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RALPH C. GCHORN

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A Star in a Prison.

A TALE OF CANADA

BY
ANNE MAY
SWYFTON.



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(CONTINUED ON THIRD PAGE COVER)

RALPH GACHORN

A STAR IN A PRISON;

A TALE OF CANADA.

By ANNA MAY WILSON.

David C. Cook Publishing Company, Elgin, Ill., and 36 Washington Street, Chicago.

CHAPTER I.

BUNNY HAS AN ADVENTURE.



ALL through the day the whip of the west wind had been laid upon the face of the deep, and the long waves of Lake Ontario still heaved in rebellion at its lash. The sky above was gray, the water below was leaden, but, from a rift of cloud in the west, a red gleam shot from the sinking sun across the rolling surface. Directly in the path of this was a small boat.

At one end of the craft sat a man, a large dark man, with a bushy beard, and black, black eyes. He wore the oiled coat of a fisherman and an oiled-silk sou'wester was on his head. He was in no state of good humor this evening. Things had not been going well lately with Fisherman Jack, and his ruffled temper was accustomed to venting itself upon anything within reach.

That thing at present was a small boy, who crouched at the other end of the boat, with the rope of the rudder about his body. But he was trembling so that he could scarcely draw upon the cord sufficiently to keep the craft with its end to the billows. This lad had an honest, round face, and beautiful blue eyes. His hair fell over his white brow in a tangle of waving

tresses, and his broad, boyish chest and straight shoulders gave the promise of a man with a noble physique. He was a very pleasing child to look upon. Had he possessed a father and mother he would have been the idol of their eyes. As it was, he was merely a trembling little fellow without a relative, so far as he knew, in all the wide world. He knew little of himself save that his name was William Hare, and that he had always been called Bunny. Ages and ages ago, it seemed to him, he had drifted into Fisherman Jack's cabin; since then he had helped with the fishing and had received for his wages chiefly abuse. Indeed, lately it seemed that Jack was harder to please than ever; but then, he had been drinking more heavily for the last few months. To-night Bunny had made some mistake in adjusting the nets. Jack had sworn at him, and now was glaring at him with angry eyes.

"See here, young fellow," he was saying, "I have put up with you just as long as I will. You do not earn your bread. Then there are the clothes to be thought of. You earn the clothes still less. I want you no more. You will leave my house this night, and never set foot in it again!"

A big lump came into Bunny's throat. Where should he go? Jack's cabin was all the spot he knew as home, and he did not want to leave it.

"But, Jack—" he faltered, with beating heart.

"Not a word more!" interrupted Jack. "You leave me this night! Now, do you understand?"

When Jack spoke in that tone, Bunny knew he was in earnest. Tears rushed to the lad's eyes, and the red sunlight, falling upon them, made streaks of radiance that almost blinded him. He lost control of his rudder-rope, and the boat swerved around broadside to the waves. Jack spoke angrily to him again, and the boy wished they were in, so that he might run away, away, away, where he would never hear wicked words and see dark looks again. Poor Bunny! Little did he know what a strange life was before him, or that this night's proceedings were to launch him into a career such as had never fallen to another beside himself.

When the boat touched the shore, and was drawn up on the beach, Jack strode off into the cabin. Bunny dared not go. He sat down beside the old boat, which seemed almost like a friend, laid his head upon it, and shivered with the chill wind. Tears came again to his eyes, but he fought them back bravely. Night was fast falling. The stars began to come out. He looked up at them, and wondered if God, who, he thought, was away up above them, could look down through those tiny, bright spots and see the small boy shivering beside the boat on the dark, lonely shore.

"I haven't any folks anywhere," he thought. "There isn't one who cares for me!" and the tears rolled down his cheeks. He almost wished that he could die. Then a patter, patter, sounded on the stony beach behind him. A glad throb shot through Bunny's heart, for he knew that light step. Before he could turn his head, a warm nose was poked in beside his face, and a bushy tail was waving about in the air.

"Carlo! Carlo!" cried the boy, clasping his dog-friend to his breast, and burying his face in the black, curly fur. "You care for me, doggie, don't you? I wonder if God sent you to me?"

