

dow to the cottage of his neighbour. "You know what's happened, don't you?"

"No, Hiram, I do not. Is it anything serious?"

"Yes, I'm afeared so. Reuben got a bad tumble last Friday, and they say two of his ribs is broke. I reckon you don't know how awfully poor they are, but you ought to. Reuben has had a run of bad luck lately, and his faith is mightily shaken by it. I guess he's a good deal like a drownin' man who can't see no help, and don't know whether it'll pay to hang on to the timber any longer. Jane was cryin' pretty bad when I saw her yesterday afternoon, but the basket of potatoes and the piece of pork cheered her up considerable. They hain't got any too much in the larder, and if we are reely children of one family, the sooner we stand by them folks the better. Now, excuse me, parson, for this shoe is the tormentinest puzzle I've had in a long while. Come back in half an hour, for I've got somethin' partic'lar to say."

"About the sermon, Hiram?"

"Yes, about the sermon."

"You—you didn't quite agree with me, then?"

"You're mistook for once, parson. It was a grand sermon, a noble and sustainin' sermon, and I want you to preach another like it, only stronger. That's the right nail, but you've got to drive it home. There, don't keep me from my work."

John's heart was in his mouth. He came very near laughin' as he crossed the road. His spirits rose, his eyes brightened, and when he knocked at the Jenk's cottage he was a boy again. "Perhaps I am some good, after all," he said to himself.

He was only a shoemaker who had talked to the minister? No, it was a human soul that cheerily

greeted another soul, and that is a very different matter.

John did not want to be flattered, only encouraged. Flattery is counterfeit coin, and no true minister will tolerate it for an instant. Kindly words, however, go a great way, and the average minister gets altogether too few of them.

"Now then, parson," said Hiram when the minister reappeared, "I've finished that bit of work, and am at your service. You were quite right in askin' if I wanted to talk about that sermon. I'm glad of the chance to do it."

John was gratified, and full of pleasant expectancy.

"Let me see," said Hiram, "you was tellin' about duties and privileges. I came near shoutin', parson, when you said that—how did you put it?—that our privileges as Christians is about ten times as many as our duties. Didn't you say that, or pretty nigh that?"

John nodded.

"Good. You pulled the right bell-rope that time. There's lots of people, parson, and good people, too, who are everlastin'ly talkin' about duty, duty, duty. I'm tired of the subject. If you can once fill a man's heart with love, the duties disappear. He hain't got nothin' left but privileges."

"You must be careful not to overstate that matter, Hiram," suggested John. "There are duties, plenty of them."

"Name one, parson."

"Well, isn't it our duty to love our neighbour as ourself?"

"No, parson, it ain't; not by no means. I can't possibly love my neighbour as myself if I do it as a duty, because I don't love myself as a duty, do I? Duty and love is a badly matched double team, and don't pull well together in harness. They are like Peter Johnson's sorrel and chestnut. The chestnut wants to prance all the time, and the sorrel is sober