

entirely against the assumption of the church of Rome that St. Peter was for twenty-five years Bishop of Rome, and consequently that the Bishop of Rome is the successor of St. Peter and the universal head of the church and that, therefore, the pretensions of Rome are built on a very sandy foundation.

—Kindly show this paper to your neighbors, and get them to subscribe for it.

### Family Reading.

#### GOLD IN THE SKY.

##### CHAPTER XVI.—INVESTIGATIONS.

Dr. Majendie was considerably irate when he heard that Mr. Cyril Egerton particularly wished to see him again. He kept him waiting some little time, and then descended, and entered the drawing-room, with some questioning on his face.

"Dr. Majendie," said Cyril, springing forward, "I want to ask you a most important question. Was there any money—I mean a considerable sum of money—found in Claude's pockets when he was brought home?"

"A considerable sum of money!" said Dr. Majendie, with some surprise, "not that I heard of. Stay, Benson is in the house—I know he took charge of what he had about him."

The bell was rung, and Benson called.

"Benson," said Cyril, "I hear you took charge of everything my brother had about him at the time of the accident; now tell me what he had."

"Little enough, sir. Indeed I've wondered many a time what made Mr. Claude go out without his watch and chain—a thing I never knew him do before, and he didn't leave it about at home, either; but there was half-a-sovereign in one waistcoat pocket, and eighteenpence in another."

"But in his other pockets; was there no money in any of them—nothing in his pocket-book—he never carried a purse?"

"There was no pocket-book, sir. There were some letters and accounts, and his studs, a handkerchief, and this half-sovereign, and the eighteenpence, and that was all he had about him, and which I can show you when you please."

"Are you sure he had money?" said Dr. Majendie. "I should like to know this for certain, for I now remember hearing some gossip about this the other day in the town—it was reported that he had been carrying money about with him, that this might be the reason he was attacked—but there are so many reports going about that if one were to heed half of them one would have enough to do."

"I know that he told me that very day he was going to the bank to get some money, and that he should ride on to Riddleys' farm with it afterwards," said Cyril.

"What a strange thing that this should not have come to light before!" said the Doctor. "The affair is as clear as a pickstaff now; it must have got wind somehow that Claude would be riding along that road alone with a certain sum of money, and he has been set upon and robbed, and unmercifully handled, for the sake of it. But who in Atherton would do such a thing? It is as mysterious as ever!"

"I shall be off at once to Riddleys' with Merton, and hear whether they had the money," cried Cyril, rising.

"Stay," said the Doctor, "that might be a waste of time. Go first to the bank, and enquire whether your brother did draw a sum of money on that day; it is past office hours now—seven o'clock—but Clithers will be sure to be at home, and willing to give you all the information you require; and if you find that he did have this money, then drive on to Riddleys', if you are sure it was to be taken there."

"I have his own words for it," was the answer.

"Well, stay a moment, I will order my carriage for you; it will save time."

"Thank you; and what shall I do if I find it as we suspect?"

"Drive straight to the police-station, and give notice to that effect. Offer a reward for the capture of the ruffians, if you like."

"I will! I will!" cried Cyril, starting up.

His impatience was so great that he scarcely

knew how to endure the waiting till the carriage come round. It did not occur to him that all this might have been done before, and time saved, had he possessed a little more energy of purpose and self-reliance; but he had been too wrapped up in his own sorrow at what had happened to look beyond it.

"Merton, get inside, I want to speak to you," he said, as Merton would have closed the carriage-door on him, and when they had started, he told him all that Dr. Majendie had suggested, and what he intended doing. And Merton, well pleased with his own part in the affair, was quite ready to agree that no better plan could have been suggested.

"But I really would be a little careful, sir," he added, "I thought, if you'll excuse my saying so, that it was rather imprudent of you to tell Jem Sawyers about Mr. Egerton's having money about with him that day—not but what I have full confidence in Jem, but don't tell anybody else everything. I am quite sorry that fellow is going away, but it is always the way when you come across any one that is of real service, and worth the wages they get, something or other is sure to call them away, and you never hear of them again."

"Is he going to leave?" questioned Cyril, with some interest.

"Yes, sir. It seems his brother has set up some refreshment rooms, or an eating house, or whatever they call it, over at Melbourne, and it is succeeding most wonderful, and he can't manage to do it all himself, and if Jem would go over at once he'll take him into partnership. He got the letter on Christmas Day, and gave warning at once. Indeed, he would have liked to be off by the next boat, he was so afraid of losing the partnership, but we wouldn't hear of that, and insisted on his remaining his month—it would have been so inconvenient to be without any one in his place. But lor, sir, I consider it very good of him to stop! Of course he's in a desperate hurry to be off; it is wonderful the way folks make their fortunes over in Australia; there's money in the very sound of the word."

Cyril agreed somewhat absently to this sentiment, and the carriage drew up at the private door of the bank, Mr. Clithers the manager living in the large old house attached to it.

