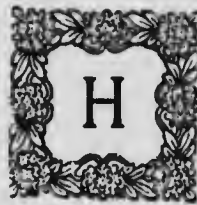


XXVI

"ANCIENT OF DAYS"



HE woke to the chiming of bells, and, as his eyes slowly opened, the sorrowful people of a dream, who seemed to be bending over him, weeping, swam back into the darkness of the night whence they had come, and returned to the imperceptible, leaving their shadows in his heart. Slowly he rose, stumbled into the outer room, and released the fluttering shade; but the sunshine, springing like a golden lover through the open window, only dazzled him, and found no answering gladness to greet it, nor joy in the royal day it heralded.

And yet, to the newly cleaned boys on their way to midsummer morning Sunday-school, the breath of that cool August day was as sweet as stolen apples. No doubt the stir of far, green thickets and the twinkle of silver-slipped creeks shimmered in the longing vision of their minds' eyes; even so, they were merry. But Joseph