



Re-living with Christ.

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CHAPTER IX.

Now, Joe had, when a boy, spent many pleasant weeks on Uncle Silas' small farm, which was really hardly more than a rough clearing in the woods, and was poorly tilled by the old man, who was little more than a cripple. But just at the present juncture Joe had very little money on hand, and could ill afford to pay his fare even to Orange Junction. Moreover, he much feared that if he were absent from the city for even a few days he might miss some good opportunity to obtain employment. Therefore it seemed no small trial, and might, Joe thought, involve in the end a great sacrifice, for him to take time to visit his lonely old uncle.

Yet he felt that it would be a real kindness to Uncle Silas to look in on him for a few days; and so off he started, the next morning, on the first train for Orange Junction. Too poor to hire a team, Joe was obliged to tramp on foot twelve miles across country, to the lonely clearing up among the hills where Uncle Silas lived.

Here, at the farm, a few days were passed quite pleasantly. They were days unmarked by any incident—unless it might be mentioned that Joe and his uncle became interested, on the morning of the day when the nephew was to return to Carter City, in watching the movements of a few horsemen, who passed by on a crossroad not far from the farmhouse.

"I've seen those fellows before!" exclaimed Uncle Silas. "I wonder what they are about? They've been hanging around this neighborhood for two days."

"What a big fellow that one in front is!" replied Joe. "He looks somewhat like a man my father used to know, who ran on the railroad with him."

Nothing more was thought at the time about this incident by either Uncle Silas or Joe, who soon fell to talking together of the character and career of John Benton, the martyred engineer.

Then, in the afternoon, Joe bade his uncle good-by, and started off on his homeward travels. This time, however, he thought that he would not take the road which led to Orange Junction, but would walk directly to the railroad, and then along a road which ran parallel with the track, six miles, to a place called Forestville. But, owing to his miscalculation of the distance, it was long after dark when Joe at last reached the railroad and turned up the rough road, which led along through dense woods for mile after mile. The section was a very lonely one. Uncanny tales had been told of certain happenings there in times past, of which Joe had heard, on winter nights in the caboose. Stranger tales yet might have been told of the locality, if dead lips could have spoken. Joe did not especially relish taking that route, but there was a chance that he might catch the way-train bound east at the small station called Forestville, and he was anxious to reach home that night.

For about two miles Joe tramped on with comparative unconcern; only disturbed now and then by the snapping of a twig under the cautious tread of some prowling animal, or by the whir of some bat sweeping past him. Meanwhile, his thoughts kept traveling back to the distant city

where stood the home once so full of brightness and cheer, but now occupied by strangers, where so often in former days his thoughtful mother had placed the lamp in the parlor window to guide him to welcome rest.

As he tramped along, Joe seemed to see again in dreamy vision that familiar home light—or was it some other light that he suddenly saw? At once he was all attention. Certainly he was not now dreaming; surely there was the gleam of a light on the road ahead—and then complete darkness once more. Joe rubbed his eyes. Had he fallen to sleep while still walking, as soldiers sometimes do on the march? With a resolute effort, he roused himself fully to the situation, becoming conscious meanwhile of his exposed position on that lonely country road. At first he thought the light might have been the gleaming of a brakeman's lantern. Perhaps a train had broken down. Yet, if so, why only a white light, and not a red one showing?

Joe's curiosity was now greatly excited, and he quickened his pace. As he drew softly nearer, he made out a figure or two dimly revealed by the faint glimmer of a small bonfire started among the bushes. The tree trunks and twigs showed weirdly in the red flickering firelight. "Tramps, not railroad men," Joe thought. Then he checked his speed, considering that it would be prudent to proceed more slowly, and to try cautiously to observe the situation for a little before he was himself discovered.

