsibility to sustain the honour of his blood; each had returned with fresh laurels to adorn the name of his forefathers—except Dane. He baulked. Within a few days of his graduation he ran away—to his parents' everlasting humiliation. The son who preferred tools to books and whose nature-loving soul pined in the class room confinement was to remain their hopeless conundrum.

"Son," demanded his proud old father, "do you forget that your grandfather tutored princes?"

"Poor grandfather!" To the older man such effrontery was equal to lese-majestie. "Father, I'd like to please you if I could, but to

wear a stiff collar all the time and hold a book to my nose—it stifles me."

"Then," said the mortified parent, "there is nothing left you but the navy yard." For to the aristocratic old mind the disgrace of manual labour seemed less if associated with government service.

But the boy was still a misfit. His dreamy, sensitive spirit shrank at first from the coarse companions of his new environment. They on their part, with the instinctive resentment of labour against the intrusion of leisure, determined to make the young gentleman one of themselves. They succeeded so well that at the end of the first of his five years' apprenticeship, Dane could drink with any of them, while his proficiency in the art of torpedo manufacture was soon outstripped by his proficiency in every sort of obscene profanity. Yet he was an incongruous figure; he imbibed the worst of his surroundings yet himself remained a foreign and solitary element.

He did not fit in at his next, a government appointment. Dissipation had already begun to vitiate his brain powers. The authorities were glad to have his illustrious name on their

pay roll, but were surprised at the irregularity of his work.

He did not fit in at home. His brothers and sisters were ready of speech; he was temperamentally quiet and slow. Amid their warm demonstrations, his dumb adoration of his mother was misunderstood and discredited. When at midnight she met him with a low-spoken, "My boy," his heart nearly burst with repentant love, but his father's harsh, "Have you no apology to offer, young hound?" congealed the rising emotion.

He became a misfit even in the circle of his carousing companions who, glorying in his extremes of dissipation, were yet repelled by his strange moods of morosity.

Then he became painfully conscious that he was a misfit in society. For some years he lived a double life. In faultless evening dress he began many an evening among wealth and culture, ending such over and over again in coarse garb and coarser debauchery; then home to spend what remained of the night in futile tears, disgusted with himself in either rôle. But the time came when invitations grew less, family acquaintances dropped his name from

their lists and he was suspiciously shunned by parents with marriageable daughters. At last came the family complaint or rather command:

"You are only a disgrace to us here. Go and pull yourself together in America."

So to the country which craves and gives itself to the strong there was added another incompetent. When will the old world wake to the truth that this mighty land of magnificent distances, buried treasure, nature's plenitude and opportunity's storehouse, demands the best? Has she not had evidence sufficient in the failures whom she has sent here to sepulchre, whitening bones on the path of progress telling of weaklings whom this strong land has turned to rend. But for the intervention of that Divinity whose miraculous effect upon the lives of men these pages portray Dane would have been numbered among these victims.

On this side the Atlantic the man seemed no better able to find his place. He essayed an atheistic set where for the first time he openly cut loose from the faith of his fathers, saying with a laugh:

"The devil's good enough for me."

Yet he felt himself uncomfortably out of his

element, and his associates were quick to feel this. One night after Dane had loudly debated the non-existence of a Divine Being a companion said to him:

"What a liar you are!"

"The same to you," Dane responded. "Do any of us really disbelieve?"

And because there is nothing more tortuous than the heart's involuntary belief to which the lip gives the lie, he was more than ever a miserable man.

Money and friends timed their disappearance with the usual precision, and for the first time Dane's well-stocked memory of the classics recalled with personal application the famous soliloquy of the ill-starred prince of Denmark. Many times he asked himself, "To be or not to be." For months he and a friendly druggist held a suicide pact in abeyance, the latter manufacturing deadly pellets, a supply of which was carried by each. But though its undulations are fitful, the pendulum of a misfit's life swings long, and ere either could summon up sufficient courage to take the last dose the Western fever had fired Dane's blood, and soon he was finding life worth living

again on the back of a broncho. Horse-breaking is peculiarly alien to meditation—such men may commit suicide but rarely premeditate it, for the very wine of earthly existence passes the lips of such outdoor life, and who would want to throw such a cup away—who but a misfit!

Before long Dane was again restless and he forsook the stock ranch to become a dog breeder in Chicago. Love of animals was one of the few steady passions of his fluctuating nature and he became inordinately proud of his fox terriers. Here he might have found a fixed if not a fine life's occupation, had not the nemesis of ill-health pursued him out of it. Gathering up the last of his funds and taking one favourite dog he bought a small orange ranch in Florida as a last hope for health and livelihood. But he had had no experience in agriculture; he loved but did not understand nature's varying moods. The barometer of his prospects sank lower and lower; frost came and it dropped to zero. Crippled with rheumatism, a dwindling oatmeal barrel his only sustenance, forsaken by his friends, without a hope or help in the world, on the night when

this story opens the man believed himself at the point of death.