Bunny did not know very much about God. He had been, a few times, to Sunday-school in the little town whose lights were now twinkling a short distance down the shore. He had picked up some ideas there, but these had set him thinking, and, with the pure heart of an innocent child, he seized upon the fact that there was some bond between him and God. Now, in his loneliness, the boy's heart turned to him as naturally as does the frightened babe to its mother.

"Yes, doggie," he went on, "I guess God sent you to keep me company, didn't he? and to let me know I have one real friend, anyway. Because you love me, doggie, don't you?" And the dog flourished his great tail vigorously, and licked the boy's cheek in assent.

"What will I do now, old boy?" asked the lad, as he nestled his cold fingers against the warm neck of his friend.

Carlo sat down, raised his ears inquiringly, and looked into Bunny's face as though he did not fully understand.

"You see," explained the boy, "Jack will not let me go home any more, so where will I go?"

Carlo gave a short bark, started up, and looked at Bunny again with ears erect, as though he were quite ready to start off at once on a pilgrimage around the world with his young friend.

"If I could only take you, old boy, it wouldn't be so lonely," went on Bunny. "We could sleep together in the green woods, and you would keep me warm at nights, and you could hunt chipmunks in the daytime. But then," he added, "what would I give you to eat? Besides, you belong to Jack."

Again he let his cheek drop down on the glossy coat. It was quite dark now, but the boy was not afraid, with Carlo by him. His eyes grew very thoughtful for those of a ten-year-old lad. He fixed them upon a bright streak on the horizon, across the water, and resolutely attempted to look into

the future. He must do something, go somewhere. Could he get work among the farmers? No, the haying was almost on, and he was not strong enough for that. Then, what about going on one of the steamers for

Carlo lay down by him and went to sleep. Bunny could not sleep for excitement. This seemed a terribly venturesome thing that he was about to do. Oh, how wearisome the hours were, and how lonely! He had



Bunny sat down beside the old boat.—See page 2.

awhile? He had seen boys scrubbing the decks of the vessels that called at the town. Surely he could do that. He would ask the men to try him. He would strive hard to please them. Yes, the "Nubian" would be in to-night, at one o'clock. He would go down and try. At any rate they could do no worse than refuse him.

never imagined a night could be so long. Surely the "Nubian" could not be coming in this time. He listened to the plash of the water on the beach, and watched the dark headland about which the down-going vessels usually came. The moon rose and gleamed through ragged clouds upon the broad waters. Bunny was glad to see her,

but she seemed very cold and solitary. He felt even more lonely than before.

At last the far-off throb, throb of a steamer sounded, coming nearer and nearer. Bunny sat up, and stared with all his might at the end of the promontory looming up against the sky. Yes, there came a vessel at last, its head-light shining through the darkness like a great, glaring eye. It was the "Nubian." Bunny knew her colors very well.

The boy sprang to his feet, and the dog, alert in an instant, sprang up, too, with ears erect and tail wagging.

"Carlo, dear old fellow!" said the boy, and immediately two great paws were placed on his shoulders, and a warm tongue was trying to lick his face. Bunny clasped his arms about the shaggy neck, and kissed the black head.

"Now, doggie," he said, with an ache at his heart, and a lump in his throat, "I must go. Go home, doggie."

Carlo looked at him in astonishment.

"Go home, Carlo," he repeated, with a sob in his voice. And the dog started off for the cabin, with an injured air, pausing, now and again, to glance back doubtfully at the little figure standing alone on the shore, in the moonlight.

Not until his four-footed friend had reached the doorstep of the cabin above, did Bunny move. He stood watching until the dog disappeared in the shadow of the house, then he started off at a run towards the town, where the red and green lights about the wharf and the station seemed to beckon him on. Carlo watched him with ears erect, and a wondering expression on his black face. What process of reasoning went through his doggish brain, it would be hard to state. Certain it is that he looked, first at the retreating boy, then at the cabin, then at the boy again, wondering probably in which direction his duty lay, and that finally he set off after Bunny with a swinging trot, keeping discreetly at some distance

behind, yet never losing sight of his lonely little friend.

