

struction of trees, stumps and bowlders, taught him that. He was lost in the mountains. A lonely owl hooted over his head, and the silence of night seemed full of strange noises. Again that dread of some unseen danger almost paralyzed his will, and his feet dragged, heavy and clogged, like the footsteps of age.

'May the good angels guard my boy,' he sighed; and comforted, he wandered on.

'I will strike the path again, presently, I know,' he said aloud, in a confident tone.

Just then he almost fell over a tree which had fallen to the ground. He started to go around it, but became entangled in the branches at one end, and butted up against the roots at the other, as though unseen hands sought to hold him back. But he clambered over the trunk and pursued his way.

'I know I will soon be out of this if I keep on; and it is too cold to sleep in the woods,' as though apologizing for his disregard of some friendly opposition; and there, right before him, he saw a light glimmering in the valley below.

'Hurrah!' he shouted and started down with accelerated speed.

Crossing a shallow brook at the foot of the mountain, on a rustic bridge, made plainly visible by the moonlight that flooded the valley on this side of the hill, he at last reached an enclosure around a cabin home, and, vaulting over the fence, rapped at the door.

A man appeared with a tallow dip in his hand, and, holding it high above his head, viewed his youthful visitor with the utmost surprise. 'Come in, my boy—come in!' he said, leading the way; and ushering John into the one room of the cabin, where a motherly woman sat knitting beside the ample hearth, upon which a roaring log fire was blazing, making warmth and light too.

'Here, take this cheer, an' set down, an' tell us whar ye come from,' said the man, offering John a seat right in the ruddy glow of the fire; 'for I see yer a stranger in these parts.'

'I came across th mountain,' said John.

'Which way did ye come to bring ye to Jack Martin's cabin?' the man asked, in visible surprise; 'for this place o' mine is nigh a mile from the road.'

'I came across the mountain,' said John.

'Across thet mountain!' Mr. Martin almost shouted. 'Ye tell me thet, an' think I'll believe ye!'

'Indeed, sir, I did,' said John, earnestly. 'You do not think I would deceive you? Why should I?'

'Across thet hill after dark,' said Mr. Martin, in an awe-struck whisper; 'an' you be alive to tell it.'

'Why, what danger was there?' asked John, nervously.

'Danger!' repeated Mr. Martin. 'I will take ye out thar to-morrer, an' show ye.'

'Ef ye crossed thet hill to-night, some good angel must have led ye, ohile,' said the woman, dropping her knitting, and looking curiously at John over her spectacles.

And another womanly voice, a far sweeter voice to him than any other, seemed to breathe close to his ear, 'May the good angels guard my boy, when Mother can no longer minister unto him.'

'Mother, get the young man some eat to eat,' said Mr. Martin, abruptly, turning to his wife, and John thought his voice strangely husky.

There was a tear in the good woman's eye, too, as she spread a snowy cloth on the pine table, and laid upon it the homely viands for his meal, sweet home-made bread, golden butter, some baked apples, and a pitcher of cider.

After a good night's sleep on the spare

bed, in the corner opposite to that in which his host and hostess slept, and a hearty breakfast for which these hospitable people would not take a cent—John felt quite equal to a tramp by daylight over the ground he had travelled in the darkness of the night before.

'Ye'd never ketch me a-walkin' uv it in anything but the broadest kind uv daylight,' said Mr. Martin, as they started up the side of the mountain. 'I've chopped cordwood hereabouts for nigh onto twenty year, an' I never set foot on this hill arter dark.'

'Why,' said John, 'what is the matter with it?'

'Look an' see, jest at yer feet, an' thar, an' thar!' said Mr. Martin, excitedly, pointing on all sides at holes in the ground, with which the hill was honeycombed; and then he led John to the brink of one of them, and he looked down into a yawning pit, black and bottomless, where the iron ore had been blasted from the rocky sides of the mountain. 'D'ye see thet? An' the hill's full uv 'em, an' how d'ye s'pose ye ever wandered roun' and roun' in the dark when ye wuz lost 'thout fallin' in a dozen uv 'em?'

'I don't think I could have fallen into a dozen,' John laughed, nervously, 'for one would have been plenty.'

'It's well nuff ter laugh now,' said Mr. Martin, gravely; 'but it seems leetle short uv a miracle thet you be alive ter tell the story.'

