

earnestly, and before they parted they kneeled together in prayer.

'Good-night, Mr. Busby,' said Sinclair warmly clasping his visitor's hand. 'You are the first man who has spoken to me on these subjects since I came to the city. I thank you for your kindly counsel and warning. Depend upon it, I shall not forget your words. And—and—' his voice trembled a little—'continue to pray for me. My danger is greater than I supposed.'

What was the sequel to Harold's unselfish act that wintry night? A week later young Sinclair met him at the mission.

'Mr. Busby,' he broke out, grasping Harold's hand, 'I owe you everything. Your visit the other night set me to thinking, and I am glad to say that God has opened my eyes and made me a new creature.'

The speaker's face glowed, and Harold's voice choked as he tried to express his joy and gratitude.

'And now,' continued Sinclair, 'I want to be a worker. If I can help you in your mission work, I am at your service.'

'You are beginning in the right way, my friend,' said Harold.

Other important consequences followed young Sinclair's conversion. He became an effective worker in the mission, and was the means of bringing many to Christ, and these in turn brought others, and thus the work spread until it was soon impossible for human wisdom to trace all the ramifying influences of grace that flowed from that winter night's good deed.

But there is one stream of influence that we may trace a little farther. A few years later Jasper Sinclair married a Christian girl and moved, for business reasons, to another city. He carried his earnest evangelistic spirit with him. One night, as he and his young wife were walking along a brightly lighted street, they met a young man, with whom they had recently made acquaintance. He tried to avoid them, but Sinclair stopped and spoke.

'Whither away, Washburn, in such a hurry?'

'Oh, I was just going—well, to be honest, I'm desperately lonely to-night, and was just going to meet some of the fellows who invited me to play some games with them.'

'Lonely, are you?' asked Sinclair, cheerfully. 'Come with us, then. We've no engagement for this evening, and wife and I would be glad to have a few games with you in our parlor. Come, friend Washburn; 'tis the cosiest little parlor that ever you did spy,' he added, with a laugh.

'I believe I'll accept your invitation,' replied the young man, after a moment's thought.

The evening was pleasantly spent with games and social converse, closing with a cordial invitation on Sinclair's part to young Washburn to join the former's Sunday-school class. The visitor promised that he would, saying:

'I attended church services in my college days, but since I came to this city I've drifted away. My associations have not been favorable.' Then he hesitated. 'Before I go, I must make a confession. You know about the proverbial "honest confession." I was taking my first step into real evil this evening when you met me and arrested me by your kind invitation. Thank you, friends. I shall change my course.'

'Ask the strong Christ to help you,' was Mrs. Sinclair's parting counsel.

Their visitor gone Jasper Sinclair and his wife sat down to talk over the evening's episode.

'Kitty,' he said, 'it was just like this that Harold Busby rescued me four years ago.'

'God bless him,' she replied, with shining eyes. 'See how that good deed spreads like an ever-widening circle.'

Faithful to his promise, young Washburn came to the Sunday-school the next Sabbath morning, and before many weeks he was most happily brought to Christ. Then followed another blessed sequel. Washburn felt that he must become a preacher of the gospel. Having already received a college diploma, he went at once to a divinity school, from which he graduated in due time.

Through his earnest preaching hundreds of persons were brought to Christ, and thus the circle of influence went on ever widening, blessing many lives for time and eternity.

Is it not marvellous how much good Harold Busby is doing in the world? And yet he is going on his quiet, humble way, little conscious of it all. But in the future life he will be able to read the shining record and trace the unending influence of his good deed. Who can ever count the multitude who will arise and call him blessed?

Perhaps this simple history will cheer some other humble worker.

### The Chaplain's Story.

Let me tell you something I happen to know, because I am a prison chaplain. Many of the young men who come into my office to talk with me and tell me their troubles, admit that it was reading bad books that gave them their first taste for crime, though at the time they did not know what it was.

