

'No, sir! I never touched my fingers to the lock, sir,' Fetcbe replied.

'Ah! so you can say a word for yourself then? Suppose you tell me why you were going over the prison records, these twenty years back we will say, when you thought no one looking.'

'I was reading about the prisoners, sir.'

'Tell me what you found there about the Political Prisoner?'

'Only a few words.'

'What were the words?'

"In on suspicion." Then, sir, was put in a bracket, "nothing proved." It might have been your hand, sir, that wrote it; it was so neat.'

'Pshaw! we must catch this man; I never have lost a prisoner since I've been here. See that my spur-boots are ready for me,' and Michael snapped the key in the cell-lock, ran his eye up and down the passage, and went hurriedly out into the prison yard where there was the bustle and excitement of getting ready to overtake the escaped prisoner.

'Plague take it, Jack; I thought I was to have a quiet day with you,' said Michael to his brother.

'Never mind me,' answered Jack. 'I'll join the chase,' and leaping upon a horse, he was breast to breast with Michael, who turned to the south, instead of to the north, as the Political Prisoner had gone.

Fetcbe watched them out of sight, his face an inert blank as usual. To himself he was saying, 'I don't care, 'taint no fair burying people in prison, that have "nothing proved" against their names in the books.'

To himself Warden Michael was saying: 'Sorry to break my record and lose a prisoner, but I've saved a snug bit and can retire very comfortable if the authorities say I must,' but no one asked Michael to retire for losing or not finding the Political Prisoner.

A few months after this a fine equipage drove into the prison yard. There were two outriders in livery and a postillion who blew his horn so loudly that Michael himself came running to see if it were the Governor of the Province, arriving in person. He was much more astonished to see the Political Prisoner get out of the carriage and look about him as if for some one not there.

'What will your honor have?' Michael asked, thinking it wise not to seem to recognize his former prisoner.

'Fetcbe,' replied the Political Prisoner, 'little Fetcbe. Is he still here?'

'Yes, sir; indeed he is. We could not well do without Fetcbe,' smiled Michael, sure that he saw which way the wind blew. 'Here he is now, sir,' and he pushed Fetcbe forward; Fetcbe with his round face as expressionless as ever.

'Here is the gold piece I owe you, Fetcbe,' said the Political Prisoner, holding it out to him.

'Me?'

'Yes, the coin you would not take. And it was as well you did not take it, for it bought all the food I had for many days. Now go and tie your clothes into a handkerchief, Fetcbe, and get ready to go with me.'

'But, sir,' said Michael, 'this lad is indentured to me for two years longer.'

'How much is that in money?' asked the late Political Prisoner.

'Bless me if I know,' laughed Michael, 'but fifteen pounds would do.'

'Here is four times that,' said the Political Prisoner, 'and I promise to train and educate the boy well. You shall satisfy

yourself on that score if you will come to see him once a year.'

Michael shook his head. 'I would like it but it would make me trouble here, sir; the authorities, you know, sir.'

'Not now, since the king is changed,' the ex-Political Prisoner said.

Michael rubbed his head. 'Faith! I knew the king had changed,' he muttered, 'but I did not know it was the side of my Political Prisoner that is uppermost. Yes. I will come. Thank you, sir.'

The ex-Political Prisoner re-entered his carriage and Fetcbe, his worldly possessions tied up in a red handkerchief, climbed to the box beside the powdered coachman.

'Wish I was going too,' said a certain guard, looking after the equipage. 'It beats all how a dunderhead like him gets on in life, while a quick wit like me never gets a rise.'

Fetcbe in time became a skilful locksmith; so skilful, in fact, that no door of that day was properly fastened unless locked with a 'Fetcbe-lock.'

Anna Blake's Missionary Work.

(From the 'Christian Union'.)

'After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face, whither he himself would come.'

Anna Blake read the verse carefully two or three times, and then looked again at the slip of paper in her hand to make sure this was the verse thereon indicated.

'Miss Hammond must have made a mistake. She surely did not mean that for my quarter verse. But if this is my verse, I don't see what I am to do. It doesn't seem to teach anything.'

