

something stagger in his breast. It was his coward's heart!

Again the knock sounded. Not because he had grown brave again, but because he had grown too weak to resist even a knock upon a door, he gave the rug a kick that half straightened it, and in the tone of one who, despairing help, bids his torturers advance, he called: "Come in."

But instead of waiting to see who entered, he turned his back and walked off down the room with slow, disconsolate stride, head hanging, shoulders drooping, knees trembling, feet dragging, utterly unmindful to preserve longer the pose of strength even before the dear ones whom he wished above all to see him brave and strong.

It was the silence of the one who entered that made him turn slowly, staring, his form lifting itself to its full height, and a hand rising to sweep the hanging hair from his eyes as he gazed for a moment in unbelieving bewilderment and then hoarsely shouted:

"Bessie! Bessie! Is it you?"

Before the broken, paralyzed man could leap to meet her, the young woman had flung herself into his arms, with a cry almost of pain: "John! Oh, John!"

He clasped her hysterically, half laughing and half sobbing: "Thank God! Thank God!" and then, murmuring incoherently, "It is the answer of the Father! It is the answer of the Father!"

Bessie, the first surge of her emotions over, stood looking up into John's storm-stressed face, with glistening, happy eyes.

It was evident that all the vapor of her doubt and misunderstanding had been burned away. She was again the old Bessie. She had started to him by an instinct of loyalty, spurred by a love that had refused to die, yet,