

ENOCH CRANE

it, ate a cracker, and resumed, strengthened by the wine.

"You have grown very near to me, Joe; more than you realize, perhaps. The glorious beginning of yours and Sue's happiness is a comfort to me, even in these sad hours. Your success, your love for one another, mean much to me."

"I'm glad of that," returned Joe. "Sue will feel dreadfully when she hears you are going away. And I—well, you know how I feel about it. Somehow I can't imagine our wedding without you. Must you go?"

"When are you to be married?" he asked, looking up.

"Well, you see, it is not exactly decided yet. Sue has set her heart on before Christmas."

"That's right, my boy, have as many Christmases as you can together," he returned thoughtfully.

"Although the job's done," declared Joe, "as far as my part is concerned—specifications all in—and the last of the full-sized details went to the contractors two weeks ago—but our first payment, you see, on the new building is not due us until February. I do not see how we can very well manage to get married before."

"Who is to make this payment to you?" asked Enoch.

"The committee, we are told."

"It has always been the duty of its chairman to attend to such matters," Enoch remarked, not letting