

cheques to back looked out at the... Tom's cousin, Herbert's projected... of his mind. The... to her own... to complete the... had fallen like a... sensitive face... told her half the... Saint Agnes. De... the fact that her... man who "cared... things," her liking... and had of his... slight of his pres... like a bird, yet... to meet it, and... stifle it, and... neighboring esth... in vain to formu... a should she win... to a lost love and... the silence, that... cry of her heart... one of St. Francis... God and my heart... the most sweet... They love absorb my... being beneath the... they die to the world... who for love of... to die on the... my God and my... form of words, this... of her heart, but... a holy love and earthly... ham swept along in... of himself, proud... Brown Bess, and... the graceful rider at... set comment was ex... so quiet old gentle... pass. One was his... an aged harriss... enabled the young... reasonable long... childless man his... very dear. He was... had his fine face and... yet a shade of... of his eyes, his... fell over him now... at" muttered the... the retired stockbroker... "s guardian. "My... show on horseback;... shrinks a little, I am... my best with it, but... late. I hope she will... ally well.

awful fear. "If I only had religion,"... "a religion like Tom's! Any... he cried, no matter what kind! It... would be a comfort now, something to... cling to, something to rest upon in face... of that awful sky"—he shuddered as... he spoke. "It is awful, that bright... blue eternity!"

He tried to hide his face in contrition... but found he could not move his shoul... to the Divine silences, as hurt... it, into the Divine silences, as hurt... on a battlefield. Harvard... soldiers do a poor pillow now... skepticism was a poor sinner!"

Then the blue quivered before him... and he faintly away. He recovered from this last swoon to... feel a hand bathing his temples, a soft... shadow had interposed between himself... and the blue. It was the form of a... good Samaritan, in priestly garb, who... was bending over him with utmost... tenderness.

"My poor boy!" the stranger spoke... in a voice like music. "I know you are... badly hurt, but keep up courage! I... have sent for help. A man on the... upper road found your horse," he ex... plained, answering the sufferer's be... wildered glance, "and then I found... you. Lie still," he headed quickly, not... ing Herbert's uneasy effort to move and... the pallor of pain it brought. "Poor... fellow! lie still in God's hand! Suffer... like a hero. God intends all this for the... best—only say 'Thy will be done!'"

God is all mercy and forgets the sins... of youth and ignorance when we turn... to Him with a contrite heart. God's... Holy Mother has sent me to help you... She will intercede for you at the throne... of mercy. She knows our weakness... and her Blessed Son will hear her plead... ing."

The comforting words fell like dew... on the poor boy's soul. The priest... understood his uplifted gaze. "You... have been baptized?" the... priest faintly asked.

"Yes," faintly murmured the injured... man. "If you are penitent, my lad, and... believe in our Lord Jesus Christ He... will shield you with His love and com... fort you forever with His Presence... 'Behold the Lamb of God, Who taketh... away the sin of the world!' And the... priest held out a little silver crucifix... Herbert clasped it with his quivering... fingers as if real help came with it.

"Try to make an act of contrition!"... The lad's dull eye showed his lack of... comprehension. "You do not know? Well... repeat the words after me; do not... tire yourself," and in feeble accents... came the cry of penitence. "O my... God, I am heartily sorry for having... offended Thee. I detest my sins most... sincerely, not only because by them I... have lost the right to Heaven, and... deserved everlasting pains of hell, but... especially because I have dis... pleased Thee, O my God, Who are... serving all of my love. I resolve to... Thy holy grace never more to offend... at henceforth to amend my life."

Then the stately priest took from his... pocket a small purple stole, placed it... about his neck, and in a low voice... pronounced the conditional absolution of... Holy Church.

It was a solemn moment to the... young penitent; he knew what he was... doing, knew that this was a turning... point in his whole life. The noble form... of the priest, standing there with his... purple stole in the blazing sunshine... was full of strength. It dominated... his own weakness and he was grateful... The Blessed Virgin had heard his... prayer, had sent a powerful deliverer... "Tom's Church" had come to his... rescue," he whispered, "and always... shall be."

