

your social position is defined by that fact, and that it's not incumbent on you to be ambitious. My father was an officer in the army, as you know, my grandfather was a clergyman, and I blame myself now, because I was neither industrious enough nor ambitious enough when I was young.'

While these words were spoken Arthur suffered torture; he bent his eyes on the carpet. Possibly his father suspected something was wrong, that he had lapsed into some youthful error, the best corrective of which was to rouse the lad to ambition, to show him that he bore an honored name.

One day Arthur went into the city with two letters in his pocket, one of which was from a certain commercial firm. In an interview with the principal which he had, his appearance, manner, and acquirements were all found to be satisfactory.

'And your references?' asked the gentleman.

Arthur hung his head as he said, in deepest humility, 'I haven't any.'

'Not any! No references? Did you not tell me you had been a year with a merchant?'

'Yes; but I can't ask him for a character. I—I did something wrong, but he forgave me and kept me,' Arthur stammered out.

'Oh, of course, if you've lost your character that's an end of the matter. Good-morning.'

Arthur left the office and wandered aimlessly to the Embankment. Standing looking at the river, he thought it might be well to plunge in. The thought of going home to his parents was intolerable; they would wonder why he didn't get the berth. He could not face them. Perhaps the best thing would be to run away; yet to do that was to inflict great misery on his parents. After brooding on his terrible position for half an hour, during which time he pictured to himself his mother's agony when she learned he had committed suicide, he remembered he had another letter in his pocket, and that he had to call at the office of a certain solicitor. What was the use? Is it likely a sharp lawyer would overlook his not being able to give a reference? Then in his despair the thought came that he might pray. There was a bench near him on which sat a tramp fast asleep. Arthur sat down, and, putting his hands over his face, leaned forward and prayed, 'Lord, I am not fit for any office; no one will take a thief into his employment, so I come to thee.'

He was not in the habit of praying, and when he rose from the bench he thought it very likely his prayer was all wrong. He even began to criticise it. Was it not an insult to the Deity to tell him that when he—Arthur—was too bad for any earthly master he would go to the holy one? But he lacked the mental vigor at that moment to think the matter out. He had, however, gained one little spark of courage. He would go to the office of the solicitor whose letter he had in his pocket.

As on the former occasion, Arthur's appearance, manner and acquirements left nothing to be desired. He was given a letter to take down in shorthand, and his stenography was pronounced to be neat and legible, as well as sufficiently rapid. 'Your references?' said the solicitor. Arthur hung his head and was silent.

'Who was your last employer?' was asked in a gentle tone. Perhaps the speaker saw traces of the mental anguish the lad had endured, and was pitiful. His manner inspired confidence.

'It was Mr. Thomas. He's bankrupt; but I can't refer to him.' And then with a face expressive of a very agony of shame,

he was beginning to tell his tale when there was the sound of an approaching footstep. The solicitor hastened to the door.

'It's Mr. Green,' said a clerk.

'I'll see Mr. Green in a few minutes—I'm engaged at present.' And having so said the solicitor locked the door on the inside. Yes, you must wait, Mr. Client, rich man though you are, for a penitent's story has to be heard.

When Arthur had finished his narration and spoken with fervent gratitude of his late employer, he added, 'But his goodness only made me the more mad with myself; I feel as if I had brought him to bankruptcy.'

'I believe you to be truly penitent; I am willing to engage you,' were the words that now lightened the load of this unhappy youth.

'Oh, thank you!' he exclaimed with passionate fervor. 'I only wish I could show my gratitude in more than words. You and Mr. Thomas are marvels of goodness; but I can never forgive myself. I'm disgraced in my own eyes forever; I can't look my father and mother in the face.'

'I understand your feelings. You would like a few drops of the water of Lethe to sprinkle over your past.'

'That I should!' was the lad's earnest exclamation. He did not, perhaps, read more than other youths; but his reading made a more lasting impression than is often the case. 'And yet,' he added after a second's pause, 'the waters of Lethe only made the sinner forget his sin.'

'Whereas you want it blotted out altogether.'