When Bunny reached the wharf, the steamer was just in, the gangway was thrown out, and a few men were beginning to roll some casks and boxes down into the vessel.

Bunny paused, and looked timidly about. His heart was beating so that he could almost hear it. In the meantime Carlo had crept along behind him, and sat down in the shadow. Bunny made up his mind to address one of the men.

"Please, sir," he said, "haven't you some work I can do?"

"Surely," replied the man, with a smile. "Help down with those barrels."

Poor Bunny looked at the barrels, and placed his hands against one, but he could not move it. The man laughed.

"Out of a job, eh?" he asked.

"Yes, I'd—I'd like to work on the boat, if there's anything I can do."

The man smiled again. "I guess you are a young runaway, aren't you?"

Bunny looked up indignantly. "Indeed no, sir; I haven't any home to run from."

"Come, now! You're only foolin'," was the reply.

Bunny rubbed his eyes hard to keep back the tears. "But no," he said with a break in his voice, "Jack told me I must never go into his house again. I—I haven't any place to sleep in!"

A man who had been standing idly near, watching the sailors, now turned and looked at the lad. He was one of the townspeople, and knew something of Jack and his charge.

"Why, bless me!" said he, "if it isn't Fisherman Jack's boy! So he's given you a walking-ticket at last, eh? Well, you'll not lose much."

The boat's mate happened to be standing near. He was a tall, kind-hearted man, who had children of his own, and he had noticed the pathetic look of appeal on Bunny's face.

"Who is he?" he asked, with a nod towards the lad.

"A poor little gaffer who hasn't a friend to his name!" replied the town man. "His father and mother was people who came out from England, — they was a runaway match, I reckon; leas'tways they had nothing to do with their folks. I mind well when they died. People didn't do right with the little 'un, and Fisherman Jack got him someway. If ye've a job, mate, it'll be a kindness to animals to give it to him. Jack hasn't been over-kind to him, I'll be bound."

"Well, then, tumble in, lad," said the mate to Bunny. And the boy waited for no second invitation, but immediately ran down the gangway. A gleam of black shot across after him. It was Carlo, who lay down at Bunny's feet, and looked up at him with flattened ears, and the most apologetic air imaginable.

The boy's heart gave a great leap of joy. He patted the dog on the head. "Oh, doggie, doggie, you must go home!" said he. But Carlo merely looked up more imploringly than ever, and thumped his tail on the floor. Bunny then caught him by the paws and tried to drag him out. But he was obstinate. He braced his feet on the floor and refused to go, and the kind-hearted mate, looking down at the handsome, glossy creature, said indulgently: "Let him stay."

"He's Jack's dog," replied the boy. But the mate had gone on, and the gangway was being drawn in, so there was nothing for it but to let Carlo remain. Bunny put his hand on the dog's head, feeling that now, indeed, he was not wholly friendless. He then looked about for some place to sleep. There was a cozy-looking corner in among some boxes. Bunny crept into it, and Carlo followed. The two nestled down together. The engine throbbed, the vessel swayed. The motion lulled the sleepy lad to rest. His long lashes drooped, sounds about the vessel seemed to drift farther and farther

away, and the little homeless waif was sound asleep, with his head on Carlo's soft coat.

The men were rolling the casks and boxes about, but that did not bother the little sleeper. He was all unconscious that, not noticing him in his dark corner, the men had piled the boxes before and above him, so that he could not get out at all.

He was awakened by a gentle whine. Carlo was poking his nose down beside his face. Bunny rubbed his eyes sleepily. For a moment he could not realize where he was. Then the dull throbbing of the machinery recalled all to him, and he started up. He found himself walled in by bales and trunks, but could see, through the chinks, that it was broad daylight.

"I guess we're in a trap now, Carlo," he said. "They didn't know we were in here, did they, old fellow?"

Carlo gave an approving bark. Bunny tried to move the boxes, but could not. He did not like to call out. "We'll wait, old boy," he said, "and maybe at the first port they'll be moving these things."

