

to discuss the situation. The two old brothers were very emphatic upon the "all-rightness" of the mission, while at the same time sympathizing with Jemmy. They knew what he must be feeling, much better than he thought they did, for had they not often gone through much the same experience many times. But what they did not know was the suffering he was enduring by reason of that evil suggestion he had entertained about the money.

The words of his father concerning the possible presence among them of one who was not all right with the Lord clung to him and would not be got rid of. However, to his great relief, the two rugged old Christians proceeded to discuss ways and means in case of a split, and this turning his mind into another channel did him good. At last it was decided that, in the event of the impending break being of a serious nature, and drawing off a majority of the congregation, Pug and Jack should beat up their friends and endeavour to persuade them to tide the little gathering over its temporary troubles. And with this resolve they parted for their several homes.

Sunday evening saw the hall packed to overflowing, for not only were there no absentees among the members, but, allured by the prospect of a row, premonitions of which unseemly proceeding had somehow got circulated in the neighbourhood, there was a goodly muster of those who had no Christian feeling whatever—only a wish to see what they termed a lark. After the preliminary hymn-singing and prayers, Jemmy rose, and taking for his text the familiar John iii. 16, launched into a fervent appeal to those present to hear the voice of God, to come and be saved. Never had he spoken with so much fire blended with so much pathos. Never, apparently, had his hearers manifested such keen interest in his remarks. But, had he been ten times as fervently eloquent, it is doubtful whether he would have made any real impression, because the majority of his audience, having come to hear something entirely different, had a certain sense of grievance at Jemmy's unwarrantably taking up their time with what they felt that they could hear whenever they liked. So, when he suddenly brought his address to an end by announcing that after the hymn had been sung Brother Jackson would address the meeting, there was perceptible intensifying of interest, all faces lost their somewhat dreamy look, and the hymn was sung with great vigour.

While the last verse was proceeding, Brother Jackson made his way to the platform, being met at its break by Pug, who whispered something in his ear. He nodded and took a seat by Jemmy's side at the rear of the platform. As soon as the congregation had resumed their seats, Pug limped forward and said:

"Brevren an' sisters, most on you know what's in the wind. I needn't remind ye of all that my son 'as ben an' done in this 'ere nayburwood; you all knows it as well as wot I do. But Bruvver Jackson, 'e finks as 'ow us old 'ans at the work in this mission's gittin' stale, an' 'that they ort t' be some fresh blood in the conduc' of matters 'ere. 'E's nah goin' t' address yer on th' subjec', an' arterward we'll 'ave a show of 'ands to see oose in faviour of 'im being superintendent 'stead o' my son. I sh'll 'ave a little more t' say arter 'e's finished, but at present it's 'is show. Bruvver Jackson, will you take the meetin'?"

The attention was now earnest enough to justify the most exacting speaker. Brother Jackson advanced to the rail, moistened his lips with his tongue twice or thrice, cleared his throat nervously, and at last said: "Dear friends, my task to-night ain't a easy one. God knows I shoud' be the last to say a word agen Jemmy or his father, or anybody else connected with this mission. I owe 'em all too much for that. I don't believe that you could find, if you searched London through, a better job than there is here. But we've all gotter remember that a man may be very godly, very lovable, and very kind, an' yet be a very bad business man. An' in a mission like this you can't afford to have a bad business man for a superintendent. There isn't any outside help; all the funds 'as got to come from the poorest of the poor (I know I'm a-wearin' my shirts till they nearly fall to pieces 'cause of the drain the mission is on me), an' if these funds are not carefully nursed and wisely managed you know what'll happen, don't you? If not, I'll tell you. Before this winter's gone you'll have the landlord bund'lin' you out an' collarin' the Hall 'at 'as cost so much labour and money"—("Neither of it yours," muttered Jemmy).

"Well, what I propose is this, that we have an election for superintendent, treasurer, secretary, and deacons, in proper form, every member of the gathering being entitled to vote, and when the election's over, that we have a proper set of rules drawn up and audi-