He was at home, and received Cyril's eager questioning with some little surprise, but he said he was only astonished that the information had not been sought for before. He was quite ready with all that the bank knew in the matter. Mr. Claude Egerton had drawn the sum of thirty pounds on the afternoon of December the 24th, twenty pounds of it in gold, and a ten-pound note, the number of which was furnished.

"Stop it then at once!" cried Cyril, and without more ado, and scarce bidding Mr. Clithers good-night, or vouchsafing thanks for the information, he rushed out to Merton, and to the carriage.

"Drive to Riddleys', Netley Farm, as fast as you can go!" he cried to the coachman, in much excitement; and there was no need to tell Merton what he had heard at the bank. Dr. Majendie's horses had never gone faster to the bed-side of a sick person than they now flew along the snowy road.

Netley Farm lay somewhat out of the high road, and at some miles distance. Although Merton talked ceaselessly the whole time, and assured Cyril the whole affair would now soon be sifted, the way and the time seemed interminable to Cyril, who at times felt the strongest desire to kick Merton out of the carriage, and then again thought he was the best adviser he could have found.

The family at Netley consisted of an old widowed woman and her two sons, and a widowed daughter who lived at Netley Farm. The farm was small and not a very good one, and the Riddleys were always poor and struggling. Since the father's death, however, the two boys, who were steady fellows, worked together with praiseworthy energy, and managed to keep things going. They were a great comfort to their mother, and respected by all. David the younger son, opened the door in answer to the vigorous thumps of Cyril's fist, there being no other mode of communication between those outside and those inside the house. He was immensely astonished when he recognised his visitor.

"Is your brother at home? or your mother? I want to see somebody as quickly as possible!" was his only greeting.

"They are both in, sir, I will fetch them at once if you will go in the parlour, sir."

"No, I will not; are they in the kitchen?" and without waiting for an answer, Cyril, well knowing where he should find the family assembled, walked into the kitchen, which was large and warm and well lighted. Merton had followed him; and they saw the old lady knitting stockings in a chair by the fire the elder son sitting opposite to her smoking his pipe, enjoying the hour of rest, and the dairy-maid looking after something which was cooking on the fire.

It was as peaceful and restful a scene as could well be imagined, but all rose, and there was an instant change in it as soon as the visitor appeared.

"Good-evening, Mrs. Ridley; good-evening, George," said Cyril, when he was introduced to Mr. Ridley. "I hope I am not disturbing you, but I wish to see you very particularly. I will not keep you five minutes—I have something to say about my brother."

"Ah, sir, how is he?"

"As bad as he can be—he is helpless, unconscious, and speechless. The doctor thinks that none of the wounds will prove fatal, and that he may recover in time, but he will always feel the effects of what has happened, and never be the same strong man again."

Cyril's voice slightly faltered as he said the last words, and a vision crossed him of his energetic healthful brother a delicate invalid, struck down in the heyday of his youth and strength, unable to follow his usual out-of-door exercises, and depending on help and assistance from those around him. The full reality of what they considered the hopeful side of Claude's misfortune now struck him in its entirety for the first time, and with a bitter feeling against the author of this crime, and a certain dislike to any who, in however distant a day, were connected with it, filled his mind, and in a harsh voice he said, "I believe my brother proposed bringing you this money!"

"Well, sir, there was no end to his generosity; he did say something about it."

"Speak out, don't waste my time," said Cyril, sharply. "Did he, or did not bring you this money?"

"No, sir," answered George Ridley.

"But had he promised it?"

"Yes, sir," said the widow, "he promised to bring it to us on Christmas Eve, but he did not do so; we were expecting him all the afternoon."

Cyril's face did not alter in the least, but he turned to Merton, and looked him full in the face, and a silence fell over all present.

"My brother intended to keep his promise," he then said. "I do not know anything about the money, or what it was for, I only know he did his best to bring it, and—and that promise has been the death of him."

He turned from them all, and left the room, with these bitter words, Merton slowly following him.

"To the police-station," cried Cyril to Dr. Majendie's coachman, "and drive as fast as you can go."

He seemed to be under great excitement all the way there, but he never spoke a word.

At the station he gave notice of all he had to say in a clear, comprehensible manner, and when it had been read over before him, the inspector added, "You wish to offer a reward for the capture of the person or persons supposed to have met and attacked your brother—how much, sir?"

Cyril answered, "Five hundred pounds!"

(To be continued.)

—And why is it that so few make audible responses? The object of responsive worship is twofold—to aid devotion by pre-occupying the attention and to incite your fellow worshippers by your own earnestness. On the first ground you owe it to yourself, and on the other to us all, to join in a fervent response. You can have no idea how a full voiced response helps and lifts up the minister, and on the other hand, what a depressing influence a faint amen exerts after a prayer or sermon. There is contagious sympathy in earnest tones productive and good. Let all, then seek to aid their fellow worshippers in this so simple and effective worship