"The good God spare your life," answered... the other in soft benediction. "He has... work for you, my son. May He bless... and keep you! Do not weary in... well-doing! Work for God!"

Help soon arrived and Herbert Den... ham was borne home to his sorely... agitated uncle. For many weeks... lay wavering between life and death... Besides his bruises and dislocated... shoulder, some obscure but serious in... ternal injury made his case hard to... deal with. His head ached—a result... of the physician thought, of spinal lesion... —and a teasing cough followed.

Through this period of suffering he... had time for much thought. The gentle... priest had vanished like a shadow;... a stranger, in all likelihood, from some... distant field of labor. Denham had... not even thought to ask his name, but... his words lingered as if written in fire.

"Work for God!" Yes, yet the first... thing was to work out his own salva... tion. So he sent for Father Lanigan... the parish priest, who found in him a... penitent of excellent dispositions. Tom... Macmillan rejoiced sincerely over all... this and was unwearied in attendance... upon the invalid. Agnes, too, came... once with her mother to visit him, and... her sweet face shone down on him like... a benediction. The brilliant Isabel... failed to give any sign of regard; no... message from her reached the sick... room, and rumor already credited her... with a new cavalier.

September came and the cough showed... no real abatement, so the family... physician ordered his patient off to... the pine region of North Carolina... Tom Macmillan going with him, as... general caretaker and nurse. Here... in the health giving air he gained... strength, and was soon equal to short... rambles in the reainous woods over... their slippery floors of pine needles... where the warm sunshine threw slant... ing orange glows at sunset. He began... to enjoy the novelty of it all. He... amused himself with taking to the... children of the poor "cracker" famil... ies, wondering at the universal shift... lessness and degradation. The misery... of the negroes was still more in evi... dence. He emptied his purse for them... but effected no perceptible good. Mac... millan organized a catechism class and... tried to teach religion; but hunger... poverty and dense ignorance balked... his efforts.

Denham's lonely strolls became... times of serious thinking. He must... "work for God" in His Church, which... he had now entered. Well, he would... be a priest—a few years of study would... supplement his already fine education... —and then his dreams flew on. He... would do wonders when the chance... finally came, rise to honors and dig... nities ecclesiastic, becoming a college... president first perhaps, then a Bishop... and so on. Everything looked possi... ble under that warm sky—even to... climbing the rocky peaks that serrated... the dim distance. His New England... ambitions had merely changed form, as... a serpent his skin. They were am... bitious still.

One day's experience had, indeed... made a penitent of Denham, but in no... wise a budding saint. Yet another eventful day arrived... The end of a prolonged stroll brought... him afresh to the home of misery, a... cabin whose dilapidation was more... than wretched. An ill omened silence... hung over it, and, softly peering in... he found himself face to face with... death. An aged negro, neglected, un... tended, the prey of some frightful dis... ease, was passing on swiftly to the... Golden City of rewards and retribu... tions. It was too late for any alms... save that of prayer.

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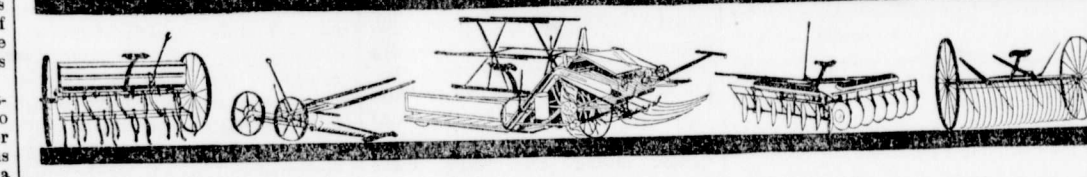
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Denham's lonely strolls became times of serious thinking. He must "work for God" in His Church, which he had now entered.

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