

"Hello! Served your term?"

Walter crimsoned.

"Served his term where?" asked the proprietor.

The boy's humiliation was a silent answer to the old merchant, and without waiting for a reply he asked:

"What was your offence?"

Albert hesitated. Then a red spot burning on each cheek, he bravely looked the man in the face, and said:

"I stole three hundred dollars from my employer."

"Well, we don't employ jail-birds here. Look some place else for your game."

Albert had fainted when the iron cuffs were snapped upon his wrists, and when these cruel words rang in his ears, he felt that same chilling feeling creep over him. He left the store, and after walking about an hour, heedless of everything, he found himself on the pleasant highway leading to the farther end of Squirrel Hill.

Just then a lady drove down a narrow lane, and coming face to face with her, Albert, on the spur of the moment, said:

"Have you any work for me?"

"Where did you come from?"

"From prison," he said, almost defiantly, as he turned to walk away. Was his sin to pursue him forever?

"You don't intend to go back again, do you?"

Miss Barton's voice was clear and sweet; inspiring, her friends said. Albert must have felt the magnetic tone, for he turned back, and a pitiful little smile crept from the corners of his mouth, as he answered:

"Not if I can help it."

Besides having an inspiring voice, Miss Barton possessed a deal of tact. She asked no questions. She appeared not to notice that some tears were being stealthily brushed away. Her quick womanly instinct told her that a heart so easily affected by a kind tone, needed sympathy. And so she reached out her hand, laid it on the boy's shoulder and said cordially:

"You're just the boy we need—jump in, and drive home with me."

Every day, Albert expected Miss Barton to ask why he had been in prison, and if he had no home to go to. But Miss Barton knew that some time Albert would tell her unasked, and so he did. It happened one day when Albert was training a refractory

grape-vine, and Miss Barton, strolling by, stopped to talk with him. When they returned to the house together, about an hour later, Albert thought of angels in disguise every time he looked at his friend. Her strong sympathy had already aroused all his manliness, and the determination to rise above the position his sin had forced him to occupy, grew deeper and firmer.

Meanwhile Miss Barton studied the boy carefully. She sent him to the bank, gave him money to pay her bills, talked over her business affairs with him, and in many ways helped him to test his moral strength. She corresponded regularly with Mrs. Alden, and they both agreed that Albert should be allowed to "bide his time" in going home.

About six months after his arrival at Squirrel Hill, Miss Barton sent Albert to transact some business with her lawyer, who lived at a day's journey from her home.

"I'd like to stop on my way back to see mother, Miss Barton," said Albert, when leaving, and that lady answered pleasantly:

"Do so, Albert."

When Albert did enter the familiar little home parlor with his mother, who had gone to the door to meet him, he found Miss Barton talking with the children. She had gone down to prepare Mrs. Alden for the joyful return. When she started soon after to take her train, Albert said:

"Mother wants me to stay."

"And Albert wants you to stay, too," laughed Miss Barton; "so I think you ought."

And so it was settled. Mrs. Alden was not an emotional woman, but in saying good-bye to her guest, she threw her arms around Miss Barton's neck and sobbed:

"God bless you! You have saved my boy!"

"No," said Miss Barton, as she gently stroked Mrs. Alden's hair, and then pressed a warm, loving kiss upon the trembling lips. "His mother did that. I only helped him along."

MARTHA MURRAY.

GUARD against discouragement as the greatest sin you could commit. Nothing is a greater injury to the soul or a greater insult to God than distrust of the Divine goodness.—MGR. D'ORLEANS DE LAMOTE.