

had expired and a competition had set in which was cutting down the profits to zero. Young Josiah began experimenting on a new design which finally resulted in a patent upon a combination ball and roller bearing. This was such an improvement upon everything which had gone before, that gradually Spencer & Son withdrew from the manufacture of wagons and wheels and re-designed their whole factory to make bearings.

This wasn't done in a month or two, nor even in a year or two. Indeed the returned prodigal grew middle aged in the process. He also saw the possibilities of harnessing the water power above the factory to make electric current. This current was sold so cheaply that more and more factories were drawn to New Bethel until the fame of the city's products were known wherever the language of commerce was spoken.

At the height of his son's success, old Josiah died, joining those silent members of the firm who had gone before. I often like to imagine the whole seven of them, ghostly but inquisitive, following the subsequent strange proceedings with noiseless steps and eyes that missed nothing; and in particular keeping watch upon the last living Josiah Spencer—a heavy, powerfully built man with a look of melancholy in his eyes