

range of vision, and the sweet, thin face on it was looking at him reproachfully. It looked tired and full of pain, too. The boy's own face softened suddenly, all the angry light went out of his blue eyes, until they looked like the gentle eyes in the face on the mantel. Both faces had the same curves and the same straight noses and strong, determined chins. But the boy's face was glowing with the glory of life and health, and the other one—how frail and pitiful it was! The seal of unremitting pain was on it.

Otis went after the book, and kissed the other face gently, on the way. It was used to his impulsive little caresses, and smiled back at him bravely.

'Well, it's worth the while,' he said, emphatically. 'And it's a mighty good thing you're a big Goliath of a chap, my boy, with that to do.'

There was something in his voice when he said 'that' that told you whatever it was, it meant a great deal to Otis Kent.

'You've got strength enough for two, old man! Now, go at your Caesar, will you?'

And he fell at his translation with stiff resolution. All Gaul was divided into three parts with astounding ease, and the Belgians and Aquitanians were inhabiting their parts, and the Gauls on the threshold of theirs before Otis remembered that it was dinner time. Then the Gauls had to wait.

Isom Academy had no boarding-house on its trim little campus, and the boys took their meals at different clubs down street. Otis's club was half a mile away.

He was tramping along at the swinging pace that his big vitality delighted in, when he ran down two fellows who were enthusiastic members of the new football team. They were talking too earnestly to notice who Otis was—so many boys were passing them on their way to dinner. But Otis noticed them and heard just that ill-fated moment the words they were speaking.

'He's a coward!' Lee Titus was saying, scornfully.

'Reg'lar built!' agreed Jed Peabody. 'An' look at him, will you? Five feet nine in his stockings, and the strongest chap in the gym. He's a 'fraid-cat, that's what Otis Kent is!'

'Umph! 'fraid of breaking his precious—' but Otis had swung on out of hearing, with burning cheeks and wrathful eyes. He had subdued his eager impulse to pitch into those two boys with a mighty effort, because—well, because of the thin, sweet face he had kissed a little while before. But his fists were clinched so tightly that his nails brought the blood in his palms. It was well into the afternoon before he 'cooled off.'

'After all, you can't blame 'em,' he exclaimed in the privacy of his pleasant little room. 'If it don't look cowardly, then I don't know what! I'd say so myself.'

But that didn't help matters much, and, as the term advanced, and the boys gave up urging Otis to join the team, and went actively about their practicing without him, he grew morose and unapproachable. The old merry, boyish spirit was gone, and the bitter, shamed one that had come to take its place was not becoming to Otis Kent.

Little by little all the 'fellows' drew away from him, and left him a 'regular outcast,' he told himself, angrily. He kept to his room and his studies, even going to his beloved 'gym' only at hours when he could have it practically to himself. When he had it all to himself he practiced football all alone! Poor boy! He was an enthusiastic admirer of the rough-and-tumble game, and knew its rules and regulations by heart. Its dangers and wild boisterousness appealed to his big strength and animation irresistibly. Its very cruelty woke up his animal courage and inborn pugnacity. How he

longed to be in the middle of the fight only Otis Kent knew, and he kept it stiffly from the little academy world.

If the boys could only have known just how it was!

The term was midway through when the great match game between the Isoms and the Lupton boys came off. There had been untiring practice on both sides. Otis had watched the home team from his window, which overlooked the gridiron. Every move in the game—every manoeuvre—was familiar to him, and his own muscles and limbs ached in the intense sympathy he felt for the game. But he had made up his mind rigidly not to go to Lupton to see the match. His cheeks burned with shame at the thought of going as a 'rooter'—he would be in the scrimmage or nowhere. At any rate he could stay at home and get his lessons like a good boy, he thought bitterly.

Perhaps, after all, this terrible half-term of Otis Kent's had not been without its advantages to him. Had he ever studied so hard? Had the sweet, pale face at home ever smiled so much over the excellent reports from headquarters? Otis was really getting to be a scholar—Otis, to think of it!

At the last minute on the great day of the great match, Otis's courage gave out. He had watched the fellows all go off in merry, shouting squads, and then he had settled doggedly down to work. But that had lasted just one half-hour. Then he knew he could not stay away from the game—he must go.

