

safe. Won't you go to your father like the poor prodigal did? I am sure that he will not only be glad to have you come, but he will keep you from harm.'

'Now, that is the trouble,' I replied, 'I have no working faith. I know that what you say is true, but I cannot apply it to myself. It is all right for you who have no temptation, and do what is right naturally; but you don't know the struggle before me.'

'I have some idea,' she said earnestly, 'and I am sure that he can keep you. I have my own temptations, and know that I could not overcome them but for his help.'

'I will try,' I said, 'but I am ashamed to, I dare not pray, so what am I to do?'

'Do as the prodigal did,' she answered. 'See how pleased his father was to have him back, and he will be pleased to have you. Is your father living?'

'Yes, but I have not heard from him for years.'

'And your mother—?'

'She is dead, and I have often been glad, for it would have broken her heart to know of my life.'

'Thank God she is sleeping the rest of the dead.'

'She knows not the sins of her wandering son.'

'She cannot be weeping her lost little one,' quoted the girl.

It made the tears come to my eyes to hear her speak of my mother, for I remembered how she used to talk of holy things.

When I told Nan that I could write, and had not written to my father for so long she made me promise to do so at once. The truth was I had been ashamed to do it. I wrote the letter, telling the whole story of my life, and of my repentance and determination to do better. The letter was returned to me. My father was dead.

Before I left the house I promised to go to God for strength and to trust my case fully into his hands. Nan advised me to look for some steady work at once, and as much as possible to keep clear of my old companions. I realize that this was good advice.

## II.

I had worked for six weeks without losing a day. I boarded with a good family, and spent my evenings with them. I was fast forgetting my past life. I went to church every Sunday, often with Nan, and really did enjoy the services. One Sunday afternoon she asked me if I read my Bible. 'Sometimes,' I replied. 'I am taking a course of reading from the Public Library row, and do not get time for much else.'

'You must be careful,' she said very earnestly, 'I am more afraid for you every day. Your real temptation has not yet come; do not relax your guard for one moment, for if you do you are in danger. Do not trust your own strength, but put yourself in God's hands for safety.'

I promised her to do so; and that night I began to think on what she had said. Was it on God's strength I was leaning? It was not, it was on her. She had stooped to help me out of the gutter; she had faith in me, and I was trying to show her that it was not wrongly placed. I was as a drowning man. A rope had been thrown to me, I had grasped it and was saved; and yet I did not honor the One who had thrown the rope. This was not right, and I knew it; but I comforted myself with the thought that if a man would not do right for the

favor of a girl like Nan he would not do it anyhow. I was on very dangerous ground, but I did not know it.

The next week after this conversation occurred, I was laid up with a severe cold, and the foreman, with whom I had become very friendly, called to see me. After a little talk he produced a pocket flask which he opened, saying that it was good medicine for a cold. The fumes of it entered my brain, I took the flask and drained it to the last drop, then I got up and began to dress. 'What's the matter?' asked the foreman in surprise.

'I'm going out,' I gasped. My brain and blood were on fire, and I would have risked my life for a drink of liquor. I never suffered such an awful thirst. In the camps I knew I could not get it, so it did not trouble me; but now it could be obtained, and I would have it.

My companion locked the door and put the key into his pocket. 'I thought as much when you first came to work,' he said, 'but changed my mind later on, I am awful sorry that I did not know.'

'You have no right to stop me from going,' I cried, 'let me out.'

'No, I won't,' he said firmly, as he forced me down on the bed. 'I am stronger than you are and I tell you that you shall not go.'

For a while I lay there glaring at him with murder in my heart. Then it all came back to me; my reformation and my miserable fall. I buried my face in the pillows and wept. 'Oh, what shall she think of me,' I groaned.

'Never mind,' said the foreman, 'no one shall ever know. When first you came to work I thought you were turning over a new leaf, but when you kept on so steadily I changed my mind. You will forgive me for offering you the stuff.'

