

kets than they have out west. I think we can make a go of it.'

'Of course, we can,' cried Alice, enthusiastically. 'Mary and I will make a garden and raise all the vegetables we want, and we will pick huckleberries. Perhaps we can sell some in the village. Then there are lots of apple trees and quince bushes on the place. Next fall we will have barrels of fruit. It will be no end of fun.'

'And work,' added Tom, quietly. 'But I think we will all like it. As you say, there is lots of fruit, and as soon as we get the land ready we will put in strawberries and currants, and such things. None of the farmers round here raise them, and I think we can establish a good business.'

'Why can't we get out some railway ties?' asked Walter, as he once more closed his book and pushed it back on the table. 'You know we have splendid timber on the place. I heard Sam Jenkins say that his father was going to give up farming this summer just to get out road ties. The railway company wants a big lot. Sam's father says it will pay better than farming. We could get somebody to haul them for us.'

'Good idea!' exclaimed Tom, who was taken with the project. 'We shall need some ready money to get our fruit and poultry business under way, and this will be just the thing. Uncle Jason used to grumble because his fields had grown up timber. Wood wasn't worth anything in this country, he said, and the land would all have to be cleared over again. But if we can sell it off for ties it will be worth almost as much to us as meadow land. Seventy-five or a hundred dollars will come in pretty handy next fall. Maybe we can put aside enough by another year to buy an old horse and waggon.'

The next morning the owner of the small cottage was notified that his house would not be wanted after the end of the month; and then Tom and Walter hired a horse and waggon and took a small load of lumber and their tent out to the farm. A few days were sufficient to build a rough-board shanty and to put up the tent; and then they made the camp as attractive as possible for the reception of the girls. Such furniture as could be used was brought out, and the rest stored with a neighbor until they should have a cabin to receive it.

It was still early in May, but the weather was warm and dry. The girls were delighted with everything, and even Walter almost forgot that there were such things in the world as books. As the weeks went by the dreamy indecision left his face, and he became almost as eager and enthusiastic as Alice herself.

A neighbor was hired to plough a small piece of ground near the camp, and this was planted for vegetables and placed under the charge of Mary and Alice. Tom and Walter spent most of their time in the woods getting out ties. Already there were numerous coops scattered about the camp, and the air was melodious with the 'peep, peep,' of young chickens.

By the end of September they had put aside over a hundred dollars. Near the site of the old farmhouse was a great pile of logs which the boys had selected and hauled during the summer. A carpenter was hired to have oversight of the building, and with his help, and an occasional lift from the neighbors, the cabin went up rapidly. Before cold weather arrived the children were comfortably installed in their new home.

After the carpenter was paid, and the rest of the furniture brought from the village, they had nearly forty dollars left.

This was expended in provisions and farm tools.

During the winter Tom and Walter worked at their ties as steadily as the weather would permit. In the spring they bought a horse and cow, but were obliged to wait until the next fall before they could purchase a waggon. This year they set strawberries and currants and some fruit trees, and Walter added turkeys and geese to his poultry business. The next year they bought a pair of oxen and more tools, and several new fields were fenced in. At the end of five years the log cabin was replaced by a neat, frame house, and they were spoken of by the neighbors as 'Them-fore-handed Carsons.'

Three Interviews With Death

(By T. C. Marshall, in N. Y. 'Witness'.)

For my own part I must confess to having a very small amount of faith in what are called 'death-bed repentances'—at any rate when such occurrences take place within a short period of dissolution. And my skepticism on this point does not arise from any doubt as to either the willingness or the power of God to save any person at any time, but from the recollection of three occurrences in my own experience, and the circumstances attending them.

There have been three occasions in my life when I felt myself to be face to face with death, well knowing that my peace had not been made with God, and in perfect control of all my mental powers. Yet in neither of these critical times did I make even an attempt to pray. And more than that; the thoughts uppermost in my mind were concerning matters of trivial moment even as compared with the preservation of my physical life, and infinitely more so compared with the realities of the future life for him who has not prepared to meet his God.

Nor was this curious condition of mind to be accounted for by either ignorance of, or hostility to, orthodox ideas of the plan of salvation. The truth of the Bible (in the main), and the probabilities of eternal punishment for all those who rejected the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ—these, and many more truths I had been taught from my earliest childhood. I had accepted them with my intellect, as part of my religion, but like hundreds of others, had proved to my sorrow the tremendous practical difference that there is between a religion of the head and a religion of the heart.

But, although travel, and change of surroundings robbed me of much of what religion I had, I never abandoned either attendance at public worship, or associating myself with the people of God. Nor did my outer life, on the whole, give any positive sign, to an ordinary observer, that I lacked what so many of my friends possessed and professed.

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The first of the incidents to which I refer happened in Kansas City, Mo., in one of the 'seventies'—I think, 1876.

That winter Dr. Munhall was announced to hold some large revival meetings in Ccates's Opera House, and one Sunday evening I went to hear him, accompanied by a young lady. We sat in the front gallery directly facing the stage, and several seats back. The place was crowded with people and the speaker of the evening was support-

ed by a large company of singers from different churches.

The service had opened as usual, and Dr. Munhall had commenced his address when I heard a fire-bell sounding from one of the stations. I did not take much notice of it, but a little while after I heard an engine clatter past the opera house. A few moments after it had done so some foolish (or malicious) person on the floor of the house uttered a loud cry of 'Fire!'

Even at this day, more than twenty years after, I can behold the scene of the next few minutes clearly before my eyes. From the rows of seats on the floor and in the galleries the people rose and rushed over the backs of the seats like the waves of the sea. A dense cloud of dust rose up in the centre of the building. The chorus of singers vanished from the stage in less time than it takes to write this, leaving Dr. Munhall standing alone, waving his hands to the audience to resume their seats, and, no doubt, assuring them that the alarm was a false one.

Away up in the corner where I sat 'the air was blue' with the imprecations of a number of men who did not lose their heads, hurled in vain at the fugitives who rushed past them, leaving in most cases, hats, umbrellas, and overcoats behind them. In a seat a little in front of me, and to my right, one such hero left three ladies as well as his personal belongings.

I sat perfectly still. So far as I could see, there was no way of escape in the direction of the doors of the building. I noticed, however, that the floor of the house was rapidly becoming empty, and I noticed what looked like a doorway under the stage, though I had no idea as to where it would lead.

The night was cold, and my companion wore a thick woollen shawl. I was turning over in my mind a plan for letting her down by means of this shawl into the body of the theatre, and trying to get her out by some door or other in the direction of the stage, when she put her hand on my arm, and said, in a frightened tone, 'Let's get out! Let's get out!'

Instantly there flashed through my mind a recollection of the fire in a theatre in Brooklyn when Kate Claxton was playing in 'The Two Orphans,' and the fact that on that occasion numbers of persons were so trampled upon in the panic that their remains were almost, if not quite, unrecognizable after the fire had been extinguished.

When the frightened girl then suggested our flight, I turned round, gripped her hands tighter than I ever gripped a woman's hands before or since, and said, 'No you don't! If we're going to die, we'll be suffocated in a respectable manner; but we won't be trampled under foot, so that the police won't know us when they get us out!'

That was the thought uppermost with me when I did not know that either of us had five minutes more to live.

The panic did not last long, fortunately. How it happened that no life was lost is one of the mysteries of divine Providence. But order was restored in a short time, and a considerable proportion of the congregation remained till the close of the service, of whom my friend and I were two. I have no recollection, however, that either of us then, or at any other time, thanked God for the preservation of our lives. Certainly,