

together for mischief. Jist thin the relief came, and Harper took my place. Ah, thin, my lad, I wish you joy, says I; glad enough sure to be relaved. And you have got a snug little tinimint to shelter you, barrin it wants a roof, but you get it chape and pay no rint, so you can't complain. He muttered something about not wanting it long, and so I lift him."

A loud laugh followed O'Connel's story, when Serjeant Macintosh inquired:

"At what hour came the relief."

"Why thin, Serjeant, I had no manes of knowin'," replied O'Connel; "it was twelve o'clock when I went on, but it was too dark to see the hour whin I came off, two hours after."

"Harper then deserted his post; what a fearful addition to his crime," said the Serjeant sorrowfully; "bitterly will both he and the others rue their breach of trust. I never knew conduct like theirs to prosper."

"But I am told," said a young soldier present, "that great bribes are held out by the Yankees, and that one who deserted some time ago, has been made a drill serjeant."

"That may even be the case, Barker, and still he will neither be a richer nor a happier man. For a time wickedness may seem to prosper, but it ever, in the end, brings its own punishment in this world. And we all know to what it leads in the next. Does not our blessed bible teach us: 'That an inheritance may be gotten hastily, at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed.' We cannot expect to prosper if we break God's commands."

"Is there a command about desertion, Serjeant?" enquired Barker.

"Yes, my lad, there is—do you not, when you enlist, make a solemn oath before a magistrate, and kiss God's book as you utter it. Is not that oath registered in heaven? and will it not be recorded against you if you break it?"

"I never thought about it—I remember kissing the bible when it was given me, but I was thinking more of being a soldier, at the time, than of any thing I said."

"I fear that is too often the case, my friend—that God's blessed name is taken in vain, and used lightly and irreverently. But remember what He tells us: 'If a man vow a vow unto God, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.' Now if you, by desertion, deliberately break that oath, will not God bring you to judgment?"

"It is a good thing to be a schollar, Serjeant," said Barker; "now I can neither read nor write, so how can I know my bible?"

"You can listen to it at church," replied the Serjeant; "or get a friend to read it for you. You could even by perseverance learn to read it yourself,

when you would gain a treasure beyond all price. I should have much pleasure in assisting you.—Thanks be to a gracious God, we have no need to be deeply learned to understand its blessed truths, if we receive them as a little child, believing all things because his word has revealed them to us, and praying for the light of His Holy Spirit to guide us."

"I'm thinkin', Serjeant," said O'Connel, who had listened attentively to all Serjeant Macintosh had been saying; "what a big scoundrel a man must be to desert, and betray the trust reposed in him. If my officer commanded me to stand and guard a certain position, what a blackguard must I be to snake off like a thief in the night, and lave it in the power of the inimy. O, be the powers, then, Patrick O'Connel, its yourself that would desare contempt. Could I thin think of the home, and the ould mother, and the dear land of my birth; all of which I had dishonoured, and my heart not break as I felt I should never see them more; that I was a disgraced man, an outlaw, a traitor to my country, a traitor to my God."

Tears filled the eyes of the honest creature, as he spoke. Serjeant Macintosh looked kindly on him, while Corporal Dawkins said:

"It is too true that money is the root of all evil, and a golden bait has been the ruin of many. I once knew a man who had risen to the rank of pay-serjeant, his character had always appeared excellent, but in an evil hour he deserted with the company's money, intending to proceed to the United States. He had fitted himself out with every thing new, and was on the eve of embarkation when he was taken; he was tried by the civil court, and sentenced to transportation for life, but owing to a favorable report being made of his former conduct by his captain, his sentence was commuted to confinement in the penitentiary. Here the health of the unfortunate man declined. Weighed down as he was, by shame, grief, and remorse, when it was found that his days were numbered, he was permitted, with much humanity, to be removed to his own home, where he died, fulfilling the prophecy that 'He who sows iniquity, shall reap vanity.'"

"An awful lesson, indeed, to all," returned Serjeant Macintosh; "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. A soldier has so little excuse for deserting. He loses so much and gains so little. What can be a prouder feeling to a man of honor, than the reflection that he is serving his king and country; to be a traitor to these brands him at once as a degraded being, on whom all must look with scorn. The love of our country is one of the most powerful motives to noble actions; it leads a man through all dangers; and may God grant that when I cease to be a loyal subject of that land, which I glory in, the land of true freedom, (because its laws protect the weak and punish the wicked,) I may cease to live."