The minutes wore on — ten, twenty, thirty. Every moment seemed an hour. Besides, the air was close. Ages seemed to go by. Carlo was very patient, but Bunny was getting hungry. He tried again to push the trunks aside, but only succeeded in knocking down a shower of dust, which got into his eyes and throat. He was seized with a fit of coughing. Then some one said:

"Who's there?"

Now, over an hour before, upon the deck of this self-same steamer, an oldish man and a little girl, evidently a grandfather and his grandchild, had appeared. They had breakfasted, and were now pacing up and down, enjoying the crisp breeze that had set the waves a-dancing. The little girl had curling hair, golden as a tangle of embodied sunbeams, and her broad, white hat kept blowing up from her head, so that her grandfather had to stop often to arrange

it. Presently it went off completely, over the railing, and out on the blue waves, where it bobbed up and down provokingly, like a white water lily just out of reach.

The little girl gave a scream. The old man looked helplessly after it.

"Never mind, grandfather," said the child. "There's a blue hood in the big valise. We'll go down below and hunt it up."

"Just so, just so, Gertrude," said the grandfather. "You'll catch your death of cold if you have nothing on your head. Come, now, and we'll find it."

They went below and began searching among the bales and valises. All at once they heard coughing that seemed to come from the bottom of the pile.

"Who's there?" called the grandfather twice. At the second call, a thin, half-buried voice piped out, "Bunny Hare!"

"What are you doing?"
"Chok-ing!"

"Ho, ho! You are, are you! Come, sir," to one of the boat hands, "there's a bunny in here that seems to have too close a hutch. Get him out, will you?"

The man began to haul the bales down, in no good humor. As soon as an opening presented itself, Bunny crept out, with dust on his nose, and his face red with coughing. The man caught him by the shoulder, and gave him a shake. Carlo leaped out with a savage growl, and the man let go his hold.

"So, you little varmint, you steal a ride, do you?" he said.

The little girl, who had been clinging to her grandfather's hand, now stepped forward. "Please, what are you going to do with him?" she asked.

"Just trundle him off with the rest of the baggage, at the first stopping-place," said the boatman.

"Serve him right, the little stowaway!" added Gertrude's grandfather, drawing her away.

Just then the tall mate came up. "Oh, you're here, are you?" he said good-humor-

edly. "This is no stowaway, sir, but a young man who aims at being captain some day, eh? Well, my lad, just straighten those valises, and we'll see that you get some breakfast."

Bunny sprang to work with alacrity.

Meanwhile the girl and her grandfather had gone on. But the child kept looking back. Presently she reached up and whispered:

"Grandfather, doesn't he look like our Wilhelm?"

The grandfather turned quickly about, and took a sharp look at Bunny. "I believe he does," replied he. Then they walked on again.

The big valise was found, the blue hood was tied on, and they went again on deck.

The waves were dancing and sparkling more merrily than ever, but little Gertrude could not help thinking of the forlorn boy, piling valises in that hot, grimy place below, before he might have any breakfast. After a time she climbed up on the arm of her grandfather's chair, put her arms about his neck, and gazed out over the blue water, with a wistful look in her eyes.

"I don't believe he has any friends, grandfather," she said, at length.

"Who, child?"

"That little boy — Bunny Hare. What a funny name he has!"

"Like enough the little rogue was lying about it."

The child's eyes looked reprovingly at him. "Oh, Grandpapa Steinhoff!" she said, "I don't think he's a bad little boy, for he looks just like Wilhelm."

The grandfather coughed. His one great passion had been his affection for his two little grandchildren, and one of them had died over a year before. Now his whole heart was given to the little orphan who was sitting on the arm of his chair. He had little room in his affections for anyone else. His whole life was given up to humoring her every wish, and in striving to make

"paying" investments which should develop into a fortune for her. But he and the child still mourned over Wilhelm, and spoke of him, even yet, in whispers.

After a pause, Gertrude said, "Grandpapa Steinhoff?"

"Yes, dear."

"Couldn't we take that poor little boy to Ottawa with us? We'll need some one to look after the fires, the way John used to, you know."

Gertrude now had her face bent down against her grandfather's, and on-lookers smiled to see the pretty picture—the pleading, red lips, the blue hood, and the golden curls escaping from it to mingle with the long, gray-streaked locks of the man.