But Dane did not die and there were even darker times to come—days when again the thought of suicide took possession of him, when he sat for hours, his gaze fascinated by the clothes-line left hanging by the old negro housekeeper of his more prosperous days—nights when he lay with fixed eyes watching the moonlight creeping up the wall till it illumined the muzzle of his gun—the only weapon left out of a fine collection. The darkest hour of all came when he resolved upon the death of Snapper.

The tie which binds a lonely man and his dog together is one of the most interesting and attractive of life's phenomena. Very often in the man it is the only evidence of humane feeling, while in the dog it brings out the peculiar capacities of canine companionship which have earned him the name of "man's best friend." The bond between dog and master in this case was a very close one. Snapper was the sole descendant of the prize "Peggy," who had been killed by a rattler soon after her flight south. Then Snapper had entered into every

pleasure, pursuit and privation with Dane upon the doomed ranch. The cat had hunted and fished on her own account, but Snapper had always brought his prey to his master. He learned to fetch hat, stick and other articles by name, and withal proved himself an indispensable companion, becoming, as is so often the case, the more intelligent and adept as his master became more enfeebled and crippled. But the oatmeal was nearly spent in the barrel, and Dane resolved that at least two should not die of starvation. He made up his mind to shoot the dog in his sleep, but Snapper seemed to dream with one eye open and it became impossible to catch him napping. Then Dane set his teeth to the task of despatching his friend awake. Snapper and the gun had always been the best of friends; its removal from the wall had sent him into a frenzy of glee in anticipation of a hunting expedition; but now the dog took a sudden and unaccountable dislike to it. He growled when Dane took the weapon in his hand, showed his teeth and ran off to hide with tail down and ears cocked in nervous fright. It was as if in some subconscious way he discerned his master's purpose, for Snapper refused

to come within or near the cabin while the gun was in evidence. At last Dane flung it from him and whistled. Snapper paused on the threshold with one foot lifted ready for flight, then seeing the gun lying in a corner he rushed to his master and commenced a demonstration of affection both noisy and vehement. He seemed to thank Dane for sparing his life, and soon big salt tears were being licked away by Snapper's long, loving tongue.

"All right, old boy. We'll stick it out together till we drop. It can't be long."

Dane's mind was now apathetic with fatalism. He thought he would crawl to his gate, turn three times and go as far as he could in whatever direction his nose pointed, whether to life or death he seemed to have ceased to care unless for faithful Snapper's sake. He reached the gate but before turning he stood amazed. For the first time for months a man approached the ranch. The visitor proved to be a friend who had deserted Dane when the crash came, now returning to see if there was anything to be made on the estate for himself. With him came money and food, and both man and dog were slowly put into some sort of condition

again. But he also brought a lot of profanity and profane literature, some of which he proceeded to unpack at once.

"Thought I might want something to keep the blue devils off in the swamps and picked them all up cheap," he said, fingering lovingly literature which ought to have been burned in the making. "Hello! What's this rum 'un? Something in your line, Dane," and he threw across a small, disfigured volume. It was a copy of the New Testament in Danish and it opened at the fourteenth chapter of St. John. In the tongue of his nativity the poor misfit read:

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions."

The strongest emotion his heart had ever known filled it to overflowing—a homesickness unutterable. Derisive laughter burst from the visitor.

"What, Dane, broncho buster, dog fancier, gentleman rancher, has religion lassoed you at last? Religion of my bringing, too—what a joke!"

"There's little of my life left worth mending

to God or man." Hope and despair struggled together in Dane's tones.

"Well, old man," said the other finding inspiration and increased loquacity in his pocket flask, "I set no stock in religion, as you know, but if I ever did, the Salvation Army would about fill the bill for me. They are the darndest, helpfullest lot in the world."

Strange message, stranger messenger, but that night the wanderer turned his face towards Home as he knelt in the moonlight, repeating with much hesitancy the old long forgotten prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven."

He resolved to make the pilgrimage to New York and to the Salvation Army. The one sacrifice was Snapper, and the man's heart ached as he left his faithful friend in the good home found for him. By slow and painful stages the journey was made, alas, not without dark interruptions, for the poor misfit fell among soul thieves en route who tempted him into old ways. But the purpose of his journey never left him, and one day, very battered in appearance, penniless in pocket and physically much the worse for wear, he landed in New

York. His only possession was a doll bought in some foolish moment on the journey north. Between the depot and the Salvation Army Headquarters the doll went for drink, and Dane reached his goal absolutely at the end of all resources. He asked for work and salvation in the same breath, and was at once despatched to the manager of an Industrial Home where men's desires and intentions are as often sorted out and made fit as the waste material by means of which their worthless lives are reclaimed. Surely the Divine alchemist is at work in these hives of industry, beautifully symbolizing their system of collecting, sorting and reclaiming the refuse of the city by refuse manhood returning to worth and beauty. Experts tell us of wonderful vessels which have been fashioned from the scrap heap of a coal mine, beautiful enough to adorn a royal palace; so divine and human compassion working here together have found in humanity's scrap heap those which have been transformed to priceless loveliness. Dane was one of these treasures discovered in darkness.

