

INSTRUMENTS IN GOD'S HAND.

Charles Ballou stood at the street corner. It was not a city, only a large town, not so large that a person who was much about town would not be likely to know pretty much everything that was going on.

Thus it was that the ringing of the church bell on Monday evening awakened a sort of wonder as to what might be "the doings" over there. He had halted at the corner to wait for an acquaintance who had promised to meet him at that particular place.

This was one of those traps for unwary feet with which our large towns and cities, and indeed many smaller towns as well, abound. Charles Ballou knew the place. He knew the danger; he had met the enemy there more than once and had been overcome in the encounter again and again until he had well-nigh lost his manhood.

But the sound of that bell! Up the other street stood a church, and from its tower an invitation pealed out to the passer-by. From its windows an invitation streamed out while the gathering crowd seemed to invite every one to join them.

And Dr. Spencer passed rapidly on towards the church, saying to himself, "Most likely he will go down George Street instead of coming this way."

While Mr. Ballou still waited for his tardy friend, Laura Keene came down the street and was about to turn the corner on her way to the church whose bell was still tolling.

This was said with a merry laugh on the surface, though Laura Keene's heart went upward in a quick prayer. Charles Ballou's young wife was her Sunday-school teacher, and this fifteen year old girl had noticed the growing sadness of the face she loved, and knew the cause, and longed to do something to help.

"I wasn't going," was the reply, "in fact, I did not know there was a Mr. Burton to hear until a few moments ago. Is he worth hearing?"

"Indeed he is; I heard him at the Convention last summer; he is just splendid. You'll miss a great deal if you miss him."

"What does he speak upon?"

"I believe he is to speak upon 'A question of to-day,' that may mean a great many things, and I suspect he will touch a number of points before he gets through, he generally does. Oh! he is simply wonderful."

"Allowing Miss Laura Keene to be the judge," said the young man, laughing.

"Well, come and hear him and be your own judge. Now just to show you that I know something about the merits of a speaker, I would like to have you hear Mr. Burton."

"Well, I will go in a little while; but I shall be on the lookout for imperfections, as you have challenged me to find them."

filled church. It must not be supposed that Laura Keene's parents allowed her to go about of an evening unattended; it was in the dusk of an early autumn evening that she met Mr. Ballou at the corner a few steps from her father's store.

"Run along, dear, and get a seat, and I will come later! I may have to stand if there is a crowd. You won't mind going to our own church alone." And this is how it happened that she met Charles Ballou as the enticements of the saloon were drawing him in one path while the tolling bell and his curiosity concerning it turned his thoughts in another direction.

Meantime the young wife waited at home in sadness; a slight illness had kept her within doors for a day or two. Her husband had gone out that evening, saying:

"I am sorry, Allie, to leave you, but I shall have to go down street a little while; I'll try to come back early; but don't wait for me. Let Kitty put you to bed and I think you will be all right to-morrow; your cold seems much better."

She did not let Kitty put her to bed; but sat and waited wearily through the long

"What a shower of questions! I went with your little Laura Keene; I liked him, and he is going to stay a few days—and Allie, darling," here his voice sunk to a whisper, "I put my name on the pledge roll."

"O Charlie!" "Yes; and that isn't all. I tell you, Alice, that is a wonderful man. I have heard sermons all my life, but I never before felt that I wanted Jesus Christ for my friend; but to-night when he showed up the weakness of men and the power of Christ to keep, I just—took Him for my own!"

Alice was weeping now, but her tears were not the bitter tears of despair.

"It is only three hours since I left you, Allie, yet everything is changed; I am not the same man I was then, and that blessed little Laura is at the bottom of it all." Then, after a moment's pause, he added, "But you are her Sunday-school teacher; I shouldn't wonder if you were at the bottom of it, after all."

When he told her the story of the evening, of his waiting at the corner, of his encounter with Laura, and all the rest—and at the close Alice said,—

"It seems to me that God was at the bottom of it all, and he used us all—your tardy friend, Doctor Spencer, Laura and me to bring about his gracious purposes towards you."—Pansy.

As saw one man, armed only with a blanket, advance and seize him by the throat, while two others, also unarmed, grasp his tail, and then the trio, still holding on, carry him through the streets and thrust him back into the den whence he had been taken.

