

"Kitty," said the boy, "I've led you into this and it's up to me to see you through. You'll have to be brave, little girl."

The child looked up at him, her cheeks white, her lips trembling, but there was no fear in her eyes. A flight of wild geese fled down the creek, trumpeting their joyous welcome to the flood, and the boy envied them their wings. There was something strangely sinister about the brown waters that surged below and for a moment the boy's gaze wandered along the face of the cliff in search of another way. Then he caught his breath and cried: "Look, Kitty, look!"

The child saw what appeared to her as a Japanese dragon, worked in some dull yellow substance, standing out from the face of the naked bedrock in the direction they had come. The landslide had laid it bare, but as her eyes fell wonderingly upon it, the boy leapt from the shelf, taking her with him.

The black waters closed over them, but the boy fought his way to the surface, using only one hand, though Nature cried to him to loosen the thing he was holding and save himself. Strength of will only can conquer Nature when man struggles against death, for it is then that the animal rises within him, and the humanity of camp fire talks no longer play a part in his being. Drifting here into a backwash, then into the central race, the boy struggled down stream, but still he kept his hold. Once, twice, he clutched at the overhanging timber, but his hold was torn loose, since he had but one hand with which to clutch. His heart sank within him, but the third time his grip held. He had clutched a willow, no thicker than the stem of a man's pipe, but he had clutched it near the root and it held.

Then came the nightmare. The bank at this point was steep and slippery. The boy was exhausted, so was the child. By supreme effort he got her clear of the water, and started on the upward ascent. Then he himself would lose his balance while she slipped back, clutching at the clay with small and feeble fingers.

The boy did not remember much after that. A birch bark canoe shot by within a yard, the man kneeling at the waist of it struggling frantically with his paddle to gain the bank. It was Ben Ingles who subsequently rescued the boy from the pile of driftwood fifty yards down the creek, but ere the boy let go he had safely landed Kitty.

"Gold! Enough gold to make you and me giddy, Ben! Wait till the creek falls." It had fallen next day. There it was, like the fossil of some prehistoric reptile, clinging to the face of the solid bedrock with crooked tentacles.

"You want to get away right now to the Recorder's Office," advised Ben. "Keep travelling. Don't look back. Take the gasoline launch."

"What I want most of all," said the boy, "is a partner—someone who knows the ropes."

"Sure," Ben agreed. "Someone who'd stand by you if it came to a pinch." "That's it," said the boy with a laugh. "And I fancy I've found my man! Something doing after all—eh, partner?"

Almost Persuaded

The Rev. H. P. Thompson gives the following account of a sceptic, who lived on the outskirts of his congregation, and never went to church. "I had heard of him as a sceptic; intelligent, and always ready for argument. It so happened that I had never met him up to the time of which I write, though I always called at his house when making pastoral visits in that neighborhood.

Suddenly his two only children, aged respectively nine and eleven years, were attacked with scarlet fever and died. I was invited to officiate at the funeral. Calling soon after I found the mother very sad indeed, and willing to hear and acquiesce in what was said. The father was, of course, somewhat softened, but not willing to look upon the affliction as sent for his spiritual good, or, indeed, as intended to teach him any lesson whatever. After this I saw him several times and became intimately acquainted with his views. At one time he told me of several infidel books he had read, and quoted largely from them to destroy the authority of the Bible.

"I asked whether he had read any books on 'The Evidence of Christianity,' and named particularly Paley and Alexander. No, he had never seen them nor read anything of that kind. Then I said, 'As a candid man, you must confess that such a course is not honest. You profess to be seeking the truth, and read to discover it. You only read attacks upon what the best men in the community—the most intelligent as well as the morally best—call truth. I ask you frankly whether you claim that that is honest?' He acknowledged it was not; but said he had never thought of it in that light before; promised faithfully to read whatever I might bring him; and from that time showed a decided attachment as my friend. But he was not decidedly won for Christianity. He came occasionally to church, contributed regularly to its support, always came to the place of public worship when held in his own neighborhood, and never spoke against religion nor its ministers. Plain speaking, in love, I have always found best. It was so in this case. The wife and her mother I have no doubt became Christians; and he himself is under good influence. What the future may reveal I cannot tell, but as yet 'God's word' has not returned to Him void."



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