'Yes; if I only had Aladdin's lamp; but you'll think me silly to speak of such nonsense at such a moment.'

'No; you are feeling dimly after a deep human need. There is a moral Aladdin's lamp for you. There is something which can wipe out the stain of your crime completely. Have you not heard that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin?'

'Yes, I have heard it, but somehow I forgot, I—I didn't think about it; but it's the very thing I need,' he replied in tones of deepest earnestness.

'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,' repeated the solicitor.

'That's in the Bible, I know. Can I take it to myself? May my scarlet sin be made white?' he asked eagerly.

'Undoubtedly.'

'To be made clean again; to be able to look my mother in the face once more—that's wonderful.'

At this point there was a knock at the door. 'Mr. Green can't wait any longer,' said a clerk.

'I'm sorry, but I'm still engaged.' Yes, go, Mr. Client; your money-bags fly up like a feather when weighed in the balance with an immortal soul.

'When you are able to believe that God has forgiven you, you will be able to forgive yourself,' said the solicitor, as he laid his hand kindly on the lad's shoulder. Now, you had better go and take a seat in some quiet place, and take this Testament with you; but be sure to bring it when you come to-morrow morning. If it should be wanted in the interim, I must send out for another. Read the fifteenth chapter of Luke—I'll mark it for you, lest you should forget—and then read the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of St. John, that you may see how much it cost to wash your guilt away. If I were you I would go to St. James's Park, and as your eyes rest on the trees think whose love it was that made them. I am

very fond of looking up from nature to nature's God.'

Arthur returned to the Embankment and stood on the very spot on which he had stood before, when the flowing river had suggested a way of putting an end to earthly trouble. What a marvellous change had taken place in his feelings! He sat down on the bench on which he had previously sat, from which he had offered up his crude prayer. Again he leaned forward, and with his hands covering his face poured out his soul. It was scarcely a prayer; it was a burst of gratitude, it was worship. If it had been spoken aloud, and if it had been heard by a passer-by, it would not, perhaps, have been considered by any means a good prayer. The usual phraseology of devotional exercises was entirely wanting. It's all wiped out, the horrid stain, were the words he many times repeated to himself as he walked in the direction of St. James's Park. He scarcely saw the passers-by. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow,' he said, with a deep sense of gratitude.

When he reached the park he looked about for a quiet place, and, finding at length a bench where there were no children, he sat down, and, taking the Testament out of his pocket, read the story of the Prodigal Son. For some minutes he thoughtfully pondered over the parable, his eyes resting the while on the waving trees. After that he read, as his kind friend had advised, the narrative of the crucifixion. 'I am pardoned, but what a lot it cost! That he should have been scourged. Oh, I never can thank him enough or serve him enough; but I do love him,' he repeated in a low tone, his countenance expressing deepest emotion.

Three years afterwards a tall, well-built young man called upon Mr. Thomas at his new office and restored seven pounds.

'I'm sincerely glad to see you, and to get this money, Walterson,' said the merchant, 'not for the money's sake, though it's useful too, but for your own.'

'I'm sorry I couldn't bring it sooner; but out of fifteen shillings a week it's difficult to save.'

'Of course it is. You must have practiced the utmost self-denial. I have often thought about you, and feared you would have a difficulty in getting another berth.'

Upon this Arthur told his story. Mr. Thomas listened with an air of deepest respect.

'I congratulate you on having found an employer, who is evidently a most excellent man.'

'He is; but there is yet more to congratulate me upon. I have found a Master who has borne my sins, who has washed me and made me clean.'

Be Kind, Be True.

Be kind, little maiden, be kind;
In life's busy way you will find
There is always room for a girl who smiles
And with loving service the hour beguiles;
A lass who is thoughtful as she is fair,
And for others' wishes has a care;
Who is quick to see when the heart is sad,
And is loving and tender to make it glad;
Who loves her mother and lightens her cares,
And many a household duty shares;
Who is kind to the aged and kind to the young,
And laughing and merry and full of fun;
There is always love for a girl who is sweet,
Always a smile her smile to greet;
Then be kind, little maiden, be kind.
—'Union Signal.'