

a hard man; that he had little mercy; that he always had his pound of flesh, if it was in the bond. He never went to church; he was not religious; he laid up his treasures here, where they paid good interest, as he believed; he pulled down his barns and built greater, not once thinking that his soul would be required of him some day. He paid a little toward the minister's salary, and thought his duty done; he was a moral man.

Yet Josiah Redbush was a heathen; the Gospel of grace he knew nothing about; his name was good for a hundred thousand at any bank; he carried weight with him into business circles; he was sharp, sagacious, keen; his judgment was esteemed above others, but he was not wise in heavenly things; he was a fool after all; he had no acquaintance with Christ, no treasure in heaven. Like many another, his calculations had concerned but one world; he had never lent to the Lord by giving to the poor.

It came about that among Josiah Redbush's debtors was a poor widow, poor from the fact that she had lost a most excellent husband, but having a fine farm. Josiah held the mortgage; he had looked with envious eye on the goodly acres for some years; indeed, he had proffered money when Hanson was sick, with the hope that some time he might add this valuable property to his scores of homesteads acquired in a similar way. His offer had been accepted, with the expectation that health would return and the claim might be met. But alas! death came, and Alice Hanson found herself at the mercy of a rich land-holder.

But there was one element in this problem that even Josiah Redbush had not regarded with his sharp vision, the Divine. There is a God in heaven! Alice Hanson was "acquainted" with Him. She knew there was mercy with Him; and often she cried for deliverance, asking that He who turneth the heart of man, as the rivers of water are turned, would move the heart of an obdurate soul.

One summer evening in the early harvest, Josiah was wending his way toward Alice Hanson's home. He had been thinking of his past life; how he left his mother's roof at nine years of age to battle with fate, and the success he had; the hard blows he received, and the lessons he had taught fate. His heart swelled with pride as his bank account, his real estate, his influence, were presented to his mind. But his errand to-night did not please him altogether. The widow's face as he last saw it haunted him, and her words:—"Josiah Redbush, your mother was a widow; have you no mercy on us who are left, like her, alone?" He remembered it to-night, and he wished the business settled. The farm was just what he wanted; he had a customer for it; he could make a number of thousands on the operation.

As he approached the house—having fastened his horse to the post beyond the white gate—passing up the trimly kept path, he heard a voice; and as he listened he heard the words of prayer. It was a long time since he had heard anyone pray. Away back in his boyhood, his mother—and she a widow—had taken him with the other children into the bedroom, before he left home, and prayed. It was strange, but he remembered some of the words, and it was thirty-one years ago: "Oh, Father, keep my boy as he goes forth into the great world to-day. Make him successful; but, above all, make him thy child." The years of struggle,

success, accomplishment, faded, and he was a little boy again, with his mother's hand on his head. She was under the grasses now. But he raised his hand to knock, when the words came to his ear, and his arm dropped again: "Oh, Father, thou hast brought me into sore straits. Thou dost take my husband, and now my home is threatened. I appeal to Thee, the widow's God, and the orphan's Father." Josiah started; strange emotions tugged at his heart-strings.

"Wilt Thou deliver us now; wilt Thou save; wilt Thou show to our oppressor what he owes to the God of the widow and the orphan?" Josiah could catch the sobs behind the words; his own eyes were wet, and he looked about to see if anyone was in sight. But the words were growing calmer, and thanksgiving was succeeding petition. "Even before they call I will answer. Verify to us thy promise," cried Widow Hanson.

Redbush waited to hear no more. He found his horse, but he was a long time unhitching him, and he allowed him to walk all the way home. The Lord had appeared in his life, and he was before the judgment-seat. He slept little; his big face hid him, and he was speechless. Scores of people seemed to pass by him; the widow and the fatherless he had robbed; and the Judge put down the items until the page was covered. No one appeared for him, until a woman, but careworn, approached the Justice. It was Widow Hanson. "Give him one more chance," she cried; "he had a praying mother." But as the Judge was about to speak, he awoke. The sun was pouring its rays into his window; another day had begun.

It is probable Josiah Redbush never spent a more profitable day, although his bank account was not increased. It had been said Josiah could make more rubbing his nose, a habit he had when working out some financial problem, than other men in exhausting toil. But to-day he was puzzled with the hardest sum of all his life. The Almighty called for his soul. He found there was little of it. All that day he sat alone and thought, and the hosts of eternity seemed watching him. But at sunset he could endure it no longer, and he fell on his knees and cried, "God be merciful unto me, a sinner!" But mercy seemed denied him for many days, until in his agony he said, "Pardon me, and I will pay Thee all."

And then the change came. He begun to make restitution. He became a poorer man, but he was rich toward God. The treasure increased beyond. Alice Hanson's prayer was heard, the mortgage cancelled, the heart of stone melted. The mother's petition had been kept in one of the "golden vials," and now its fragrance blessed many lives.—*New York Observer.*

WAS IT INSTINCT?

A western lawyer, whom we will call Mr. Lawrence, recently related the following, which is true in every particular:

"I rode lately some thirty or forty miles out of the city with my friend Mr. G—— in order to help him in opening the summer cottage, which had been closed during the winter. We had a delightful drive and found things looking all right about the cottage. Mr. G—— unlocked the door of the barn and led his horse in to stable him while we should examine the premises more fully. On closing the barn the fall be-