



Sandy Brown

LEAVES FROM MY DIARY.

(G. Jameson, in 'Sunday at Home.')

CHAPTER IV.—Continued.

Long enough he kept his own counsel; but one night he had to tell me all. I must save her. She feared me. Could I not get at her, somehow? So we agreed that I should patrol the district at midnight, to catch her, poor woman, who was so far from home and love; from self and God.

A sweet harvest midnight hour, full moon; hardly dark, not many astir. Every thing so quiet and unlike mid-day. 'Hulloa!'

'Hulloa!' said Inspector Graham touching his hat. 'Seldom we see you here at this hour. What's up?'

'Man, Graham,' I said, wringing his hand, you are a gentleman. What cloud dropped you? The very man I want. Have you a second to spare?'

'Yes! go on. I just left the sergeant this minute; all's right for half-an-hour; we can walk, and talk as we go.'

'Well, man. I'm in a fix. You know Brown, the smith? He has made a profession lately, which I believe genuine; but, oh dear! his wife breaks the door, pawns everything, and I fear mischief; so I promised the poor fellow to hunt all round to-night to catch her.'

'You did? Well, I don't like to say it—but the more fool you.'

'Tuts, Graham! that's not like you.'

'Maybe no! but—excuse me saying it—we know Brown, and—well, you don't. Watch him, he's after no good. He's a bad one!'

Much more was said and answered—Graham, sure I was being 'sold,' angry at my simplicity; while I was as sure he erred this time.

When more talk was idle he blew his whistle in despair, and gave pointed orders to the sergeant, who, in half an hour, had put my wants over a large part of the sleeping city. But it was all in vain. Early that autumn morning I tumbled, thoroughly tired, into bed and slept soundly. After a bath and breakfast I was off again—in vain, again, all our search.

Next day fell, like a benediction, God's holy Sabbath; and, at evening-time, I was glad to see Mrs. Brown at her own fireside. She was humble, crushed, dejected, ashamed. She had returned early that morning in a bad way, had taken poison, but too much, and so had not retained it. Then came resolve, reconciliation, peace.

I pled with her as if she had been my one ewe lamb. Sandy pled; the bairns all joined in. What a scene! while evening shadows softly fell. If only Inspector Graham had been there! But God was there, moving meltingly in every heart; and we all felt ourselves, God's grace apart, in the region of the impossible.

Then we all knelt down in that little kitchen, that Sabbath evening in The Open, to cast our selves on God: In his sovereign mercy we set our hope; at the cross we lay seeking not pardon only, but the grace to help in time of need.

As I walked homewards many thoughts were mine. It was a lovely evening, though late a little; and, instinctively, I was led into 'the heavenlies,' where loud songs or joy proclaim the glad, swelling tidings that another wayfaring soul has found the way to God, heaven, home.

CHAPTER V.

Many years have passed away. Inspector Graham is dead now, though he lived long enough to see Sandy an elder in the

church where himself had long been a deacon.

Sandy has stood long and nobly. He has told me that the past, when he thinks of it, is like a bad dream. Mrs. Brown has backed up all his endeavors. The house is 'a little place'—the same house it is, but how different, the sweet room and kitchen. Some little ones have 'gone home,' and she shows you with a mother's joy, through tears, the little Memoriam cards, over the mantel. She hopes to meet them again, and, with them, be part of 'the choir invisible.'

Meantime, Sandy and she live the new life, where they lived the old. And at the prison gate of a Monday morning you may find both; or, mayhap, Sandy alone, on a cold morning, laying hold of a former 'mate'—ere he fall into bad hands. Sandy has him off home, where Helen, fresher and plumper than we once knew her to be, has a steaming breakfast waiting. Then Sandy 'takes the books,' as we Scotch folk say; and he who has felt temptation's awful power, now pleads for his friend, before the Throne of God. In this way Sandy seeks to be 'a man of help'; and not a few in The Open have ventured to take their griefs to Sandy, and been led by him to his and their Saviour.

The last time I saw Sandy was on a Communion Sabbath afternoon. His minister, Great Heart, whose smile was full of gracious peace, and who now rests and so lives in God—had asked me to aid him at the Sacrament of the Supper; and not the least joy that day was just to watch Sandy.

I see him yet. According to custom, Great Heart arranged us all in order of march in the little vestry. Prayer was offered—then we set off downstairs for the church. As officiating minister I led the way; elders, bearing 'the elements,' followed; then Great Heart came last of all, clothed with benign humility. How I watched Sandy reverently arrange the bread; how softly he bore it—in its white cloth, like Christian holiness, mean but clean, down the aisle. Then, all was over. The great day was closing for another term, and we all stood up to sing Paraphrase fifty-four.

Sandy and I exchanged glances, knowing fine each other's thoughts, only we dare not sing. Voices we had; but our thoughts were too many and too great just then. How sweetly the song went, as sung at the Table that day:—

'Jesus, my Lord! I know His name,
His name is all my boast;
Nor will He put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.'

Sandy didn't sing, nor did I. We knew where each other's thoughts were—away back in the years, in that awful hand-to-hand fight for an immortal soul: 'at the front' were we against Sin and Death, and Hell!

So we couldn't sing; but through the gathering mist of tears, a great joy filled our hearts. 'Till the day dawn'—that was our feast divine. It was an ante-past of heaven!

(The End.)

Gilded Traps.

How many traps there are set for our young people! That is what makes parents so anxious. Here are temptations on every hand for every form of dissipation and every stage of it. The young man, when he first goes into dissipation, is very particular where he goes. It must be a fashionable hotel. He could not be tempted into these corner nuisances, with red-stained glass and a mug of beer painted on the sign-board. You ask the young man to go into that place, and he would say, 'Do you mean to insult me?' No; it must be a marble-floored bar-room. It must be a place where fashionable gentlemen come in and click their cut glass and drink to the enunciation of flattering sentiment. But the young man cannot always find that kind of place; yet he has a thirst, and it must be gratified. The

down-grade is steeper now, and he is almost at the bottom. Here they sit in an oyster cellar around a card-table, wheezing, bloated, and blood-shot, with cards so greasy you can hardly tell who has the best hand. But never mind; they are only playing for drink. Shuffle away; shuffle away! The landlord stands in his shirt-sleeves with hands on his hips, watching the game and waiting for another call to fill the glasses. The clock strikes twelve; it is the tolling of the bell of eternity at the burial of a soul. Two hours pass on, and they are all sound asleep in their chairs. Landlord says, 'Come, now, wake up; it's time to shut up.' They look up and say, 'What?' 'It's time to shut up.' Push them out into the air. They are going home! Let the wife crouch in the corner and the children hide under the bed. What is the history of that young man? He began his dissipation at the first-class hotel, and completed his damnation in the worst grog-shop in the back street.—Dr. Talmage.

An important work of the school is to prepare the child to resist temptation and meet responsibility without faltering. The influence of the cigarette is as perilous today as ever the seductive pipes of the 'Pied Piper of Hamelin,' whom the children followed to their destruction. And we can save the children, only by teaching them the danger that lurks in these harmless-looking rolls of paper and tobacco, before the appetite for them is formed.—Mary H. Hunt.

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