Let me give you one instance, though not in the prison where I am now chaplain. In the Massachusetts State Prison is a man by the name of Jesse Pomeroy. His case twenty-six years ago was known all over the United States. He was the boy murderer, who killed two boys and tortured a number of others. His whole iniquitous course was begun and fostered by the reading of bad books. He read how boys had done awful deeds and how cleverly they always escaped detection, and he came to the conclusion that he could do the same. His mother, a Christian woman, was afraid of the influence of these books and used to follow him to his room and see him safely in bed before she left him. But he used to conceal candles in the room and after his mother had gone to bed, he would light a candle and read nearly all night long. It was bad books that started him on his downward course. Jesse Pomeroy ought to have been a useful man. He is a clear-headed, inventive, thoughtful man; but if there were 875 men to be released from the State Prison to-morrow, out of the 876 at present confined in the cells, he would be the one to remain. Public indignation would tear him limb from limb if he ever did escape. All this because he gave way to the temptation to read bad books.

What a lesson for boys and young men! Be careful what you read. Once a month Jesse Pomeroy's poor, broken-hearted mother comes to the prison to see him. She is the only one now who is allowed to see him. Think of it! He has been there for twenty-six years now, and is only forty-two years old, healthy, strong and with every appearance of living a good many years. But he is never to know what liberty means, although he spends day after day thinking and planning how it is possible to get out and what he will do when he gets out. His career of crime was inspired by bad books. He was like any other boy, till he became a slave to the book that told him of crime and its outcome;

that told how boys did deeds of cruelty and were made heroes by it. Such a life and such a lesson ought to teach every young man a good lesson on reading.

One day, as I sat in the guardroom waiting for a man I had come in to see, the officer went over to a pleasant-faced woman sitting beside a young man not more than twenty-four or twenty-five years old, and said to her, 'Your time is up, Madam.' I asked the officer about the case. Said he:

'Yes, that is his mother. She is the only one of the family that will come near him; they all feel so disgraced at his being here. Sad case, sir! He is here for life. Been here seven years already.'

While we had been speaking, the woman had risen, and covering the young man's face again and again with tears and kisses, she at last tore herself away from him, and he rushed toward his cell. This scene is repeated every month. Another life blighted by bad books and bad companions!—Austen T. Kempton, in 'Christian Herald.'

### The Swan and the Crane.

There is an old legend of a swan and a crane. A beautiful swan alighted by the banks of the water in which a crane was wading about seeking snails. For a few moments the crane viewed the swan in stupid wonder, and then inquired:—

'Where do you come from?'

'I came from heaven,' replied the swan.

'And where is heaven?'

'Heaven!' replied the swan, 'Heaven! have you never heard of heaven?' And then the beautiful bird went on to describe the grandeur of the eternal city. She told of streets of gold, and the gates and walls made of precious stone; of the river of life, pure as crystal, upon whose banks is the tree whose leaves shall be for the healing of the nations. In eloquent terms the swan sought to describe the hosts who live in the other world, but without arousing the slightest interest.

Finally the crane asked, 'Are there any snails there?'

'Snails!' repeated the swan; 'no! of course not.'

'Then,' said the crane, as it continued its search along the slimy banks of the pools, 'you can have your heaven. I want snails!'

This fable has a deep truth underlying it. How many a young person to whom God has granted the advantages of a Christian home, has turned his back upon it and searched for snails. How many a man will sacrifice his wife, his family, his all, for the snails of sin! How many a girl has deliberately turned from the love of parents and home to learn too late that heaven has been forfeited for snails.—D. L. Moody.

### In the Woods.

(By The Khan.)

If you would breathe that perfume sweet  
That scents the trailing skirts of spring,  
Forsake the office and the street  
And hie thee where the blue birds sing.

The pretty flower that died last fall  
Comes forth again benign and brave,  
And with his tender fingers small  
He makes a cradle of his grave.

His little blanket and his sheet  
Were woven in the looms of love;  
The angels made them soft and sweet  
With holy incense from above.

Draw softly near—and mark it well,  
This little stranger in the sod;  
For in his tender breath you smell  
The far-off greenhouse of our God!