"Take two hours' sleep. You'll work better for rest." The kindly tone as well

as the humane thoughtfulness of the Industrial manager's first words quickened gratitude in the heart of the hopeless derelict.

Rest? Every aching bone in Dane's body cried out for it. Rest? The tiredness of a lifetime was in his heart.

The night after in a little meeting conducted by his new and good friends he found rest. Sweeter than any music to which he had listened in the famous concert halls of Europe sounded the simple hymns with their reiteration of the invitation, "Come." To Dane the word and the spirit that unctionized it was irresistible.

The visible effect of conversion in this case was the adaptability with which it endowed the man's nature. He who had been a misfit in twenty different trades now showed not only capacity but continuity as he thankfully began to work his way up from the lowest place among the paper-sorters. His contentment was noticeable by all. Those who had known him in the old morose days would not have recognized the geniality of his present disposition; they would have been still slower to understand that he drew its source from the time

spent in a big packing case in which he hid many times a day for a quiet few minutes' communion with his God. As the years rolled on, the scholarly mind and wide experience found a more responsible niche of service. Among his comrades he was both loved and honoured; outside business men with whom his work brought him into contact respected and appreciated him, but there was always something pathetic about the humble little man. He liked best to sign himself "a poor and simple Hallelujah gentleman."

Ten years after his rehabilitation sudden sickness came upon him, and with little warning the other world beckoned and claimed him. Among the many tears shed at his grave there fell the big drops of children's eyes. His yearning over children was wonderful to witness and many comrades welcomed the solitary man among their little flocks. In the Bible of one of his small friends he wrote a few days before his death:

"You may not now find so much comfort in reading this Holy Book. But in coming years, when the days, perhaps, are not quite so sunshiny and friends are gone away, I pray that

you may find here what I have found: consolation and comfort, hope and peace. Trust all things to Jesus forever and we too shall meet again in the many mansions of which He has spoken," and he quoted the promise recorded by St. John which had led him to seek the Army and the Army's God.

The message to this little girl was his last. When the end came, pain paralyzed his utterance. But those who looked upon his still face needed no dying words to explain the speaking peace that beautified it. On his casket they placed the little Danish Testament with the marked verse in the fourth Gospel.

In the many mansions of the Father's House Dane is a misfit no longer.

XII

XO923

Under the paralyzing sense of disgrace, the pulse of his manhood beat slow

A GAUNT delegation met the young minister at the depot, and escorted him to the small mountain home where he was to take his first supper. Here a hollow-cheeked woman gave him welcome and several distressingly thin youngsters peeped with awe at the new great man of their small world. While his hostess was busy in the adjoining shed, a dog showing all his bones pushed a soft, appealing nose into the visitor's hand.

"What a lean kind you all are here, old boy," said the young man. "Well, I guess this is left for you, so begin to fill up upon it," and he pushed within the animal's reach a plate of what appeared to be scraps standing on the bare kitchen table. When the woman returned her eyes immediately took in the empty plate, and with dropped jaw she demanded:

"Where did the meat go?"

"The dog ate it," said her guest.

The shock of a real domestic catastrophe vetoed all power to suppress the humiliating fact, as she exclaimed tragically:

"It was your supper—all I had."

The hospitality and poverty of these Southern mountain folk is alike proverbial. As their minister, Martin had ample opportunity to test both. With a hundred miles' circuit to cover, without any adjunct to his original means of locomotion, with a microscopic salary eked out by cabbages, salt pork and other donations "in kind," with a blacksmith shop for a place of worship and an unfinished loft, reached by a ladder, as his sleeping place, the drifting snow supplementing his scanty coverings with an extra quilt of ice, the outlook was lugubrious.

But before the authorities had found him out and sent him home as the runaway minor son of a widow, Martin had been known as the mascot of the regiment, and the spirit which had kept the boy's lips stiff amid the horrors of those two years at the front gave the man nerve to stick to his post, and so far as energy, business ability and push could fill the requirements of his pastorate Martin was not found

wanting. But—it was a long but—the man acknowledged to himself that he had never experienced a change of heart; sometimes he felt himself a "sky pilot" sailing under false colours and unworthy of the name he bore; therefore when a sudden wind of fortune found him out, there was little to hold him to the ministry.

"Martin, I guess you've struck luck," said an acquaintance one day. "They are advertising for you up North as the lost heir."