"Do you want him very much, Gertie?" he said, after a moment of silence.

"Yes, grandpapa mine."

He pulled one of her curls. "What a tease you are!" he said. "Well, run away down, then, and bring him up till I talk to him for a while."

She was off like a gleam of sunshine, and went picking her way daintily through the grimy passages below to the place where she had seen Bunny. He had finished his work, also his breakfast, and was sitting on a box, holding his knee with both hands, while Carlo lay beside him panting contentedly. Bunny was feeling very much alone and very timid. He thought the little girl coming toward him through the dirty, smoky passages must look like an angel—but then, angels didn't wear blue hoods. At any rate she seemed as one from a sphere different from his, and as she paused before him, he looked up at her with a half-wistful, half-pleading face.

"Please, Bunny Hare," she said, "my grandpapa would like to talk to you for a little while."

"To me?" Bunny said, in astonishment.

"Yes," she replied eagerly. "And maybe he'll do something nice for you. Come now, please, 'cause I want to have everything

settled," she added with a gravely important air.

He arose and followed her up the stair and through the cabin, which he thought must be the most beautiful place ever any one was in. Then she triumphantly led him to her grandfather, who looked at him for a moment, softening more and more as the resemblance to Wilhelm appeared more evident.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Bunny Hare, sir; at least, William Hare," added the boy, who was used to having his nickname, Bunny, laughed at.

"Wilhelm, too, aye!" muttered the grandfather; then aloud, he asked: "Where are your mother and father?"

"Dead, sir, ever so long ago," replied the boy.

"An orphan, as our Wilhelm was," muttered the man again. Then he asked, "What are you doing here?"

Bunny explained. Gertrude pleaded for him, and the result was that the boy who "looked like Wilhelm," was taken with his new friends off the boat and on to a rushing train which bore the three swiftly to the capital. He was henceforth to be, not the boy who should "take care of the fires," but the adopted grandson of Hermann Steinhoff, and to be known as Wilhelm Steinhoff.

In his early life, this man with whom Bunny Hare was now to be so closely associated, had, in company with his brother Fritz, drifted about Canada. They had been in all sorts of obscure and unlikely places; had set their traps in the fastnesses of the great forests, had carried on a system of barter with the Indians, and had kept stores for that purpose on the very confines of civilization. But Fritz had at last settled down in the capital, and now Hermann, with his little Gertrude, the only one remaining of his family, was going thither also, to spend the remainder of his life near his brother.

When the trio reached the city they were

welcomed by this brother, and, with his assistance, a cozy home was soon secured in a once fashionable quarter of Sandy Hill. It was a white cottage, set in the midst of a broad, rambling garden filled with tall trees and blossoming shrubbery. A green veranda, hidden beneath clematis and Virginia creeper, ran about the house, and a very high picket fence enclosed the grounds, giving the place a delightful air of privacy and home-like seclusion.

Bunny, or, as he was now called, Wilhelm, thought the place was the most beautiful that he had ever seen. He and Gertrude played for hours every day in that wonderful garden, and many a passer-by paused to look at the pretty sight—the fairy girl with the long, golden curls, the staunch little lad dressed in sailor-blue, with his hat on the back of his head, and his fair waving hair blown about his rosy face, and lastly, the great, black collie which entered into their fun with all his heart.

Occasionally they would go down the street on little shopping expeditions, and Wilhelm would scarcely let go of the little girl's hand for a moment. "I have got to take care of her, you know," he would say to the old shop-woman who weighed out their candies for them. This sense of having some one to care for was the sweetest change of all to the boy. He felt as though now he really had "folks" like other boys, and he could scarcely recognize in himself the little Bunny, the poor, forlorn waif who had sat, all homeless, hugging his dog, that weary night on the lake shore. It all seemed like a dream now, yet he thought of those days sometimes, and his blue eyes would then grow very solemn.

One day he was lying on the ground, leaning on his elbows, with his chin in his hands, and his sailor hat, as usual, on the back of his head.

"Gertie," he said, "what makes you happy all the time?"

"Why," she replied, "lots of things. I've got ribbons, and pretty dresses, and this garden to play about in, and you and grandfather to love me, and for me to love."