'Yes,' I said, 'of course you did not know, but you sized the matter up about right the first time, I am feeling better now and you need not be afraid.'

I put in a miserable day. The temptation was still strong on me. Oh, what a mighty chain does the drunkard forge for himself. Returning from my work I met Nan, I dare not look her in the face and she well knew that all was not right. After supper I went up to my room, but could not read. The hour of my final trial was at hand. I wanted liquor. I could smell it. I must have it. And what of Nan, she need not know. My heart was parching and my blood was on fire. I threw myself on the bed in an agony of despair. Only those who have been through the fiery furnace can know what I suffered. 'Lord save me, I perish,' was all I could cry. Nan could do nothing for me now; all things earthly was of no avail. Was there no help? Must I give way? I knew that God could save me; would he? 'Lord if thou wilt thou canst make me clean,' I cried out in my despair; and the voice that whispered peace to the wild waves of the sea spoke to my agonized soul, 'I will, be thou clean,' and there was a great calm. The wild thirst was all gone and a peace settled over me that I never knew before.

Now I knew that it was true. God could and would help; he alone could save, and I felt a joy and comfort in that faith. Now I felt secure.

The battle was fought and the victory won, and I had a clear knowledge of the fact that it was not any of my own strength that had given me the victory.

From this time I took pleasure in reading my Bible and in searching out the pro-

miscs it contained. I saw it all in a new light, and much of what I had learned in my childhood's days came back to me. I could see more and more clearly the truth of the hymn, 'God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.'

Next Sunday I told Nan about it, of my temptation and fall and of the final victory. She rejoiced that at last I had come to a full knowledge of my weakness, and to a knowledge of the strength of Almighty God. She told me that she felt sure that I was safe; and as long as I trusted myself fully into his keeping I would never again have to make a confession of failure.

I never saw Nan again. When I next called, they told me that she had gone away to her home in the country. She left a message to say that she would pray for me and to keep close to him for there alone I would be safe. I missed her very much, but she left in my heart a holy memory which is always fresh. Though I may never see her again in this world, I feel sure that on the happier shore, there will be many to bless her as the means of leading them safely over the dark river to the better land, and I among the number.

## Georgia Lowlands,

### WHERE THE NEGROES CHANT AS THEY WORK.

(By Louise Palmer Smith.)

The singing angel, Israfil,  
The leader of the heavenly choir,  
Stood silent on his shining hill,  
Relinquished at his feet the lyre.

For, from the rice field's sodden sedge  
Up from the brake of tangled cane,  
Along the sea's low southern edge,  
In plaintive minors rose a strain.

Low breathings from the heart of toil,  
Of souls that pant in seething suns,  
Of forms that crumble to the soil,  
Unheeded as the stream that runs

Its sluggish current through the sand,  
And sinks, the useless journey done,  
Beneath the barren, fruitless land  
That thrives no better for the boon.

To change this sighing breath for song,  
That were a task for Israfil!  
Heaven needs not music all day long,  
High throned from pain and mortal ill.

The singing angel took his lyre,  
And floated downward where the day  
Had paled in night its searching fire  
And the low world in silence lay.

To every dusky, listening heart  
There stole the song of Israfil;  
He sang of that high world apart,  
Where morning stars together still

Sing of the land without a night,  
Which feels no heat of earthly sun,  
Where all stand white in God's clear light  
With tears and toil and parting done!

Now chants of labor all day long  
Float up from ditch and field and fen,  
The note of hope is in the song,  
As hand to hand the dusky men

Fill their low calling with their might;  
The light heart gilds the empty lot,  
When songs are given in the night,  
The ills of day are counted not.

The glad, bright angel, Israfil,  
The leader of the heavenly choir,  
Sings with them on his beauteous hill,  
Triumphant in his hands the lyre.

Every man in his humor. 'World Wide' is a collection of the best writing on the most interesting subjects.