The supposition proved correct, and in a few weeks' time, his clerical garb doffed forever, Martin was hard at it, doubling the small fortune left to him. It takes originality to mint money in Washington. Martin's method was shrewd and successful. Every four years he raked in thousands, and could well afford to mark time in his real estate business between whiles. Long before the inauguration ceremonies he had bought up all available rooming space which he rented easily for double and treble the price later, the ability with which he cornered the market equalled by the cleverness with which he preserved the renter's incognito.

But as Martin himself has said, "There is no

security for the best business head which leaves God out of its calculations," and at the high tide of his prosperity there befell him both social and commercial shipwreck.

One of the idiosyncrasies of sin is its frequent choice to overthrow a man's footing at what he feels his strongest rather than his weakest point; and thus we find this man who had prided himself upon what he called his high moral code apprehended by the law for immorality—the specific charge being the violation of the postal laws. All that made life worth living to Martin was at stake, and he had no scruple in pleading "not guilty." The prisoner's bank account was heavily mortgaged to provide a clever lawyer to get him off, and with only circumstantial evidence the case was about to be dismissed, when the sudden advent of a handwriting expert in court affirmed the criminal anonymous letter to be in Martin's hand. The penalty was ten years, and although owing to his previous character it was in his case considerably diminished, the convicted man felt that so indelible would be his branding that it might almost as well have been a sentence for life.

The exchange of a name for a number has a peculiarly demoralizing effect upon most men. It stupifies individuality without which a sense of responsibility is impossible, and this loss is as much accountable for the after delinquencies of men who have "done time" as is the much quoted stigma "once a criminal always a criminal." The rapidly increasing intelligence of world-wide philanthropy is coming to see the fallacy as well as the cruelty of the latter, but the man behind the bars is still tempted to regard himself as a nameless, irresponsible cog in the machine of state.

As XO923 the man who had once written the reverential prefix to his name, who had inscribed that signature on many an affluent check, felt his dominant personality slip away from him. That first Sunday morning in his cell found him already immersed in despairing apathy—under the paralyzing sense of disgrace the pulse of his manhood beat slow.

Annoyance crossed his indifference as the sound of a hymn floated up through the corridor. He had done with religion long ago, and to be reminded of his own connection therewith now was cruel mockery indeed. He was glad

the rules did not permit the assembling of the prisoners, but he could not shut out the intruding sounds of song and prayer. Against his will one man's words held his attention; simple and slightly ungrammatical in expression they nevertheless gripped his soul as no sermon of his own or others had ever done. Alone in his prison cell, ostracized from the set which had been his world, the man felt for the first time in his life the thrill of Divinity. Consciousness of the Presence transformed him. He who had pleaded "not guilty" with a steady eye, who had held his head so high in self-righteous complacency, now fell upon his knees smitten by the revelation of his undone state and guilty heart. As the Salvation Army soldier concluded his testimony and gave place to a song of praise, the man in a distant cell lay on his face before his God crying:

"Be merciful to me, a sinner."

The humble instrument never knew his mission was so crowned that morning. Heaven holds many surprises.

So it was that when Martin, his sentence further commuted by good behaviour, came out into the world again he carried a new and very

different spirit beneath the ill-fitting suit of prison-made clothes. But the world did not see the new spirit—its eye did not get past the clothes, recognized all too easily as the parting gift of a Federal penal institution. With his fortune exhausted by his lost legal fight, with old friends turning upon him a look of steel, with no references at his command, with a few dwindling dollars in his pocket, Martin found himself in a new and wholly antagonistic atmosphere. Only the criminal world was open and anxious for him, but he shunned its advances, and after long fruitless days seeking employment his evenings were spent in any religious meetings he could find where he forgot his loneliness by listening to the Words of Life. Little did his fellow worshippers suspect the fight going on beneath that quiet exterior as each night found him hungrier, thinner and more footsore.

With an empty pocket and an empty stomach he turned into a noonday prayer-meeting, too faint to walk another step. When experiences were invited Martin gave his—just a word or two of grateful praise for what God had done for him in a prison cell with no hint of his present hard case.

"Fool!" He caught the evil one's voiceless recrimination as he went out with the crowd. "Why did you label yourself a jail-bird?"

"Friend," said a business man in his ear, "I have a little of the Lord's money, and maybe you are one of His children who need it."

Martin was much averse to taking anything that looked like charity, but this unknown benefactor insisted on helping him with two weeks' board and lodging. The man's search for work now became frantic. For weeks his only job was the carrying of a load of coal for which he was thrown twenty-five cents—fifteen of which went at once to meet the need of another ex-convict whom he met in extremis.

It was after many vicissitudes that some years later Martin again came into touch with the Salvation Army. His gratitude had always followed it, and when the small prison work with which he had identified himself handed over its operations to the Army's growing prison branch, Martin with a full heart asked if he might not be thrown into the bargain.

"Come on trial for six months," said its leaders.

