

"Oh! he'll turn up all right," said Alan, wishing to hide from her the anxiety he was beginning to feel.

It was more than an hour after that when Ben's light step was heard without, and he entered alone, looking a little moved out of his usual imperturbability, and a little doubtful as to the reception he might meet with. He delayed answering the enquiries for Dan with which he was assailed, until he had carefully drawn from the depths of an inner pocket a sealed packet addressed to Mr. Campbell, in Dan's well-known, irregular, boyish hand. Then he replied to his startled questioners that Dan had called him early in the morning to go out with him, he knew not where or wherefore; that at Dunn's Corners they had met Ned Lindsay and Vannecker, the horse dealer who had returned to the neighbourhood a few days before. That they had all had a talk together about Beauty and the American army; that the boys appeared rather to waver till Vannecker had "treated" them to something to drink; and that then they had all started together for Carrington in Vannecker's waggon, Dan alone riding, while the rest drove; and that in Carrington Dan had given him the sealed packet, and had bidden him goodbye, telling him he was going a long journey, and would not be home for a very long time. That was all Ben knew; he had returned as Dan had charged him, carrying the packet; and his own sorrow at Dan's departure was evidently complicated by misgivings as to how far he might be considered as an aider and abettor of a step that would of course bring grief and consternation into the family.

The story was told laconically, and giving the barest outlines of it, which some at least of his hearers could easily fill up. The packet was eagerly opened and was found to contain bank bills to the amount of two hundred and fifty dollars, together with the following letter:—

"DEAR FATHER,—I hope you and mother won't be very angry with me, but I couldn't

stand having Beauty sold away, and Vannecker says, if I go into the American Cavalry, I can have her to ride, so I send you the money he has given me for her, and I'm going with him to take care of Beauty and join the army. Tell mother and Alan there wasn't nothing else I was fit for, and I couldn't stand working at a desk, and ask her to forgive me, and I'll try and be a good soldier and do credit to the family, with best love to all, no more at present.

"Your affectionate son,

"DANIEL.

"P.S.—You know I had a right to sell Beauty, for she wasn't yours, for you gave her to me when a little colt, but I only wanted the money to give you, and I'll send my bounty money and write soon again. He gave me a little more for Beauty, but I kept it for fear I might want it for something. Tell mother I brought away the little Testament she gave me.—D."

Poor Dan! How many tears, after the first shock and consternation were over, were shed over the scrawled, unpunctuated, unscholarly-looking letter, so characteristic of the rash, generous, loving heart that dictated it. But at first, as they eagerly and silently bent over it, they could hardly take in the meaning, and when they did, the shock was too great for the relief of tears. They looked at each other in blank consternation till Mrs. Campbell, with a cry of alarm, sprang to her husband's side. He had tried to rise, but speech and movement seemed to fail him. His frame wavered, and he sank heavily back in his chair, his lips making an ineffectual, pitiful attempt to form articulate sounds. The shock had been too much for him. Dan had always been his favourite son, having many points of resemblance to himself, and his undermined constitution, shaken still farther by his recent troubles, could not stand the blow. He had had a stroke of paralysis.

It is easy to imagine the days of sad watching and sad work that followed—sick-room