Slowly and cautiously Joe Benton felt his way forward along the dark woodland road, taking great care not to reveal his presence to the men who were by the fire in his immediate front. Soon he saw that the bonfire was not such as tramps would be likely to build; and the attitude and doings of the men conferring together around it suggested another explanation of the matter. Suddenly the neigh of a horse and then an answering whinny from the woods near by startled Joe with a new suggestion as to the purposes of the group of men near him—a suspicion immediately confirmed by the actions of one of the men, who quickly ran into the thicket where the horse was tethered. The whole situation was now in outline clearly revealed to Joe. The gang of ruffians before him were plotting coolly for the detention and perhaps the wrecking of some expected train, possibly the very way train that he had hoped to catch at Forestville. Of all places on the road which rascals might have chosen for their foul deed this was one of the worst, since there was a heavy grade at this point, where the road curved down through a group of hills, of similar formation to the "dug-outs" farther on.

Joe was simply confounded at this discovery. Do something he must to frustrate the plans of the desperadoes; but just what to do he hardly knew. No matter if the company had treated him shamefully! Such a consideration did not weigh a feather's weight under the circumstances of danger which threatened its property and the lives of so many trustful passengers. There was but one thing to do, and that was to give the alarm to the approaching train.

But first Joe thought it necessary to try to learn a few details of the robbers' plans, since otherwise he would not know in which direction to carry the alarm. So he crept down towards the track, and observed them at their dastardly work. As they laid a number of ties across the rails he could overhear portions of their cool heartless talk. Their depravity amazed Joe.

To be Continued.

Oftimes we call a man cold when he is only sad.

Sunshine in Darkness.

Dr. Isaac Watts says:

"Behind a frowning Providence, (God) shows a smiling face," to which some writers have taken exceptions. But my experience has often proved the correctness of that phrase of poet's statement. I might give many instances of this fact during my lifetime. I will mention one at the present time. Last October I was taken with a severe attack of asthma and bronchitis which has laid me up all winter, not being able to do anything except a little attention to "THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL." The prospect for the winter looked very dark as I had no means to provide for the cold season, except a little from the Annuity Society, and when that was all gone, and hills began to becloud the horizon the pastors of the churches in the city and Fairville in one of their Monday meetings resolved to ask their respective churches to make me a birthday donation, and accordingly a company met at our home and spent a social evening on the 12th of March, and left me \$70 better off for their coming. This amount tided me over my financial crisis. But my physical condition being no better, fears for the future began to darken my vision, and only as I could trust myself with the Lord, believing his word that says "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; and cast all my care upon Him who careth for me, could I see any gleam of light. And He has been as good as His word, for He has put it into the hearts of several of His dear people to send me very kind letters with greenbacks in them that have let in the sunshine of His love, so through the darkness I can see the light of His smiling countenance. May he amply reward those dear friends that have thought so kindly of me.

J. H. HUGHES.

Religious News.

On Lord's Day morning, MONCTON, N. B. March 30th, after preaching an Easter sermon, Pastor D. Hutchinson baptized four recent converts. One of the candidates was the Pastor Hutchinson's daughter, Grace Euid. Others are ready for the ordinance, while others again are inquiring.

Baptized Lord's Day morning DOAKTOWN, N. B. ing 18 willing followers of Jesus. Two others were received and will be baptized next Lord's Day, when we are trusting others to decide by that time to do likewise. The meetings will be continued through this week. Gave the hand of fellowship to 20 yesterday, 2 coming with us from the Free Baptist.

M. S. R.

March 31.

Seven were added to our ST. STEPHEN, number on Easter Sunday, N. B. five by baptism and two by letter. Others have given evidence of conversion and will shortly seek admission to the church. An offering of \$23.78 for denominational work was received on Sunday. On Tuesday evening of the present week \$25 were realized at the annual Mission Band concert. Last evening was the Easter meeting of the Womans Missionary Aid Society, when a collection of \$15 was taken. In all our work there is cause for gratitude and encouragement.

W. C. GOUCHER.

April 3rd, 1902.

Rev. H. F. Adams was with FIRST HARVEY, us March 30 and 31. On HARVEY, A. CO. Sunday morning he preached N. B. an interesting sermon from the text "And who is my neighbor." He also presented the matter of the Century Fund to our people. On Monday evening the W. M. A. S. held its annual meeting, at