But he has been there eight years, and expects to serve a self-imposed life sentence, for closer acquaintance with the people to whom he owed his prison-found peace convinced him that they were to be his even unto death.

He early discovered the confidence which the Army's name bestows upon its followers. One day after speaking in an open-air meeting, a plain clothes official touched Martin's uniformed sleeve saying:

"Well, I guess my job's through."

Unknown the man had shadowed him for years.

Martin has found his sphere. Whether in the little office to which ex-prisoners turn as to a beacon of hope and help, or within the gates of the hundreds of penal institutions to which he and his associates have access, the man puts every ounce of his own painful past into good account. "Thank God and the Army," he says, "for this chance of keeping up a man's heart when he stands, as I did, alone before an unfriendly world. I never forget how it felt, or what I would have given for such a hand as the Army now holds out to them. Some of their hearts are touched as mine was behind the

bars ; more still feel our hand-clasp (the Army's) when the bars shut behind them."

In Martin's good memory and better heart are legions of histories revealing not only the chasm which the Army has bridged for these men, but the gratitude that has come back from those who have stumbled across it into honesty, good citizenship and repentance. Not all find at once the great Eternal Remedy, and the Army's temporal help is never withheld because its spiritual message is not immediately grasped, but, in the language of its Prisoners' League, "a brighter day" is dawning for any man who comes into that office with its helpful yet humble motto conspicuously waiting to catch his eye :

> "I am not what I ought to be,
> I am not what I wish to be,
> I am not what I hope to be,
> But by the Grace of God
> I am not what I once was."

We close with a scene in a crowded conference hall. Every seat is filled, but beyond these serious eyed delegates it is easy to imagine the audience increased a thousandfold by men

whose uniformed garb and close-cropped hair proclaim those who have forfeited the right to voice their rights. Such meetings mightily increase one's faith in human nature—the warder of those paying penalty to the state can no longer be featured even by the most sensational as a gloating jailor as he sits here with mercy tempering the justice of his eye, flanked by citizens coöperating with him for the welfare of criminals on both sides of the bars. Much good work has been explained and eulogized, and the hour is late when the chairman of the prison conference unexpectedly rises to express his own observation of the splendid service rendered this cause by the Salvation Army. He speaks of its ministrations to the prisoner, its timely assistance to the ex-prisoner, and of the adaptable machinery which makes its efforts effectual for the prisoners' families. All eyes are turned upon the two quiet men in blue as the chairman calls for a word from the Army delegates. The senior officer tells Martin to respond, but the man's heart is full. He remembers what the Army folk carried to his cell years ago, the countless miracles and mercies he has seen them accomplish in the

lives of others, and thanking the chairman with a word of gratitude, simply adds with the brevity and sincerity of true eloquence:

"I, an ex-prisoner myself, have no words to eulogize the Salvation Army's prison work, but, like Niagara, it speaks for itself!"

XIII

LATIN AMERICA

"If they kill me I go Home the sooner"

THE Latin stranger within America's gates is a growing force impossible to ignore. The Italian element in particular shows notable increase in numbers and calibre, and no record of spiritual awakening among the peoples of this Union would be complete without the representative redemption of a sojourner from Europe's Southland.

Only seventeen miles from Venice, the beautiful city of Treviso is off the beaten track of the tourist and escapes both the inconvenience and the cash value of his presence. The name is derived from a word meaning "Three faces," for Treviso from time immemorial has been a "three-faced" community—rich, middle-class and low, all looking in different directions, living their life as if the other two did not exist.

It does not take great astuteness to discover that Lodovico belongs to the lowest strata of

Treviso's society, yet as he sits eating grapes in the sun which has so often filled his deficiencies in both food and clothing there is nothing to awaken pity. No one would guess that the fruit given him by a friendly street vendor makes his only meal for the day as, swallowing the last of it, he slowly rises to his feet and walks off with the air of a young prince, serenely unconscious of the large and ugly patch which spoils the colour scheme of his nether view. But follow the little fellow further down the street. See the bitterness blind the sunshine of his smile and the boyish frame stiffen with impotent resentment as he drags a drunkard out of the gutter, and his disgusted cry of "Padre" is followed by our involuntary, "Poor Lodovico!"

Then there is the long, painful journey home, the boy almost carrying the man, the arrival at the bare little house, the mother's cry, "Mother of God, pity us," the son's passionate, "Never will I be bad like him." In after years Lodovico sums up his parentage: "My mother was an angel but my father was a devil." Inclined towards goodness by the influence of one parent, hampered by the hereditary vices of the

other, the boy starts out at the age of eleven to help earn the family bread. Again we say, "Poor Lodovico!"

More than twelve years later we find the young Italian sweltering in the "oil hole" of a merchant vessel bound for New York. Upon his entire worldly belongings he has realized the sum of fifty francs which the captain promptly pockets, telling Lodovico that he may *work* his passage over! That first night spent in a dark closet filled with the stench of stored petroleum is a severe test of immigrant enthusiasm, but Lodovico's one thought is to put the ocean between himself and Italy—he is already a prodigal and a wife deserter.

