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The Tramp.

(Mrs. S. A. Siewert, in the 'Sunday School Messenger.')
The afternoon was sultry, the congregation small—consisting of only four women, two girls and three men.

The minister, a young man just out of college, arose in the desk with a languid air, as if undecided whether to attempt to preach, or dismiss the audience and go home.

He decided in favor of the former, and as the first hymn was being sung, one other person came—a man of rather rough appearance, who entered hesitatingly, and took a seat near the door.

As the young minister opened the Bible to read the lesson, a pitying smile flitted over the stranger's face. He cast a quick glance over the small congregation and soliloquized, 'I'd tramp it, afore I'd make a livin' preachin' to such a congregation.'

The next moment, however, he was listening to the Scripture lesson, losing thought of the reader, in the interest he felt in what was being read.

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well. Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land."

'May the Lord bless the reading of His Word,' reverently said the minister, as he turned to the hymn book to announce the second hymn.

When it had been sung, and the others knelt in prayer, the stranger arose, intending to pass out unobserved, but seeming to change his mind, took his seat again, his elbows resting on his knees, paying no particular attention to the prayer until the supplicating voice with a deep touch of unmistakable sympathy said, 'And grant, blessed Lord, an especial blessing upon the stranger within our gates to-day. May Thy presence go with him where he goes, and Thy love and mercy overshadow him where he stays, and may his life in this world be a constant preparation for the life eternal.'

Two large tears stole from under his closed eyelids and fell upon the floor. With a sort of savage stroke he dried his cheeks with his grimy hand.

'Plague take it! What'd I come in here for, anyhow?' he growled under his breath and made an impatient movement at the close of the prayer, as if to go; but the pleasant voice of the minister announcing the text arrested his attention. It read, 'Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die.'

Having noted the interest with which the reading had been listened to, the minister indulged in a hope that his sermon might benefit the stranger, but he had only said, 'This is a message to be heeded by every one of us,' when the newcomer suddenly arose and passed out of the door.

He tramped along for several hours until the heat seemed unbearable, and the sight of



(From 'The Good Shepherd,' Blackie & Son, Glasgow).

The Shepherd and the Lost Sheep.

O tender shepherd! climbing rugged mountains,
And wading waters deep,
How long wouldst thou be willing to go homeless
To find a straying sheep?
'I count no time,' the shepherd gently answered,
'As thou dost count and bind
The days in weeks, the weeks in months; my counting
Is just—until I find.
'And that would be the limit of my journey,
I'd cross the waters deep,
And climb the hillsides with unflinching patience
Until I found my sheep.'

—Anna Temple.

the dusty road seemed to increase the terrible pain in his head. Creeping through a fence he lay down in the cool shadow of a stack of straw.

Lying there, he seemed to hear again the words: 'May Thy presence go with him where he goes, Thy love and mercy overshadow him.'

'Fine company the Lord'd have walkin' long side o' me, trampin' the country,' he said, aloud, trying to make light of both the words and his feelings. He failed in the attempt, for, as though a voice were whispering in his ear, he heard the other words, 'Wash you, make you clean; cease to do evil, learn to do well.'

'Yes,' he soliloquized, 'afore that young feller's prayer could be answered, I'd have to clean up a bit, sure, afore I'd be fit for such high-toned company as he mentioned.'

The voice continued, 'Set thy house in order.'

'I'm in luck this time,' he said, with a grin. 'Ain't got any house, so don't need to— Le's see, what was the rest of that Scriptor? I orter know. When I was in Sunday school I learned the hull chapter. It's Isaiar.'

'For thou shalt die,' prompted the inner voice.

His heart gave a sudden throb. A momen-