She read the verse again, and as she slowly repeated the last words a ray of light came.

'Why—yes—perhaps that is it. I'm sure I've read that verse dozens of times, but I never thought of getting any practical lesson out of it. Jesus sent his disciples before him to those places whither he himself would come. Perhaps he sent us that way now; perhaps he'll send me this quarter into some place to prepare the way for his coming. I'll go and talk with him about it.' And alone in her own room this earnest young Christian was soon talking with her Master about the work she would like to do for him.

'I think, wife,' said Mr. Blake that afternoon, 'we ought to let Anna go to Colorado this summer. Too close application at school is taking all the roses from her cheeks, and a few months among the pines up in the mountains would freshen her up amazingly. I imagine it is rather a rough life these ranchmen lead, and she may not find everything congenial at Cousin John's; but as they seem willing to have her come, I guess we can spare her this summer. She has too much good sense to fret much over uncongenial surroundings,' concluded the fond father.

'I have felt all along that it would be well for her to go,' said Mrs. Blake; 'and yet I have felt some hesitation about sending her alone to such a place. They seem to have no Sunday or anything else that is good in the vicinity of Cousin John's. Still, if you think it best we will let her go.'

'Anna will always carry Sunday with her wherever she goes,' replied Mr. Blake. 'She may be able in a quiet way to do missionary work, and at the same time to drink in health with the mountain air.'

So it was settled between her parents that Anna's summer would be spent among the Colorado mountains; and two weeks later found her at the mountain ranch of her father's 'Cousin John.'

How strange everything appeared to the eyes of the girl whose life before this time had been bounded only by Illinois prairies! Cousin John's house was built out of logs. It was papered with old newspapers, and the only pictures that adorned the walls were such cuts as happened to be in these papers. The outbuildings were small, low affairs, the two horses almost filling their little box of a stable. But here were the mountains and huge boulders, and apparently limitless acres of pine trees, and not far from the house a mountain brook famous in that region for its trout.

'It's the nicest place to dream in!' Anna wrote to her mother the day after her arrival. 'One can't help "seeing visions and dreaming dreams" amid such surroundings. I am sure I shall have a very happy summer.'

But when Sunday came she longed for the home church, and Miss Hammond's helpful teaching.

'Don't you ever have any kind of service here on Sunday?' she asked of Mrs. Wheeler, Cousin John's wife.

'Sometimes a preacher comes along and has meetings up to the school-house, but there's nothing regular. Some of 'em started a Sunday-school once but it didn't last long. There's children enough in the neighborhood, but nobody seems to know much about Sunday-schools up here, and the school kind of died out after a while.'

Anna took her Bible and walked down to the brook, and seating herself on a large rock turned to the Sabbath-school lesson which she knew Miss Hammond and the girls were busied with at home at that hour. After an hour of faithful, prayerful study, she closed the book, and leaning back against the old pine which grew beside the rock sat thus for some time thinking. Suddenly her 'quarter verse' came to her mind.

'He sent them into the places whither he himself would come.' I wonder if he sent me into this neighborhood because he wants to come here too. What can I do for him here?'

'Is it your father you're talking about, Miss?'

Anna started at the sound of another voice than her own, for she had thought herself quite alone. Turning quickly she saw four little ranch children who had approached unobserved standing not far from the rock, their curious eyes fixed on her face. The eldest, a bare-footed, bare-headed, sun-browned boy who carried an immense bouquet of mountain lilies, proved to be her questioner.

'Why, no,' she answered, smiling, 'it was not my father—but it was my Elder Brother. Come and sit down here and let me arrange your flowers for you. How lovely these mountain lilies are! Will you give me a few of them to press?'

'Have 'em all, Miss, if you want. I just picked 'em 'cause I didn't have much of any thing else to do. Bushels of 'em up yonder if you want more.'

'Thank you,' said Anna. 'Are these three little midgets your sisters?'

'Two of 'em is. That littlest one's Mr. Grover's Susie.'

The little gypsy-like children were all seated on the rock by this time.

The juvenile part of the 'Messenger' is continued on page 11.