



THIS world would soon be regenerated if the saints were fully consecrated.

Owing to Christopher

By Nancy Byrd Turner.—(Youth's Companion.) (Continued from last week.)

Hazel Creek, wide, deep, swift running, was at the bottom of the hill; Christopher slowed up just in time to enter the ford without disaster. In seasons of heavy rains Hazel Creek was unfordable at this point; it was no tshawlow, even in a drought.

"This creek," Mr. Shane explained to Mr. Beale, "is the boundary line for one side of my property."

All at once, in the middle of the stream, Christopher stopped short. He was merely resting for a minute, with the cool current washing his knees, before starting on the steep uphill climb on the other side of Hazel Creek. So to stop was a time-honored habit of his; Aunt Luella and Mary were well aware of it. But Mr. Shane got up fustilly.

"The horse wants to drink," he announced, "and the shortest cut is to let him do it. But why, in the name of common sense, didn't we take the check rein down before we got into the water?"

Although he said "we," it was very evident at whom he aimed the reproach. Aunt Luella opened her mouth to explain that Christopher had drunk heartily before leaving home, and that he abhorred any other drinking place, when she beheld Mr. Shane swinging himself round by the stop.

"I don't see anything to do," he declared, "except to let down the confounded rein myself."

Clutching the harness, he crept gingerly out along the shaft. Christopher selfishly turned his head in order to see what was happening. Mr. Shane tossed the rein with a jerk that brought Christopher's nose sharply into the air; then he crawled back to his place.

Aunt Luella and Mary exchanged glances. Mr. Shane had grievously affronted Christopher.

A little silence fell. Hazel Creek swirled along through light and shadow.

"Why doesn't the critter drink?" asked Mr. Shane, in an exasperated voice.

Before Aunt Luella could answer, Christopher's head turned again, slowly, at a sharp angle with his body, and one eye rolled defiantly; then his tail gave a violent switch from left to right.

Christopher had balked.

"Get up, Christopher!" commanded Aunt Luella, feebly. He did not "get up"; he stood motionless and steadfast. Aunt Luella clucked and tugged at the reins as earnestly as if she had believed such methods would stir him; in the back seat Mr. Shane fidgeted and breathed hard.

"The old fellow's after a nap, to my way of thinking," observed Mr. Beale, with an attempt at jocularity.

"Well, I'll see him take it!" Mr. Shane cried. "I'll teach him to nap when I'm behind him in a hurry!"

He leaned forward with extended hand and grabbed the long whip from the socket.

Now this whip was a mere figure-head carried only because every one else carried a whip. The Dunaways would almost as soon have thought of striking grandfather as of using the whip on Christopher. Before Aunt Luella could protest, however, the lash descended, and smote Christopher's venerable back with a sickening swish.

"Now will you go on?" cried Mr.



A Well Trained Vine has Made This Archway a Beauty Spot. The illustration shows a picturesque archway leading into an artificial lake at Scotsburn, in Fife, Scotland. The Scotchman Creamery may also be seen in the background.

Shane, shrilly. "Get up, get up here, you confounded beast! Beg your pardon, Miss Dunaway, but this is no time for half measures."

It was not, indeed. Christopher's tail described a swift arc, and then was still. The whip fell again, and yet again, and at each blow the gray tail swung with a twist that meant outraged surprise as well as obstinacy. When Mr. Shane's hand went up for the fourth time, Christopher turned his head slowly. Until then he had evidently attributed the whipping to Aunt Luella, the driver and custodian of the whip. When he perceived the real state of affairs, his behavior changed in an instant. With an airy toss of his head and tail together, he began to dance.

He was a nimble old horse, and he had what Michael called "blooded legs"; those slender, tapering legs were now put to strange use. Without rearing or plunging, without moving an inch backward or forward, he danced lightly under the spur of the lash. His hoofs beat a lively tattoo under the water, his old shanks dashed in the sunlight; a shower of flying drops sprayed the occupants of the wagon.