He caught up his cap and trundled out his wheel. Lupton was a good four miles away, but he was a famous 'scorcher'—he would get there in time, after all. But, alas, the frailty of hopes founded on wheels! Otis's bicycle came to grief after a mile or so of riding, and he had to walk the rest of the way. When he reached the Lupton ball grounds the game was under way. He got the score from somebody, and then went away by himself and entered into the wild, cruel melee with everything but his strong, young body. And how that longed to enter in!

It was a terrible game. One boy after another went down, most of them to be borne off the field in stoical suffering.

'Those Lups are mean sluggers!' panted Otis, indignantly. 'They're not playing fair!'

In one of the crises of the game the Isoms lost their best player, and great was the mourning—not for his sprained knee, oh, no! but because now the game was lost. Nobody could take his place. All the best substitutes were already in use.

Then Jed Peabody spied Otis on the outskirts of the crowd.

'Oh, say, Ote,' he cried, hurrying up to him, with pleading in his tired, moist face. 'I say, old fellow, come in and help us out. We're in awful straits. All the subs but Nate Reid are out in the field, and Nate's no good. Oh, come on, Ote! We need you like sixty! I know you haven't practiced with us, but you know the ropes all right—come, hurry!'

And Jed was dragging him off—and Otis was going. But he stopped half-way across the field.

'I can't, lemme go, Jed Peabody,' he said hoarsely. The light of a great struggle was in his eyes, he was so near yielding!

'Come on, I tell you!' shouted Jed, fiercely. 'It's your chance to redeem yourself. Save the game for Isom and the fellows will carry you home on their shoulders. Come on!'

'I—can't—' gasped poor Otis. For the sweet face of his mother came between him and Jed's stormy, imperative face, and he set his teeth with a despairing grind.

'I can't, Jed Peabody—go get Nate Reid!' he said.

'Coward!' hissed Jed between his teeth.

Otis found his disabled wheel and trundled it home at a fierce stride, never stopping for all the four miles. He went to his room with a bitter, unreconciled heart, but the dear, frail picture-face was there on the mantel-piece to greet him, and under it a yellow envelope, that terrible cover that strikes terror to the stoutest heart.

'Come home at once,' the despatch read. 'Your mother is very sick.'

With the sudden overwhelming grief and horror in Otis Kent's soul was mingled a great thankfulness that he was not playing football on the Lupton gridiron.

He went away on the fastest train he could get, and when he came back again four weeks afterward to take the examinations, the bitterness was gone out of his manly face, and a great sadness was in its place. For now he had but the picture of the beautiful suffering face left to him. The other face—the living one—was gone out of his world to live in God's.

The boys met him at the depot—so many of them! He could not understand. He had lost the game at Lupton for them, he firmly believed, and he knew how that loss had grieved the boys. But he did not know that good old Doctor Tupper had made a little speech to them that night after the defeat. He had not known—how could he?—that the Doctor had said:

'Boys, there are two kinds of courage, and the one that defies insult and derision for the sake of a little invalid mother at home is the right kind. That's Otis Kent's kind of courage. I tell you, the boy's a hero, instead of what you call him—a coward! I tell you he has a little, frail, sweet mother at home, and because he knew the least shock might kill her, and because he loved her better than himself, he bore all your taunts and scorn instead of winning your applause. It was no promise that bound him—it was love. That's courage!'

And—but Otis did not know it—the good old doctor's face had glowed with enthusiasm. 'I found it all out to-day. And to-day his mother is dying,' he had concluded gravely.

So the boys met Otis at the station—so many of them! And though they did not carry him home on their shoulders, they tramped home beside him, and behind him, and before him, and talked and laughed in the friendliest way in the world, till the boy's sore, stricken heart was comforted.

'Cast Thy Burden on the Lord'

(By Rev. G. D. Coloman, in 'Golden Rule'.)

A well known English evangelist, when engaged upon a work which seemed to call upon him for a more than usual exercise of faith, received what seems like a most tender answer from God.

His little daughter, who was a paralytic, was sitting in her chair as he entered the house with a package in his hands for his wife. Going up to her, and kissing her, he asked, 'Where is mother?'

'Mother is upstairs.'

'Well, I have a package for her.'

'Let me carry the package to mother.'

'Why, Minnie dear, how can you carry the package? You cannot carry yourself.'

With a smile on her face, Minnie said, 'O no, papa; but you give me the package, and I will carry the package, and you will carry me.'

Taking her in his arms, he carried her upstairs, the little Minnie, and the package too. But it came to him that this was just his position in the work in which he was engaged. He was carrying his burden, but was not 'lod carrying him?'