Lodovico's shears have been sacrificed to help pay his passage, and what is a tailor without his two pronged sword? However, he appeals to the first Italian he meets in New York—characteristically a fruit vendor.

"Show me a tailor. I want work—not charity. See, I have money," displaying a handful for which he has exchanged on board his one decent suit of clothes. The fruit vendor laughs. It is a typical sailors' deal—only twelve cents good money out of the handful.

Hungry, unshaven and disheartened the stranger at last finds an Italian restaurateur who, impressed by a starving man's refusal to eat an unearned supper, gives him his chance upon a garment of his own. With this overcoat Lodovico makes brilliantly good; a friend and countryman of the gratified owner offers to take Lodovico into his ladies' tailoring establishment, and from now on this ceases to be a "hard luck" story.

But good money and plenty of it only complicates the labyrinth of temptation. Lodovico finds sin perilously easy with a well-filled pocket. A twinge of conscience reminds him of his forsaken family and he sends help home; to appease another he remits passage money for his wife and children, but the reunion is short-lived. Lodovico is in the toils of a power as designing as it is fascinating, and for many years the poor little wife lives the life of a dog. When her husband comes in at the door she faces brutality and misery; when he goes out of it she has to work night and day to keep a roof over the children's heads, for on his long absences all the tailor's big wages are spent upon another. Again and again he promises to

reform only to fall, and the wife's heart is sick with disappointed hope; he writes that he is preparing a home for her in New York, and she travels thither only to find that, his good intention overridden, he has fled to Chicago.

Fifteen desertions in as many years; no wonder the slender frame droops, and many lines trace their woeful story around the patient lips. She lives for her children's sake, but in all that makes life for herself she feels already dead. Then one day a ministering angel in a plain blue dress finds her way into the desolate home and the still more desolate heart. Before many a crucifix in her own land has Lodovico's wife told her beads, but now a Book is opened telling the story of the Crucified, making it precious and personal as she had not known it could be. In the cup of her own repentance she drowns the bitterest drop of her many injuries, and life becomes bearable as religion relights her candle of hope.

Next time the wanderer returns, it is to find the little woman on her knees and to catch the words:

"Gesu, salva mio Lodovico."

At first resentment conceals condemnation: then a second thought brings the quick tear of the Italian to his eye.

"She might well curse instead of pray; she was always too good to me."

But the emotion is only passing. Lodovico is willing for his wife's religion, but feels no concern as to his own crookedness. He continues to drink like a fish, smoke like a furnace and spend his earnings upon the siren who has so many times successfully lured him. Nevertheless the impression made upon him by his wife's new friends has its effects. Anger hides his shame as he hears of their care for his neglected family, but the shame outlives the anger, and in a strange mingling of abashed gratitude and sincere respect he blurts out the tribute:

"Wife, I will be one of two things—a Salvationist or a devil."

But for a long time it seems as if his choice had fallen upon the latter and his wife still weeps and prays. It is hard for her to break up the little home and go out West, but Lodovico appears anxious to take his family there, and on chance of maintaining their reunion

she dares not hold back. She would feel more reluctance if she could know, as she does afterwards, that Lodovico's chief motive in going is to put miles of separation between them and the Salvation Army, such propinquity being altogether too condemning. She is at a loss to understand Lodovico's start and muttered curse when the first person they meet on the street of a distant Western town happens to be a Salvationist in full uniform!

The evil spirit that is fighting for Lodovico's soul invites him to celebrate his new arrival with a fresh and wilder plunge into debauchery, but it is his last stand. Another and a mightier force is at work upon this tangled skein of life, and a Divine Hand begins to sort out the mesh of circumstances in which Lodovico's many sinning years have involved him. The leading thread is drawn when Lodovico discovers that he is the only Italian in the city. His usual convivialities pall without a compatriot to share them and he can no longer resort to the excuse, "Because of my friends I cannot be a good man." It seems as if a Voice rings in his ears, "The time has come."

One beautiful June evening the Salvation

Army Captain chooses as text, "The Prince of Peace." Lodovico has taken to dropping into the meetings and is sitting by his wife, and her heart swells as she sees a big tear roll down his cheek. There is a world of sadness in that drop. For the first time in his life Lodovico realizes that he has missed the best in it. Business prosperity, sinful pleasure, an angel of a wife, but never since the hour he first fell one moment of peace, and his heart feels one big wound aching for want of it. His wife has forgiven him and taken him back but that cannot, does not satisfy the ache of his hungry spirit; he has lost faith in any absolution a church can give—he knows not that he is experiencing the pangs of which one wrote centuries before, "Thou hast made man for Thyself, and our souls are restless till they find their rest in Thee."

