

"So be I," said Mr. Dorman, "She's only been so a few months. She had a spell of fever a year ago, 'nd it left her bad off. She's been away bein' doctored most of the time till jist lately."

"A fine horse you have there," was the tramp's next remark, as the wild antics of a handsome bay horse, in the next lot, attracted his attention.

"Colby is a prime roadster," responded his master proudly, "but what's up with the brute; I never saw him act like that before."

So engrossed was Mr. Dorman that he did not see the stranger turn suddenly pale, nor notice him in any way until he gave a peculiar whistle on his fingers.

At the sound Colby cleared the gate at a bound and rushed straight towards them.

Mr. Dorman drew back in alarm, but he had no occasion for fear, for, without even noticing his master, the horse rushed to the tramp's side and laid his head on his shoulder.

"Colby, dear old Colby!" was what the stranger said, and then winding his arms about the animal's neck, he burst into tears.

By invitation of the "head of the house," the man sat, a little later, again by the fireside and told his simple story.

He was only one of many thousands who, through mismanagement and debt, had lost everything, grown discouraged first and reck less afterward, and had gone out empty handed to seek for work, ending in becoming "only a tramp."

And Colby? Well, Colby had been his pet horse, raised from a colt, and the last of his possessions which the relentless grip of the law had wrung from him.

"I tell you, and I'm not ashamed of it," he said, "I cried when they led the noble beast away, looking back as he was and neighing, and I have not cared much since what became of me. I was misused and early driven from home by a step-parent, and have never had a family of my own, so perhaps I give too much affection to my dumb friends, especially Colby."

"Mebby there wuz a Providence in it all."

Mr. Dorman said a year later, when the stranger, who had become an inmate of the house, giving twelve months of faithful work for a suit of common clothes and Colby, rode the sure-footed creature three miles in ten minutes and brought a physician in time to save the life of little Mary, whom a misstep had hurled down a long flight of stairs.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days," murmured Mary; and many times the parents recalled it in the days following when nobody but Colby's master could carry the little aching form and not hurt it, and nobody but Colby's master was utterly untiring and unselfish.

Was there a Providence in it?—*Sel.*

THE TWO PLANKS.

Suppose it is needful for you to cross a river, over which two planks are thrown. One is perfectly new, the other is completely rotten. How will you go? If you walk upon the rotten one you are sure to fall into the river. If you put one foot on the rotten plank and the other on the new plank, it will be the same; you will certainly fall through and perish. So there is only one method left. *Put both feet on the new plank.* Friend, the rotten plank is your own unclean self-righteousness. He who trusts in it must perish without remedy. The new plank is the eternal saving work of Christ, which came from heaven, and is given to every one that believeth in Him (Acts xiii. 38, 39).—*Sel.*

THE EFFECT OF GOOD INFLUENCE.

"Where are you going, Jack?" asked a boy of his school-fellow whom he met as he himself was walking to the school house.

"Why, it's such a fine morning I thought I'd like to go sliding on the pond. 'Tisn't often we get such a day as this."

"That's true, Jack, but you won't enjoy sliding if you are playing truant, you know. Give it up, Jack, and come to school with me. We're in the same class, and somehow I don't feel quite natural when you are not there."

"Don't you, though?" responded Jack. "All right, old chap, I'll come."