

here, I've a bit of an operation for you to perform. The brutes broke my arm in one of their rushes."

Harry at once went to Charley's assistance, and improvising a pair of splints from a shingle, set the arm, which was, indeed, broken. Charley bore the operation manfully, and even assisted a little in tying on the handkerchiefs that were made to do duty as bandages; but it must be confessed he was more "spunky" than usual.

"Are you coming home, Peter?" asked Harry.

Peter turned and joined them, but did not speak. He did not appear even to notice Charley's arm, for if he had he surely would have spoken of it. As they went out the burly, much-battered, but still unconquered, smith met them, and insisted upon shaking hands with his two late comrades.

"We was nearly done for, lads, but they didn't quite do it, they didn't quite do it!" he said; "and they'd never 'a' nearly done it if it wasn't for putting the lights out. Will ye have a drink afore ye go—if there's any liquor left unspilt!"

The offer was declined, and McCoy bade them good-bye, saying he was going home to lie abed a day or two, for he was "main sore."

The boys continued on their way, and tumbled, or rather crawled, into bed at about two o'clock in the morning.

Charley did a good deal of thinking that night as he lay, feverish and wakeful, with his broken arm. He was thinking of Peter. His admiration for his friend had increased since the ordeal they had gone through; but the last scene of the fight, when Lizzie bent over the prostrate body of her dying brother, and Mr. Forbes delivered his denunciatory words against Peter, remained at the dregs of that memorable evening. Even Peter's evident anguish could not sweep away the influence of his moral cowardice regarding Lizzie, whom Charley had recognized as the girl Peter had professed not to know at the Hartley's.

Next morning he made known his resolve to go home. Peter was still sorrow-stricken, and Charley could not find it in his heart to declare his changed feelings, and left Prankville outwardly the same, but inwardly resolved to cut short his intimacy with so selfish a fellow as Peter had shown himself to be. On his return he sought his sister Alice, and had a long conversation with her, the subject being Edith, for Charley was no fool, and had observed the growing intimacy between "Dusk" and Peter. He left his sister's room with a cloud upon his brow, and sought solace with his sweetheart Bertha, who met her wounded warrior with the "I told you so" formula, for in going off with Peter, he had transgressed, in her opinion. It was not long before she got the whole story out him, and for the first time she comprehended Lizzie's heroism in the interview which took place on the memorable evening of the dinner party. Bertha was not the girl to do anything by halves, and that same day sent a letter of apology to Lizzie, that was like a ray of sunlight on the very dark path she was now treading.

The path was indeed dark! The shock of Bolton's injury had almost prostrated his father, and had struck the knell of his life. He tottered feebly about

his house, peering now and again into the sick room, but never entering.

Bolton lingered for some time, nursed assiduously by Lizzie and her mother, and attended by Mr. Forbes, who in a quiet, unoffending way, tried to prepare him for the impending change. It is hard to straighten a gnarled oak, and the change in Bolton was very slight. But there was a change, and as long as religion was not forced down his throat with his medicine, he did not sneer at it.

He lingered for many days, growing weaker and weaker and more shrunken, until his comrades would have failed to recognise him. He seldom asked about any one, until one evening, when his talk turned constantly to his father. Even then there was no expressed desire to see him. But memories of toys made by old Mr. Tilton for Bolton's pleasure, of walks in the bush and of labors in the grain and hay fields, flowed from his tongue. The watchers thought then that the end was near. Death catches his prey by the feet, and mounting into the brain, dulls the lower animal faculties, while the intellectual and spiritual still burn brightly and clearly at the top; and this was the case with the once brutal Bolton.

It was near the morning, when, with a groan of unrest, Bolton called to Lizzie, who was dozing on a lounge near by. She approached him, and asked what was wanted.

"I want to see father," he replied. "Send him to me, alone."

Trembling, and yet joyfully, Lizzie went to do her brother's bidding. It was with difficulty that she could make her father understand what was wanted of him, but once he comprehended he rose, and, clinging to his pipe, went towards his son's room. He entered, and Lizzie gently drew the door to, leaving father and son together.

Mr. Tilton approached the bedside almost reluctantly, and seated himself in a chair that stood conveniently near.

Bolton was evidently distressed, and stretched out his hand towards his father, who took it and pressed it. The touch seemed to soothe Bolton, and he began to speak.

"Father," he said, "I've been a bad son to you."

"A little wild, lad; a little wild, but I forgive ye. 'Twas the blood and not the heart."

"Can you forgive me, without knowing all the wrong I've done you?" asked Bolton eagerly.

"Ay, lad, why not? You're my own flesh and blood."

"Perhaps it's because you don't know what I've done, that you forgive me," said Bolton sadly.

"Then don't tell me, lad; don't tell me."

"But I must tell you," Bolton broke forth. "I cannot die with that on my shoulders. Let me take your hand, father; I've something to tell you that may make you deny me that afterwards."

The old man stretched out his hand, and laid it in Bolton's. In broken language the son began his tale, of which all can guess the burden. Mr. Tilton leaned forward, eagerly listening. When Bolton said "it was not Uncle Hal who forged your name, father," he started up.