The restlessness of Lodovico's soul will not let him sit still. He rises to his feet and slips into the seat in front; that is not near enough, and he tries the next, and still like a magnet those words, "The Prince of Peace," lead him on. With held breath his wife's trembling heart follows that painful progress, and nearly stops

for joy as she sees him walk like one in a dream to the penitents' bench and fall weeping to his knees.

There are those who affirm that the moment of regeneration is indistinguishable, that only by its effects can the regenerated prove it has actually taken place ; but such a belief will never hold weight with Lodovico. For as he sobs out the agony of a profligate's heart there comes upon him a mighty trembling. He is conscious of a convulsion of spirit which is indescribable and then—O thrice welcome sound—he hears the same voice which bade the devils depart in Galilee saying, " Sin no more." Peace has come to stay.

A few weeks afterwards a whiskey seller and a tobacco merchant meet on a street corner.

" Say," says the man of drink, " I've lost a good customer. The gay Italiano buys no more from me."

" Nor from me," says the man of smoke.

" He must be crazy," they agree.

" Lodovico, have you turned fool ? " writes the siren.

But in the little home where the husband and father has settled down in his long empty

place a woman between smiles and tears says to herself:

"God has brought my Lodovico to his right senses at last."

House to house visitation begins Lodovico's ministry in his adopted country and in another city, holding many needy compatriots, he works up a splendid little Salvation Army community which exists to-day. All the warmth of the Italian's warm nature is now alive for others, and he thinks nothing of being called out of bed after a hard day's work to pray or help. Italian speaking comrades are few, and Lodovico does most of his meetings himself, sometimes leading as many as five open-air services one after another. At first the persecution is annoying, even dangerous. The neighbourhood is dynamic and a gang of anarchists several times attempt to upset and disperse his meetings. After repeated annoyances and many menaces towards his poor parishioners, Lodovico has them arrested. His people wail that he takes his life in his hands by so doing, and when the anarchists are not only severely censured but heavily fined for their maltreatment of the Italian Salvationists,

there are rumours that Lodovico's life will pay the forfeit. But next Sunday the offenders come in peace and penitence to buy each an Italian Bible from Lodovico who is colporteur as well as preacher. Now his work is in a locality terrorized by tribute exacted by the Black Hand—dangerous soil for this sower of the truth, but Lodovico is unafraid. He says:

"If they kill me I go Home the sooner."

Nor does the work end here. Lodovico's converts are perpetuating it and will go on to do so. One returns to Italy with the fire burning in his breast and for his fearless preaching is thrown into prison. Coming out, this man assists in one of the mightiest revivals the sunny land has ever known. Up and down their native mountains Salvation donkey riders are still echoing the heavenly songs he taught them. In one Italian quarter of a great American city a saloon is now a Salvation Sunday-school for dark-eyed boys and girls. In another a man goes to and fro with Bible and blessing. One who knelt in rags at this humble mercy seat is now a missionary. Eight Salvation Army officers have gone out from

this little corps. And the good work goes on growing.

Lodovico is still a tailor. He has not even the very small stipend of a Salvation Army officer to hold him to his work; love for it is a better chain. He is none the worse preacher because he is an expert workman, and many a new suit reminds its wearer of the courteous word in good season which has spiritualized the hour of its fitting.

XIV

WASTED TIME?

Its love for the people is no more passive than was the love of its Lord

"CLEANLINESS is next to godliness," said the Lieutenant as she scrubbed the quarters floor.

"Cleanliness is godliness," amended the Captain from the wash-tub. "You can't have a clean heart without a good one and to my mind you can't have a really good heart without a clean house."

Then to the accompaniment of scrubbing brush and wringer there rose the duet:

> "For it washes white as snow,
> The precious Blood of Jesus,
> It washes white as snow."

It was not often the two indulged in so long a discussion of their religious principles; usually they were too busy putting them into practice. But a biting blizzard of the severest winter

for years had reconciled both to a morning's hard work at home.

A timid knock at the door halted both women. They were accustomed to summons at all hours of the day and night—work upon their own home could always take its chance; work upon others was more often than not an emergency operation—sometimes a matter of life and death. The Lieutenant flung the door wide—a small, stiff figure tottered across the threshold, his blue, piteous lips moving voicelessly.

"Poor little dumb fellow!" said the Lieutenant.

"Dumb! Not a bit of it," said the Captain. "The child's frozen. Put a bit more wood in the stove, dear, and bring a blanket."

There was a special light in the Captain's eye, a special prayer in her heart, as she set about thawing out the visitor. She had recognized in him a son of the forlorn hope of the neighbourhood—a terrible sinner upon whom she had been warned that all persuasions and efforts would be so much waste time.

At last the child was able to deliver his message—a tragic appeal for help—they had

nothing to eat at home; they were cold; the baby had died in the night and mother was so ill that even father was scared.