Not long since, the writer saw Mr. Thomson, a dealer in live animals, open a box containing an anaconda, quite as long as this one, take the reptile by the throat, and calmly examine his mouth, opened though it was in rage, to look for cancerous humors. Then from adjoining shelves he took python after python, each about ten feet long, and examined them in like manner. Only last week, at the place of another dealer (Reiche), a big, powerful Syrian bear, a type known for its ferocity, was subdued without the firing of a shot.

Some timid boys are judged too harshly by their companions; nay, by their nearest relatives, and even by their own mothers. Johnny's mother kept it for years as an awful secret that he, a robust-looking boy, was afraid of the dark! She thought the trait something peculiar to that boy.

TIMID BOYS.

How relieved she was to discover that another mother's Tommy was afflicted with the same infirmity. If she had gone extensively into the study of biography, she would have found that several of the most illustrious men who have ever lived were mortally afraid of the dark.

Charles Lamb, for example, suffered for years from this cause, and suffered terribly. As soon as the candle was extinguished, his misery began, and he fell asleep sometimes only from the exhaustion of terror.

Those who have carefully observed the management of wild animals in menageries, zoological gardens, and in the pens of the animal dealers, must, at times, have been astonished at the ease with which hired men, comparatively unarmed, subdue beasts which we have been taught yield only to the blazing rifle, and fight gamely until death.

A lion escapes from his cage, and crouches at the darkened end of the menagerie. Remembering the stories we have read of the ferocity of this beast and of the terrible scenes of the lion hunt, we can imagine only one mode of action. The keepers should arm themselves with rifles, hide behind barriers, and open a rapid fire upon him.

It is to be noted that good boys of lively imagination are peculiarly liable to this kind of fear. They are often brave in meeting real dangers, and, if necessary, they could fight well in self-defence, or in defence of a girl, or of a boy weaker than themselves. It is against imaginary dangers that their courage is wanting.

"I used to be awfully afraid of the dark," said a little girl of ten the other day. "And how did you cure yourself of it?" asked one of her friends.

Her answer was a wise one, for so young a philosopher. She said, "Whenever I felt afraid, I would stand still and say to myself, 'There is nothing in this room except what there was before dark.'"—Youth's Companion.

WHEN THE CROSS is heavy remember the sufferings of the bleeding Nazarine.—Exchange.



"AS SAITH THE PROPHET ESAIAS"

Give references (from Isaiah) to the texts on these 15 cards.

hours. The little clock on the mantel struck eight, then nine, and still Alice Ballou sat in her armchair before the grate; she leaned her head upon her hand, while her elbow rested upon the arm of the chair.

Presently she heard a step on the walk coming up the steps; it sounded like Charlie's, yet it could not be, so early! She waited for the ringing of the doorbell, but it did not ring; instead she heard the click of the night key; it must be Charlie!

"Only nine! Charlie will not be in before eleven, I presume. I suppose I may as well let Kitty help me to bed.—O, Charlie! If you would only come home."

"Alice, I have something to tell you; something which will make you glad. I have been to the church to-night to hear a man they call Mr. Burton."

"O, Charlie! I know about him. And you have heard him? I wanted to hear him, but I did not know he was to be here to-night. How did it happen? Did you like him? And is he going to speak again?"

MAN'S POWER OVER WILD ANIMALS.

Those who have carefully observed the management of wild animals in menageries, zoological gardens, and in the pens of the animal dealers, must, at times, have been astonished at the ease with which hired men, comparatively unarmed, subdue beasts which we have been taught yield only to the blazing rifle, and fight gamely until death. A lion escapes from his cage, and crouches at the darkened end of the menagerie.

Some time ago, an anaconda seventeen feet long broke away while being carried across a public park in New York City. With vivid pictures of the exploits of this reptile in the Amazon watershed before our eyes, we expected to see him fall upon the nearest human being, enfold him in his coils, and crush him to a jelly. Surely it will take armed and resolute men to capture him! No; on the contrary, this is not required; and it must have been with a feeling akin to disappointment that those who had read of the ferocity of the anaconda