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I'll give you a tow if you think you can't make the mourners' bench under your own canvass. It'll make you feel better the minute you weigh anchor."

"I don't want to feel better," said Lem, half-choked apparently by his feelings. "I'm as happy as I can be and live; I don't want anything but to die and get out of this awful world, and up to where God is."

The people were still waiting their way through Wesley and Pleyel, but Father Dilman sprang upon a seat and shouted:

"Another soul made port—Glory to God?" and then the old sailor, with a voice against which the assembled multitude strove only to submit, roared out:

I want to go, I want to go,
I want to go to heaven;
I want to go where Jesus is,
And have my sins forgiven.

I'll tell you why I want to go;
I'll tell the pleasing story;
There's so much trouble here below,
But, oh, there's none in glory.

Several of the brethren looked around inquiringly, and finally made their way through the aisle to where Lem sat; they shook his hand, they congratulated him, and when the pastor, at the close of the meeting, gave an opportunity to those who wished to unite with the church on probation, and Lem started forward to give the pastor his hand, the little knot of sympathizers led the audience in the doxology, beginning—

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

CHAPTER XV.

THE SQUIRE'S RELIGIOUS INTEREST IN LEM IS CRUELLY ABUSED.

As Lem slowly awoke on the next morning, he gradually lost his desire to die and be among the angels. As he opened his eyes the least bit, and beheld the unattractive surroundings of his miserable apartment, he tried to conjure up the visions and sounds of the night before—the lights, the songs, the melodies, the transformed faces of men who usually seemed but little less troubled than himself—but without avail. Bare, cobwebbed rafters were what he saw; the rattling of culinary utensils, and the querulous voice of his landlady scolding her impudent children, were the sounds that he heard. He groaned, and buried his face in the straw of his ragged pillow, but a shout of "O, Lem!" roused him to see his landlord, a low-browed, bleared-eyed, bestial man, standing at

the head of the ladder which led to Lem's chamber.

"The fish is fried," remarked the landlord; and Lem arose and performed his toilet by putting on his hat. By the act of descending the ladder, he came again into the old world—and the new, in spite of a frantic mental grasp, and eager stare and a great gulp in his throat, faded from his sight. He did not lose hope of recovering it, however. He despatched his breakfast with unusual celerity, and strolled up to the busier street of the town. He passed Micham's grocery, its doors surrounded by many of his old comrades, without much effort, but as he approached the principal stores he was tempted to run, and never show himself in town again. He longed to be spoken to by some one of the religious merchants, several of whom had been participants (not active) in the meeting, but he dreaded to hear what they might have to say. As he passed one after another of them, receiving only a pleasant yet conservative "Good morning" and an inquisitive stare, his pale face flushed with mingled expectancy and disappointment. What if even Christian bonds had no thread of sympathy in them?—there would then be no common meeting-ground on which he might find that response for which his heart was longing, even though he could not name it.

But Lem was not to be doomed to utter disappointment. Faithful among the faithless, Squire Barkum spied Lem from the rear of the store, and although the good merchant was busily engaged in rubbing molasses settlings into brown sugar, he dashed out the front door and laid a hand on the shoulder of his ex-employee.

"My dear young friend," said the Squire, as Lem instinctively took a defensive attitude by thrusting his hands into the pockets of his pantaloons, "I am rejoiced to hear that you have taken a most excellent and praiseworthy step. I could have wished that you might have cast your lot among us for I have an abiding conviction that our faith is more consoling and unassailable than any other, but there are, nevertheless, a great many excellent people among the Methodists. There's Captain Dilman, now—I've sometimes thought that he was mighty shaky in doctrine, but he always settles his account every winter, and there ain't no honestest man in the whole county to trade horses with. An' there's Jonathan Bingham—Jonathan's slow pay, but I always believed he meant to do what he said. How is it with your soul, Lemuel?"

Lem dropped his eyes. He was not apt at formulating his feelings, and on this particular morning he had no feelings suffi-