"You see, Captain," went on the loosened tongue, "it was awful cold last night and we hadn't covers enough to go round. I suppose we hadn't oughter, but as many of us as could piled into mum's bed, and I guess some of us kids must have rolled over on to the baby and smashed it 'cause it was dead this morning."

The Lieutenant, who was a newcomer at this station of salvation and relief, felt her lips quivering, but the Captain's practical heart brooded to herself:

"Well, there is plenty of room in heaven for the poor little lamb."

Up-hill two miles in the teeth of a howling wind and driving snow-storm, the two women fought their way. They were out of breath and almost dropping when they reached the wretched shanty which was a mere mockery of protection against the elements. As they reached the door it opened and there came out one of those unnamed heroes upon whose breasts many medals ought to glow—the parish doctor.

"This is no weather to be abroad," he exclaimed.

"You set us a bad example," the Captain gasped through blue lips.

"Well, I might have known the Salvation Army girls would be on their job," he went on, "and I'm mighty glad you've come. You were never needed worse."

Within, what a sight! Seven children hugged a stove in which a bit of charred wood gave forth a pitiful pretense of heat. The father sat in the corner by himself, dazed and despairing. The mother shivered under a thin coverlet, the dead baby still lying by her side. The temperature was only a few degrees above the frigidity out-of-doors.

The odds were against speedy alleviation but these women of the poke bonnet work as if by magic—perhaps the magic lies in the fact that they *do* work, always more than they talk! In little more time than it takes to write it, there was a big fire blazing defiance to the cold which encroached through countless cracks and crevices. The children were munching in industrious unity upon the "quick lunch" which fairy-like appeared from the Lieutenant's

basket. The mother got her chattering teeth under control beneath the warmth of the Captain's coat, and watched her remove the still little form to a cold corner of the shanty and reverently cover it. The father sat stolidly in his broken chair; what he thought is shown later.

Then another trip to the Army quarters, the two officers returning like packhorses through the arctic afternoon bringing blankets, clothing, food and a neat little shroud fashioned by the Lieutenant's ready needle which last brought the brimming tears to flow in healing from the poor mother's reddened eyes.

"Oh, my dears," she moaned, "who are we that you should so care for us?"

"Who are you?" said the Captain kissing the lined brow which she had just tenderly bathed. "Why, some one who is very dear to God. He sent us straight to you because He loved you and wanted us to help you."

Still the man sat silent—watching, listening.

There is a store which boasts that a customer could pass from the cradle to the grave through its various departments without an unsatisfied want. The Salvation Army slum officers could

boast that there is no phase of life in which they have not enacted the necessary part. Thus these women on occasion have served as pastors, scrub women, lawyers, nurses, policemen, doctors and what not.

At the funeral on the morrow the Captain appeared both as the officiating clergyman and funeral director. The snow had ceased but the wind continued and the temperature had sunk still lower. When the cemetery was reached the Captain nearly fell—both feet were frozen, and no one knew the agony the gritty little woman went through as she committed the small casket to the snowy grave.

Some nights after the notorious father entered the Army hall, six of his children obediently following his lead. Their round eyes grew wider and wider as the man walked with deliberation to the penitent form. Those present could scarcely believe their eyes, for it was said that this man had outtired every Christian's patience in town. But wonder changed to praise as they saw that he was sober and heard the agony of weeping which convulsed the strong frame. His presence there seemed a miracle; that he should rise

with such a transfigured face filled every soldier's heart with thanksgiving, and brimmed over the cup of happiness of the faithful little Captain.

Years have proved how definite was that transaction, how wonderful that deliverance, how revolutionary its merciful effects upon wretched family and wrecked home. But the Captain was after all a woman, and being so could not withstand an involuntary "Why?" and a very excusable "What was there in that particular meeting, what had been said, or sung or felt there that should have broken down the barriers of that stubborn heart?" When the question was put to the new convert his unhesitating reply surprised and overwhelmed her. Happy tears dropped from the humble brown eyes as she heard him say:

"It wasn't nothing that was ever said or sung, Captain. It was what you done when the baby died."

Beautiful sentence, breaking more than one rule of speech, but revealing the ethics of the Salvation Army's lovable religion. Surely this is the secret of its marvellous success as well as its mighty energy for the succour and uplift of

others. Its love for the people is no more passive than was the love of its Lord. Wonderful words dropped from His lips, but the world was convinced by *deeds* of blessing and at last by a supreme *act* of self-sacrifice. So these saviours of the people have found that to love their neighbour as themselves they must love them with a love that suffers and bears and serves until by the light of their love they lead them to the feet of One who both loves and saves. Earth's recognition finds them once and again in such rewarding words as "It was what you *done*, Captain"; heaven's crowning is inevitable at the hand of One Who has described those worthy to bear His name as not those who *say* "Lord, Lord" but those who *do* the will of His Father.

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