Mr. Beale was obviously alarmed; he clutched the seat tightly as if he had expected the horse to bolt at any moment. "Stop, Shane!" he remon-

strated, weakly. "Stop, I say!"

But Shane stopped only for breath. Again the whip sang through the air. "Take that!" he cried. "You—you ash-colored idiot!"

Christopher performed a graceful polka that drenched his castigator thoroughly, and Mr. Shane sat down, gasping. Suddenly Mary felt the seat begin to shake, and glanced up. Aunt Luella was very large, and she was laughing, silently and helplessly, so hard that the loose springs of the wagon squeaked beneath her mirth.

She knew there was no danger. In all his well-ordered life Christopher had never run away; and he was not about to begin now. But that last epithet had proved too much for her; she was overpowered by an emotion as uncontrollable as Mr. Shane's.

Aunt Luella's mirth cooled Mr. Shane down to a state of sulky stiffness, and reassured the frightened lawyer. For a long time no one spoke. There seemed nothing to say. Mr. Shane, for all his wrath, could not blame his hosts, certainly. He knew well enough that Pleasant Plains had only one horse—and he had ordered that one to meet him. Mr. Beale relaxed with a sigh, and Aunt Luella gradually got the better of her mirth. Hazel Creek flowed monotonously along. Christopher stood like a statue, with his gaze fixed

the tall red chimneys of the house appeared above the trees.

Michael shuffled round the corner as they drove up. Mary had expected to see him surly and dumb, but his manner was cordial almost to offensiveness. As the occupants of the spring wagon descended, Grandfather Dunaway appeared in the front door and suddenly another figure loomed behind him—big Uncle Thomas Dunaway, who had come in his automobile by another road. Grandfather's old face wore a queer blend of expressions, but his hospitality did not falter. The two guests were graciously received.

The hall clock pointed to one when dinner was served. Mr. Shane was still sulky, and plainly ill at ease. All through the meal he kept consulting his watch. When Aunt Luella gave the signal to rise, he looked at grandfather and then at Mr. Beale, and cleared his throat.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "shall we settle our little affair?" "No," said Uncle Thomas turned from the window. "I didn't bring up the subject during dinner," he remarked, "because I don't like to mix business and pleasure—but, as it turns out, there's no affair to settle. You see, it's this way. When Michael's letter found me, it looked as if the news that it was sooked as if the place had soon to go, I made up my mind that it shouldn't, for its own sake, and not because it held anything worth digging for. My brother insisted that until noon you had the right of purchase. We waited and twelve o'clock; then I saw no reason why I shouldn't buy in my own home—and I bought it."

He did not add that he and she immediately turned it over to its former owner, but grandfather's happy old face told for him.

Mr. Shane believed better than any one thought he would. Perhaps Uncle Thomas overawed him; or perhaps he felt a bit of honesty, or belated shame. At any rate, he simply snapped his watch and announced that he must immediately get back to town.

"But not," he added, "behind the animal that brought me. I'll telephone for a livery team from the station."

Half an hour later, Michael, with a smile, watched the livery vehicle depart in a whirl of dust. He had a halter round Christopher's neck, and was grating him in a forbidden spot under the apple tree.

"There go all our fallen vineyard said Aunt Luella. "But never mind, Christopher shall have them if he wants them."

At some hidden memory her shoulders heaved.

Uncle Thomas sat tilted back comfortably on the veranda, and grandfather was pottering happily about the yard.

"What's the gray's name, Mr. asked Uncle Thomas.

Michael gave his rope a slight tug that brought the head of his charge up, with ears erect. "Christopher," he said.

"Looks as if he'd been some bit of a horse in his day."

"He has one grave fault, though," admitted grandfather. "He balks."

Suddenly Uncle Thomas threw his head, and laughed long and loud. Across the "ash-colored" nose Michael winked at him solemnly. "To be sure," said Michael, grinning. "Christopher do balk occasionally. I wouldn't be naming it a fault in his No, sir, I would not," and Michael smiled significantly.

gaze came back from the sweet, level fields of Pleasant Plains.

"I can imagine times," he said, "when it might be called a positive virtue!"

The End.