

ed shook his head and said he knew no lady of the name written on the wall.

After a great search in the city news was brought to Justinian that the woman had been found. The Emperor accordingly went out with a band of courtiers and followed the guide into the lowest part of the city, and going down a steep road he reached a mean cottage. As he entered the doorway he found himself in the presence of an old woman, dressed in little more than rags. The Emperor was amazed, almost angry.

'What have you done to help the building of my great church of Santa Sophia?' he asked, haughtily.

'Very little,' she answered, quietly, and did not seem a bit frightened of the Emperor; 'very little, but the best I could. When the mules were dragging the heavy slabs of marble for the church up the steep road yonder I saw that they often slipped, and I feared that the marble might be broken. I therefore took the straw bed on which I slept and scattered the straw on the road to give them a foothold, so that they slipped no more.'

I dare say Justinian, who was a faithful Christian, learned a lesson from this old woman. That lesson was that no true service is without self-denial. She had probably denied herself more, by sacrificing ease, perhaps sleep, for the sake of God's house, than the Emperor, who owned the whole world and could give without feeling it.—The Churchman.

## The Way That Was Dark.

(Ida T. Thurston, in the 'Wellspring'.)

Richard Wilbur locked his desk, looked again at the safe to be sure that it was all right, then put his coat and hat and left the office, locking the door behind him. Outside, the chill wind made him shiver, and he stopped and turned up the collar of his old overcoat and buttoned it closely. Then he set off rapidly on the long walk before him. It seemed very long this cold November night, for he had had an especially hard day at the office, and he was very tired, and—yes, there was no denying it—he was disheartened and discouraged. Usually he was brave and hopeful, but to-night he could see nothing before him but years of just such hard work with small chance of promotion, and he had a mother and sister dependent upon him. The future looked as dark and gloomy as the clouded November sky above his head.

He turned a corner and stopped before the bulletin board of a newspaper office; it cost less to get the news so than to buy a paper. Swiftly his eyes swept over the roughly-chalked items to the last. As he read that, he leaned forward eagerly and his eyes began to shine, while a flush crept into his cheeks. Twice he read it before he hurried on, his head lifted, and his step quick and firm. The way did not seem long now, for his thoughts were busy with new hopes and plans.

They were waiting for him in the little home—his old mother and his crippled sister. The hot supper was soon on the table, and as they sat down to it, the young fellow told his news.

Markham was dead—Markham of the Mutual Insurance Company. He had died very suddenly, and there would be a vacancy in the office. The young fellow pushed aside his plate—he was too excited to eat.

'It's the place I've been hoping to get, mother!' he exclaimed. 'You remember, I had a talk with Tom Brandt about it a year or more ago, and he said then that Markham wasn't well, and talked of resigning, and he promised to speak a word for me whenever Markham did leave. Oh, mother—think of it! The salary is two thousand—just double what I'm getting now, and it's the same kind of work I did at Gridley's—I know it like a book. He pushed back his chair, and, springing up, began to pace the floor excitedly. 'And Uncle James is one of the directors, you know; he'll speak for me, don't you think he will, mother?'

There was anxiety in his mother's soft eyes as she watched him. 'I hope so—I don't see how he could refuse to do that much for you, Richard,' she answered; 'but, my boy, don't count on it. There are so many chances against your getting this place, and you are young, too, for such a responsible position!'



'Of course, I'm young, mother, but remember, I've had some experience. Oh, I know I can fill the place if only I can get the chance. I must go to see Uncle James and Cousin Tom right away. If I should wait until tomorrow, somebody might get in ahead of me.'

His mother checked a sigh; she must not discourage him. She drew his face down to hers and kissed him.

'God send you success—if it is best for you,' she whispered tenderly.

'I do believe he will,' Richard answered with reverent earnestness. 'I've done my best at Johnson's, mother, but it's awful drudgery there, and you don't know how I hate it.'

The door slammed behind him, and the two women looked at each other.

'He didn't eat half a dozen mouthfuls,' his sister said.

'No, he was too excited,' her mother replied.

'Oh, mother,' the girl went on eagerly, 'do you think he'll get the place?'

'I hope so, dear—it seems as if he had a good chance, but as I told him—don't count on it.'

Yet they could talk of nothing else. Their thoughts followed Richard as he hurried through the dark, wind-blown streets, build-

ing his hopeful air castles. But if he should be disappointed—how would he bear it! They watched the clock with anxious eyes. Would he be back in an hour—in two hours—or more?

When at last they heard his key in the door they were afraid to look into his face, but when they did look, one glance was enough. His shining eyes and flushed cheeks did not mean disappointment.

'I guess it's a sure thing, mother!' he cried, exultantly. 'I went first to Cousin Tom, and he was just as kind as anybody could be. He said that I am the very one for the place, and he's going to speak to Mr. Howe—he's the president, you know—he's going to speak to him for me, the first thing in the morning, and I'm to go to see Mr. Howe myself in the afternoon. I couldn't see Uncle James; he is out of town, but he'll be back in a day or two. Oh, mother, won't it be fine to have two thousand a year! That means a better house than this, and that new treatment for Nellie. I'm so happy, mother. I'm afraid I shan't sleep a wink to-night. I shall have to lie awake to rejoice!'

'I'm glad Cousin Tom was so kind about it,' the mother said, thoughtfully. There had been times when Cousin Tom had not been so kind as he might have been.

## A PLEASING MONOTONY

We are used to hearing people talk of 'a pleasing variety,' but there is such a thing as 'a pleasing monotony' too. When a shopkeeper finds his customers coming back to praise his goods and to buy more, he does not mind how many of them say: 'They are just splendid.' 'Best I've ever seen,' or something of that sort. He thinks the more the merrier. You would not find such monotony tiresome at all, would you?

That's how we feel about our 'Pictorial' Boys' Mail. The letters may make somewhat monotonous reading; indeed, if we printed a lot of fresh ones to-day, you probably would have to turn up an old paper to be sure they were from different boys; but it's a kind of monotony we are well pleased with. We can stand lots more, and we invite every young reader of this advertisement to send for a package of 'Pictorials' to sell for premiums, that they, too, may write just such letters, and join in the same refrain.

The Christmas Number was a great seller, and the January Number will even surpass that—same three colored inks used—same extra size—a special cover that is even more charming than the Christmas cover—altogether it will be the very best yet—and that is saying a good deal. It will be very popular as a New Year's card—so easy to send to friends far away—so interesting when it reaches them. Many families will buy three or four to send away, and our young agents can dispose of a large number of them for this purpose alone.

Send in your order at once, as the January issue will be ready by the time your order reaches us, and the sooner you get it the sooner you sell.

Cash in advance at the rate of ten cents per copy, secures the full number of papers and premiums by return mail; otherwise we send in lots of not over twelve at a time, but forward second lot at once, just as soon as you remit for the first, and send your knife or watch or pen just as soon as you have earned it.

You sell twelve for a knife, eighteen for a pen, twenty-four for a watch. Orders promptly filled. Full instructions given. Address JOHN DOUGALL & SON, 'Witness' Block, Montreal, Sales Agents for the 'Canadian Pictorial.'