

know all there is to know about ideas. Maybe there's more white ones that have lived to get old than we've got sense enough to think there is.'

Sam spoke a little defiantly as we sometimes do speak when we feel ourselves opposed to public opinion and expect a counter-blast.

'Maybe,' said big Jones.

One Sunday afternoon, early in the summer, when it rained in torrents, the living room had been full of ranchmen, loafing and joking and grumbling. Albert read a book by the window.

'Hello, boy!' shouted one of the men to him across the babel of voices. 'We are bored. Preach to us. You were brought up with a sky pilot. You ought to know some of the trade.'

Before the end of this speech the other voices had stopped. There was a burst of applause.

'That's right!' cried Jones, slapping mightily on the table, 'give us a sermon! Its variety that we want.'

'Give us a good one!'

'Spice it up!'

'Don't put off any worthless life-preservers on us; our account is pretty heavy.'

'Yes,' concluded Jones, 'we need the real thing. Let us have the best.'

'I'm willing,' said Albert. 'I have a fine sermon right here.'

He turned back in his book and began to read.

It was the Life of John Paton.

For half an hour or so, while some of the men slept and more of them listened, Albert continued to read. Then he shut the book.

'That's real, isn't it?' he asked.

'That fellow,' said Jones, 'would have made a good cowboy.'

'A number of cowboys,' growled Mr. Van Doren from his corner, 'would make good Patons, if they gave themselves the chance.'

A pause followed this unexpected speech. It was broken by one of the men who had awakened from his nap and called out with a yawn:—

'Say, boy, we ought to have some praying. That's the most fashionable thing of all in meetings.'

'So we ought,' agreed Albert again. 'We'll pray.'

And he started to sing,

Rock of ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.

At the second line Sam Kelly struck in, and soon the good old hymn shook the walls of the room and carried the thoughts of the men only God knew whither.

It came to be the custom to read and sing on Sunday afternoons; by and by what Jones called a 'regular prayer' was added. The congregation varied widely with the weather, but it never, on the brightest days, dropped away entirely. As Albert's last Sunday drew near he said one afternoon, 'Who is going to be reader when I go?'

The men laughed.

'That's so,' said one of them. 'We've got the habit of going to church now. It won't seem natural to turn clear heathen again.'

'You musn't turn. Sam Kelly,' said Albert, making a bold stroke, 'can lead the singing. Who will read?'

The men still laughed. But sudden solemnity seized them when big Jones answered with some shamefacedness, 'I will.'

'But,' Jones went on, 'the book will soon be read up and I'll be out of my job.'

'By no means,' said Mr. Van Doren. 'There is other good reading. I will have a boxful shipped out here. I will take advice on it,' he added grimly, his twinkling eyes roving from one bronzed face to another. 'Somebody shall choose that has religion enough and hasn't dyspepsia.'

The sneaking smile that was beginning on the faces died out sheepishly.

'The fact is,' Mr. Van Doren said later to Albert, 'I know of another class mate like your father who has gone all to pieces under the strain. When I first heard of him I said, "What a fool!" But I presume that I may alter my opinion if I see fit.'

'Yes, sir,' said Albert.

'His name is Harding,' continued Mr. Van Doren. 'You father would know him I dare say. A winter in this climate would set Hard-

ing up. He might start in about Christmas time. It is my belief that then the men would keep Christmas not altogether on whiskey and poker. I must see about that.'

Albert stared.

'You don't mean he hinted wonderingly.'

'Never mind what I mean, snapped Mr. Van Doren, turning his back on him.'

But Albert did mind. He reflected on the subject.

'There is no reason,' he decided, 'why he should be poor. I merely have assumed that he was. To be sure, his coats are shiny and his hats are not. But Mr. Van Doren is a man who would wear shiny coats and unshiny hats as a matter of—well, of disposition.'

'I don't see,' Albert reasoned further, 'how what he said could make any other sense than that he is going to send a man like father out here to spend the winter, beginning with Christmas. If father only had a chance at big Jones and Sam Kelly and the rest! And Mr. Harding is like father.'

When Albert, well and strong, started east again, his skies were very bright.

'Things are turning out splendidly for me,' he told Mr. Van Doren. 'This session I need do nothing outside my college work but tutor Dr. Thatcher's two boys. I shall be almost a gentleman of leisure.'

'Come to see me,' Mr. Van Doren said to him on his last night at the ranch.

'To see you?' repeated Albert vaguely.

'Yes. I live two squares from the university.'

Albert promised, discreetly omitting to question why his invitation came so late.