"Yes," returned the little philosopher, "when people love you, and you love people, you think kind thoughts, don't you, and that makes you happy?"

"'Course," assented Gertrude with a nod.

"Well, then, I guess poor Jack never had anybody to care for," said the boy, stroking Carlo thoughtfully. "Because, you know, he wasn't very happy."

"Well, I'm sure he might have cared for you," replied Gertrude, indignantly.

"Or Carlo," nodded Wilhelm, while the dog raised his head and winked approvingly. "Gertrude," went on the lad, "wouldn't it be very strange if I should ever meet Jack again?"

"Very," said the child.

"And if I do," returned he, "I will try very hard to care for him, and be kind to him."

Yes, little fair-haired boy, lying there in the grass, you are yet to have the opportunity of making good your words, in the midst of circumstances more strange than you would ever have dreamed of.

In the meantime, Wilhelm and Gertrude started to school. Wilhelm had to begin in a very low form indeed, but he was clever and willing, and soon distanced the rest of his class-mates. In course of time he entered the high-school, and grew up, a tall, alert youth, a favorite alike with teachers and students, whether in the school-room or on the campus. And, during all these years, the same quiet, peaceful life went on in the vine-covered cottage. If a shade of anxiety was on Hermann's brow no one noticed it. He spent a great deal of his time dabbling at experiments in physics and chemistry, for he was a scientist of no mean order, and hoped, some day, to embody some of his theories in an invention

which would electrify the world. Hence, he was able to give much valuable assistance to Wilhelm, whose remarkable proficiency in all such branches brought him into high favor with the old man; and together they spent many happy hours probing the mysteries of natural law. So, with apparent smoothness, the tide of their life ebbed on.

CHAPTER II.

THE COLPORTEUR.



URING all this time, Wilhelm received very little direct teaching about God, for Hermann Steinhoff was not a Christian. With the naturally religious element which had been in him when but a little child,

Wilhelm felt God in the green trees, in the warm sunshine, in the blue sky, in his own soul. Sometimes he wondered about him still, as he had so long ago, yet of God he had still but a hazy conception, as of some mighty, all-powerful being, whose great white throne was afar off from the touch of man. But his heart remained strong, loving and true, and through it he was never, perhaps, very far from the heavenly portals.

During the long evenings, after school was done, Wilhelm often indulged in a sort of nature-worship. He would then usually hire a skiff and row briskly up the Rideau, rejoicing in the calm beauty of its scenery. Sometimes he would make his trip serve two purposes, and would collect plants for botanizing.

At some distance from the city, the canal branched out into a small lake. At one side of this lake ran a high, hard road, forming

a ridge between the lake on one hand, and a deep, swampy gulch on the other. This depression was filled with marsh grass and weeds, cedars and spruce trees. Hence, the spot was enchanted ground to Wilhelm, for all sorts of swamp flowers grew there, and birds of many kinds flew among the branches. When bent on study, he would fasten his boat to a stone, spring across the road, and lose himself for hours among the birds, bees, bugs and weeds.

One evening he sat idly tearing apart a common ox-eye daisy, taking out each little floret, and examining it through a magnifying-glass. He was sitting at the edge of the road with his feet almost touching the calm water.

A light step, pausing beside him, caused him to look up. A man was standing there, a man who had blue eyes, and rather long, light brown hair that escaped in rings beneath a broad-brimmed hat. His clothes were neat, though threadbare, and he carried a satchel.

Wilhelm's eye went back, with a sort of fascination, to his face. It was strangely gentle and winning. Wilhelm had a vague impression of having seen it before. Then, before his mind arose one of the pictures in a church of the city, a representation of "that disciple whom Jesus loved." This man's face seemed to have come down from the canvas.

"You have quite a collection," said the stranger, pointing to the pile of weeds and flowers loosely thrown in the boat.

"Yes. Do you know anything about botany?" asked Wilhelm.

"A little. Have you a difficult specimen there?"

Wilhelm introduced a difficulty. The man sat down, and looked through the glass at a tiny particle of plant-life which the boy held on the point of a needle. He was able to explain the trouble in question, and Wilhelm's respect for this threadbare gentleman arose higher than before.

