

Years before, John Berton had been a successful ship-master with a comfortable home in one of the New England sea-board towns. As he was away from home months at a time, he entrusted his partner Allen Bent, a friend from his boyhood, with all his business affairs; trusted him to such an extent that on his short visits home he neglected to enquire into matters as he should have done. Several years passed in this way, when on coming home from a long voyage he found the man whom he had trusted so completely had been robbing him for years. Bitterly he regretted his blind confidence but it was too late; his property was so involved that his home had to be sold, and with his wife and two children, he sought a home in Nova Scotia.

John Berton had become a Christian since then, but to-night he found he had never fully forgiven the man who had so wronged him. When the rescued sailor had told that his name was Walter Bent, John Berton knew that he had saved the only son of his old enemy; and he came away where he might be alone, to try and still the tumult in his breast. He was glad they had saved the young man's life, but now he knew who he was and he did not want to see him again.

"Allen Bent ruined my prospects in life and tried to tarnish my good name. I am glad we have saved his son, but I do not want him in my home; and some of the neighbors would gladly take him in," so his thoughts ran.

"If thine enemy hunger, feed him," the words floating through his memory. He had read them in the Bible last night.

"If Christ commanded that of me, I cannot turn Walter Bent from my door," he said at length, just as the last beams of the sun sank below the ocean.

The young man had been sleeping quietly but as night came on, he began to mutter and moan in his sleep. The exposure of the night before, together with a blow on the head, had brought on a fever, and by morning he was tossing in wild delirium. Tenderly John Berton and his wife nursed him; he fancied Mrs. Berton was his mother, and would hardly allow her from his sight. From no other hand would he take medicine and even in his wildest moments her gentle voice and touch would soothe and quiet him.

"Well, mother," said her son Harry, a lad of fifteen, as she came from the sick room one night, "you and father are certainly casting bread upon the waters. I wonder if you will ever find any of it again."

After long weeks of watching, and care, reason returned to Walter Bent, and health came slowly back again.

It was a morning late in the spring, when he stood beside the door of the Berton cottage. He had spent his last night beneath the humble roof which had sheltered him for so many weeks, and on that day a schooner was to sail for Boston, in which he had taken passage.

"How can I ever repay the debt of gratitude I owe to you?" he said to Mrs. Berton.

"By lending a helping hand to another in need, when you have the opportunity" she replied.

"Tell your father," said John Berton at parting, "that I have learned to forgive."

Mails only came at long intervals to the village where the Bertons lived, but they received two letters, the first telling of his safe arrival home, and the other about a year later stated that he had entered the United States navy.

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In the close stifling hold of a vessel, a number of men were trying to find forgetfulness in sleep. One of them tossed restlessly and moaned as if in pain, and the companion to whom he was handcuffed tried vainly to find him a more comfortable position on the hard boards.

A few weeks before Harry Berton had left his home on his first voyage to the West Indies. His father and mother had let him go with great reluctance for the war of 1812 had broken out between the United States and England, and American privateers had already seized several merchant vessels belonging to the British Provinces. The outward voyage had however been safely made and they were returning, when their brig had been captured early that morning by a privateer; and the crew handcuffed together had been thrust into the hold of the vessel. Later in the day the privateer had been attacked by a British frigate and for hours a fierce battle had been raging. The imprisoned men heard the roar of canon, the rattle of musketry, the short sharp orders of the officers, and mingling with the other sounds, the groans of the wounded and dying. The fight waxed fiercer, and they heard the captain declare he would blow up his ship before the Englishmen should take her.\* The long slow hours dragged by darkness fell, and as neither of the vessels had gained a decided advantage, they drew away from each other, bruised and battered with shattered masts and torn sails, but resolute still. Since leaving Antigua, Harry had been ill with a low fever and the foul air and excitement of the day had increased it, until his companion feared for his life, if he should be kept long in his present quarters.

Presently two men entered the hold bringing food to the prisoners who had tasted nothing since their capture that morning. One of the men was evidently an officer, and he began to question the prisoners. He gave a start when Harry told his name, and calling him away from the others began asking him about his home.

"Don't you know me?" he said; and looking closely, Harry recognised, in spite of bearded face and officer's uniform, Walter Bent.

"Your father and mother saved my life, and I must do something to help you," he said. "The wind has sprung up since dark and we are now several miles away from the frigate, and near the coast of Nantucket Island. The captain is a hard man and it is useless for me to appeal to him, but he has been drinking to-night and will sleep heavily. The first mate is severely wounded and it is my watch on deck. There is one of the crew I can trust and if I can manage to launch a small boat I will land you on the Island. Many of the inhabitants are Quakers and I think some of them will aid you to get back home. This is all I can do for you and it is at great risk to myself, but I have not forgotten the kindness your father and mother showed me. Your companion will have to come with you as the man who had the key to the handcuffs was among

the killed to-day, and it would take time to file them apart."

An hour later, Walter Bent and his companions silently lowered themselves over the side of the ship, and the boat with oars muffled, glided away. The wind had died out and the night was dark; but they could faintly discern the shores of the island not far away.

"How will you account to the Captain for our escape?" asked Harry, as they were nearing the land.

"I do not know yet, I shall have to trust to Providence to help me if he should discover it."

In a few minutes more they were landed, and after a parting clasp of the hand, Walter Bent rowed away in the darkness.

"I have an aunt, my mother's sister, living a few miles from here," said Harry's companion, a young man named Stephen Hilton. "If you can keep up until we reach there, I know she will take us in."

The night air had cooled the fever in Harry's veins, and hope lent him new strength, but it seemed as if the last mile would never come to an end. Helped and encouraged by his friend, they kept on and at last, just as the sun had risen, they reached the home of Hilton's aunt.

"Thee are very welcome," was the kindly greeting she gave in her quaint Quaker fashion.

Under her skilful nursing, Harry soon regained his health, and a few weeks later, her son took them in a fishing boat across to Shelburne, from where they soon walked home.

Great was the joy in the Berton home, for as weeks had gone by and nothing was heard from the brig, grave fears were felt for the safety of those on board.

When Harry had finished telling the story of his capture and escape, his mother added softly, "Surely the bread we cast upon the waters has been found after many days."

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\*This incident happened to a great-uncle of the writer during the war of 1812.

### ANGLO-CANADIAN FEDERATION.

ANGLO-SAXON FEDERATION AND UNIVERSAL FREE TRADE.

So great is the unrest in Canada at the present time that it seems as if a change sooner or later must be considered a certainty. There are three proposed changes before Canada, Imperial Federation, Independence and (as an able and "live" correspondent to The Mail, Jan. 5, Mr. Allen Pringle terms it) Continental Union.

We are all familiar with the titles of the above proposed changes, but we are as far off as ever from any definite scheme, if I may so call it, whereby Canada could obtain one or any of them. The reason is obvious, it has so far passed the wit of any individual to devise one which would be acceptable to Canadians.

Anyone who has studied English public opinion during the last few years cannot fail to have observed that there is among Englishmen and English politicians a grave reluctance to formulate proposals dealing with Imperial Federation or any other change which would affect the colonies as much as, if not more than, the mother country.

If some Canadians sneer at such a