

But trouble, dark and terrible, was again to visit the home of the Ashtons, and this time it was the poor lost sheep who had lately been gathered by the Good Shepherd into the lower fold, that was to be translated—though by a cruel death—to the green pastures and still waters of the homeland above.

One very dark night as he was returning home from the store, where he had been detained later than usual, having reached the back street on which his house was situated, and when within a short distance of it, as he was passing an alley he was suddenly struck a terrific blow on the head, which felled him senseless to the earth. The ruffian who had attacked him was not content with knocking him down, but continued brutally kicking him after he had fallen, and did not desist until his victim was lying still, as though dead.

"I guess that settles the score I have against him," muttered Joe Porter, for he it was who had made the murderous attack. "I'm thinking they'll have a good time finding out who did it. And he'll be some time before he swears against me again. If I only had that young dandy here that took his part I'd settle with him, too. No man ever meddled with me yet without suffering for it, for I hold spite like an Injun, and I'll have satisfaction out of him if I swing for it." Thus muttering to himself he glided off into the darkness.

Eddie, when on his way home a few moments afterwards, saw, by the light of his lantern, a man lying