"Are you a professor?" he asked.

The stranger shook his head, with a smile. "My college course was never finished," he said. "I was forced to leave before I was even ready to teach public school. I worked then, with my two hands, to get money to put me through for my final examination; but an accident put that to a stop."

With his left hand, he slowly raised his right up. It was limp and useless, and beginning to grow small as if from paralysis. Wilhelm shuddered.

"I cannot write with my left hand," continued the stranger. "No one will give me work that can be done with it in other ways. But I still find myself able to do a little for Jesus. I do not complain now."

"How do you make your living?" asked Wilhelm with sympathy.

"I am a colporteur. I have just come in from a tour through Quebec, where I sold enough Bibles and other books to pay my expenses. Where I could not sell, I gave little booklets and papers. They are a few grains of precious seed sown by the way-side, you see."

Wilhelm was fumbling through his pockets. "I'm sorry," he said, "but I haven't a cent except enough to pay my boat-hire."

"Never mind," said the colporteur, with a smile. "I didn't stop to ask you to buy. I wanted to talk to you because you seemed so much interested in one of God's gifts."

He took up a spike of crimson cardinal-flower. "Have you ever thought," he said, "how good God is, to scatter so many beautiful things about us? Even a flower tells us of his love. So do the trees, the water, the sunsets."

He paused, and pointed towards the lake before them. "Is not that glorious!" he said.

It was shining like a sea of fire, veiled by a purple haze. Across it, in the far distance, the still more purple mountains arose like a low cloud above the horizon; and,

from their crest, the sun was taking his last look at the evening world. A crimson gleam, broken into ten thousand rubies, stretched along the surface of the water to the flower-laden boat at their feet.

"Yes, God is very good," mused the stranger. "Were one confined in a gloomy dungeon for ten years, one might form some estimate of his great blessing in giving us such a beautiful world."

"Yet many," said Wilhelm, "have been in just such dungeons for years, through no fault of their own, like that young Earl of March who was put in just because he had a claim to the throne of England. In what way did God show his goodness to them?"

The colporteur did not speak for a moment, and his face was gravely thoughtful.

"We are not prepared to say," replied he, "that such people did not learn glorious lessons, even in prison. God may have appeared to them so clearly there that they were enabled to rise above their environment, and soar to heights which they never could have attained otherwise. You know Paul suffered imprisonment, persecution of all kinds, such as few have been called upon to endure, yet he said, 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' He spoke well. In the development of character this 'light affliction,' in some cases, is mighty for good. The much tried man is often the strong man."

"Is that quotation from the Bible?" asked the boy.

The colporteur raised his brows in surprise at the question. "Why, yes," he answered; "do you not read the Bible?"

"Not very often," replied the boy, looking away.

"Have you one?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I am sure you could find many beautiful things there, if you choose to look; things beautiful, indeed, because they touch the heart-life, and beckon us ever to

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heights beyond. It seems to me that we can never understand the depths of love until we read it in the life of Jesus, and experience something of the feelings through which he has passed—nay, through which he is passing, day by day, in the trials of his loved ones."

