

he chose to do with an indulgence he granted to no one else. He wished the boy would come to church more; he wished he would give more attention to those things to which his father had devoted his life; and yet he could make allowance for him. The young man's environment, his social gifts, his business prospects, all inclined him to another set of associations. Besides, the boy's own character seemed so fine and strong, the sentiments of his heart so truly noble, that the father's iron judgment softened even in the matter of an indiscretion so flagrant as this. He reflected too that for business reasons it was doubtless just as well if Rollie were brought into no prominence in this unpleasant affair. In fact, Elder Burbeck would have been as well satisfied if his son had stayed away altogether.

"It is time to call the meeting to order," suggested Elder Brooks, a pale, nervous man whose eyes were continually consulting the typewritten sheet which he held in his hand.

"Yes, Brother Brooks," agreed Elder Burbeck, advancing to the table below and in front of the pulpit. He was almost directly in front of where Doctor Hampstead sat in his pew.

John noticed that the Elder looked worried and over-anxious. His pouchy cheeks sagged; there were huge wattles of red skin beneath his chin, and his whole countenance had a more than usually apoplectic look.

"Brother Anderson will lead in prayer," announced the Elder in unctuous tones. "Let us stand, please!"

The congregation stood. But Brother Anderson's leadership in prayer could not be deemed very successful. He led as if he himself were lost. His prayer appeared to partake of the nature of an apology to God for what the petitioner hoped was about to be done.

During the length of these whining orisons, the congre-