And right before them was the tree over which John had clambered, with a yawning pit at each end of it. Had he gone around it as he had at first attempted, he would have gone down into a pit, whichever side he took.

'I shall ask it every day of him,' thought John; and in his heart he understood the miracle.

John passed his examination successfully, and got a school in Scioto County, at a salary of \$37.50 per month, which made him feel far richer than his present salary of \$5,000 a year! for John boarded around among his scholars, and, dressing very plainly, he saved most of his money, and took a course in law, moved to the far West, and now represents his state in the United States Senate.

Ungracious Goodness.

(By Martha Clark Rankin.)

'Mamma, is Mr. Black a good man?' was the earnest query of a ten-year-old boy.

'Yes, indeed, a very good man. Why do you ask?' was my reply.

'Because, if he is good, then I don't see why God lets a good man be so very disagreeable!'

To the mother of three ever-questioning children, it was no uncommon experience to be at a loss for an answer, and this time the thought was one which had often seemed puzzling. It is written of our Saviour that he 'increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' That would seem to be the natural condition of spiritual growth—an increase in favor with man as well as God; but alas! I know too many who, like Mr. Black, were types of ungracious goodness. A stern, sour face, which instantly repelled a sensitive person; a manner never kindly, often distinctly unsympathetic and harsh—could I wonder that such a man should be a stumbling-block in the way of my child?

I sent the boy away on an errand, knowing that his question would be brought back to me, but hoping by delay to gain some inspiration. Immediately all the ungracious good people I had ever known began to pass in procession before me.

First came the woman who could always be depended upon to help a neighbor or the

church, but who was sure first to find fault, criticize, and scold, giving the impression that she was a martyr, killing herself with self-sacrificing work. 'An excellent woman,' everybody said, 'but peculiar,'—a word, by the way, which covers a multitude of sins.

Next came the blunt church-member who prided herself on always telling the truth. 'If everybody was like me,' she was wont to say, 'there wouldn't be much trouble in the world. Everybody knows just where I stand.' It is she who waits for the pastor after church with the greeting: 'I hope you'll give us a good, practical sermon next Sunday—one that'll hit some of our backsliding members; and p'raps you don't know that Aunt Huld's feeling dreadful hurt because you ain't been in since she's had the rheumatism so bad.'

The poor pastor, who had known nothing of Aunt Huld's rheumatism, goes home discouraged—a feeling which he shares with half a dozen others whom she greets. But she is a good woman, and at least never says anything behind your back that she would not say to your face.

Following her is the elderly man who is ever shaking his head over the degeneracy of the times and the frivolity of the young. When he was a boy, he went to church twice every Sunday, and to Sunday-school between; and, if boys now had to do the same, there would be an end to Sunday bicycling and weekday dancing and card-playing. He does not know what the world is coming to with such a gay set of young folks to take the place of the strong men and women who will soon be gone.

His cousin is the man who thinks poorly of the Christian Endeavor movement. It makes a good show, he admits, but there is too much show about it, and it makes the young people think they can run everything.

Next I remember a lady whose diligence in the study of her Sunday-school lesson attracted my attention on the cars one day. With bent head and attentive air she was comparing her bible and commentary, and I thought some scholars were fortunate in a diligent and careful teacher. Then she looked up, and I found myself wondering whether the lesson of the melancholy, scowling face might not teach louder than all she could say. And when she moved aside to make room for an old woman who came into the crowded car, I noticed that it was done without the smile that would have made the action gracious.

At this point I was interrupted by a call from my pastor, to whom I propounded the question, 'Why is it that good people are not always agreeable?'

'They are,' was the response. 'Goodness must of necessity be agreeable. If one fails to find it so the fault must be in himself.'

I was silenced, but would this answer satisfy my child? Should I say to him, 'You are very wrong, my son, to think Mr. Black cross; if you were only better yourself, you would see only his lovely traits of character; we see in others the reflection of ourselves?'

Perhaps it was a mistake, but when he came bounding in to hear what I would say, I found myself talking after this fashion,

'You know, my child, that when we call a person "good," we don't mean that he is perfect; only One who has ever lived has been without faults. We mean simply that he is trying to do right. Your little experience in gardening has shown you that it is far easier to raise a good crop on one piece of ground than another; and so good traits are much more easily cultivated in some characters than in others. Some people fail to realize their unattractive manners, while others, I fancy, mourn in secret over what they do not