When, in September, he went to see Mr. Van Doren, all Albert's light-heartedness was gone.

'What's wrong?' demanded Mr. Van Doren. 'Dr. Thatcher doesn't want me. He has engaged a governess for the boys. He knew how I overdid things last year and the boys will need more lessons than before; so he gave up thinking of me.'

Albert looked down at his soft felt hat which he was parting into folds with hands that shook.

'I can't try to go through college,' he said. 'I will look for work.'

'No, you will not!' said Mr. Van Doren. 'Let me tell you what you will do. You will come here and live with me and go to college from my house.'

Not one word did Albert say, but he shot an uneasy glance at the door.

'Look at the place!' said Mr. Van Doren, with a wave of his hand about him. 'It is too big for one man to live in, and too lonely. There are ghosts in it. It is they that are making me an old man. They dog me. Flesh and blood is healthier. I see it all now. If I could have a live boy to talk across the table to me, to come in at my door and live in my rooms, I verily believe that I could get my health again.'

Indeed, at that moment, he looked as though he might be telling the truth. Albert had never seen him so vigorous.

'Oh, no! Oh, no!' murmured Albert, backing away.

Mr. Van Doren pushed him into a seat.

'Your father and I,' he said, 'began life together. I have made a mess of mine; you know what he has done with his. He has never been paid its money value. Has he?'

Albert shook his head.

'The rest of us are in debt to him—hopelessly in debt, I acknowledge. But there is no reason why a little salvage of it might not be paid off. When a glint of the truth shines through the shadows that I have been busy piling up about me always, why should you quench it? When I claim my right to a little share in your father's good work, who are you to balk me? You shall not.'

Still Albert was silent.

Mr. Van Doren leaned toward him. When he spoke there was a gentleness in his voice that Albert had never dreamed could be there.

'Boy, you are like your father. Your face is not, but his stuff is in you. I am a cranky old man who has usually managed to miss the best. But this good that has been sent to me I am going to have. I will have it!'

One day Fred Bonsall said to Tom Hoskins and some of the others:—

'It's easier to be an honored guest than to tutor those lively little Thatcher boys. Albert Kent is lucky.'

'It isn't luck, it is a special providence,'

said Tom, 'for Mr. Van Doren. The old man has sense enough to know it, too. So far as Albert is concerned it is patrimony.'

## Locking the Stable Door.

There lived a man, one time, who kept  
A stable with fine horses stocked,  
And carelessly one night he slept  
And left the stable door unlocked—  
In fact, no lock at all had he;  
He was as careless as could be.

And thieves that night got in and took  
The horses, and got clear away.  
Though high and low that man did look,  
He has not found them to this day.  
His neighbors came and mocked his woe—  
'Aha!' said they. 'We told you so.'

The man arose; to town he went,  
And there a massive lock he bought;  
For iron bars some cash he spent—  
It was a happy afterthought.  
With bolt and rivet, screw and nail,  
He made that stable like a jail.

Then when the neighbors looked upon  
His work, again they laughed and mocked.  
They said—'Now that the horse is gone,  
We see the stable door is locked.'  
He answered—'Though I am bereft  
Of horses, I've the harness left.'

Moral.

It never is too late to learn.

If all precautions we neglect

And some few hundred people burn,

It's doubtless what we might expect,

Our stable door, though, seems ajar.

Let's keep it shut with lock and bar.

—League Journal.

## Why?

Why, it is asked, are there so many snares? That we may not fly low, but may seek the things which are above. For just as birds, so long as they cleave the upper air, are not easily caught, so thou also, as long as thou lookest at things above, will not easily be captured, whether by a snare or by any other device of evil.—Chrysostom.

## Don't do it 'Just for Now.'

Many young people form habits which cripple and handicap them for life by doing things 'just for now.' They let things drop wherever they happen to be, 'just for now,' thinking they will put the book, the tool, the letter, or the article of clothing, later, where it belongs.

When these young people grow up to manhood and womanhood, they find that the habit of putting things down anywhere, 'just for now,' has become a tyrant that fills their lives with confusion and disorder.

It takes no more time or effort to put a thing where it belongs, in the first place, than it does later, perhaps less; and the chances are that, if you do not do so at the proper time, you never will.

Even if it costs you a little inconvenience, at the moment, to put everything in its proper place, to do everything at the proper time, the orderly and methodical habits which you cultivate in this way will increase your power and usefulness a hundred-fold, and may save you much trouble and mortification in the future.—'Success.'

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