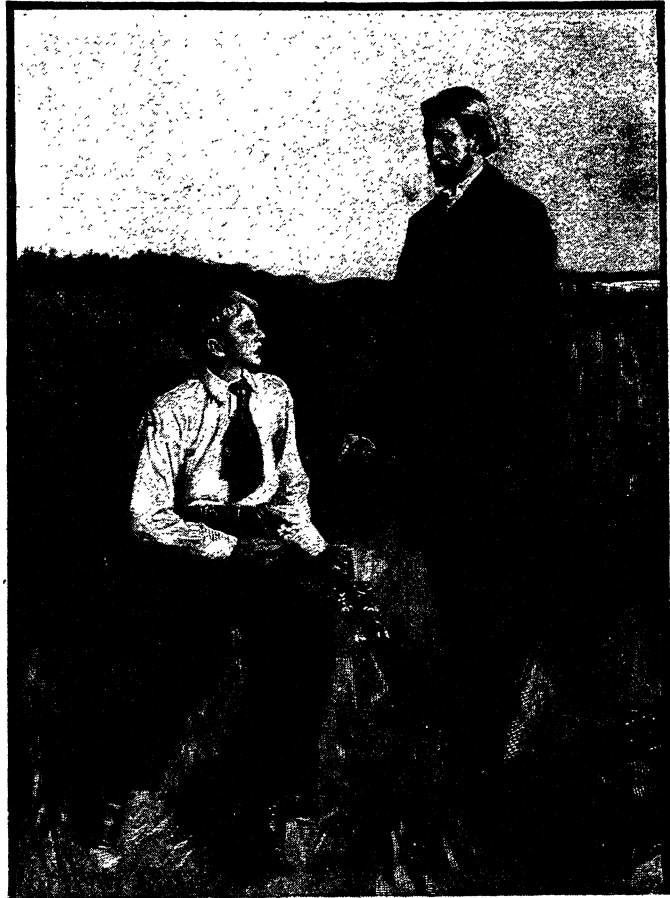
The boy sat thinking for a long time. No one had ever spoken to him in this way before. The sun had gone down, and the still water was growing dark. Over its calm surface a canoe, bearing men in white boating shirts, sped silently past. A whip-poor-will began to sing in a thicket, and its sad, weird cry aroused Wilhelm to the consciousness that it was almost night. He arose and untied the boat.

"Come," he said to the colporteur, "get in, and I will row you down to the city."

In a few minutes more they, too, were speeding over the surface, now smooth as a mirror, and the soft splash of the oars fell like music on the still air.

The colporteur resumed the conversation. "I do not think any man who does not know Jesus can be truly happy. He loses much joy and rest in the present, and has no hope for the future. He is more likely to fall into sin and thus incur its painful consequences. He may live a strictly moral life, yet if strong temptation offers itself, he is much more liable to

yield than is the man who has Jesus, at all times, with him. It is a far more difficult matter to sin if one is even a little in touch with Jesus."



"Do you know anything about botany?" asked Wilhelm.—See page 9.

"I do not exactly understand what you mean by being in touch with Jesus," returned the boy.

"Perhaps I can explain it in this way," replied the colporteur. "I am almost alone in this wide world. I have no parents, no sisters, no brothers; all have gone to the

life beyond the grave, except perhaps one, and he is lost to me." He paused, and when he spoke again his voice had a lower, sadder cadence. "I once had a brother," he said, "but he left us, and never even wrote to us more. I came to the New World to search for him, but the land is wide, and the body is feeble. I cannot find him; I fear he, too, is dead."

Again he paused. Ah, had Wilhelm then spoken, had he told even his name! But he remained silent, and the word was not yet said which must have changed the lives of both. The colporteur turned to him with a smile whose sweetness shone even through the dusky twilight.

"But, dear lad," he said, "do you think I am really alone, that I am altogether lonely? Ah, no! Jesus walks with me, sits with me. I know he is there, and I can commune with him all the way. His presence makes me feel as though all the world is my family, for he loves all people—and can I help loving them, too?"

Wilhelm was listening with the deepest interest. "Does the Bible say that Jesus can be with people in this way?" he asked.

"Jesus himself has told us so," returned the colporteur quietly. "Before he died on the cross he promised that the Comforter should come to be with his followers. That meant that he himself should come in a new form, as the Holy Spirit, and so he is here now, to come between us and sin, if we will, to comfort and help us all the way."

"Do all Christians feel this way about these things?" asked the lad.

The stranger shook his head sadly.

"None of us feel it as we should," he replied. "We are too easily drawn away from him. I tell you,"—and he leaned forward in his earnestness—"if the personal companionship of Jesus were realized to its fullest extent by Christians, the whole world would be revolutionized! Oh, what suffering, what agony, would be spared people if only they kept close enough to him!"

Wilhelm said nothing, and the colporteur resumed: "My lad, this earth is beautiful, yet in it are those to whom the breeze is a sob, the fairest green field a desert, the brightest flowers a mockery. These people might have a heaven on earth—they choose to find a hell upon it!"

Wilhelm stopped rowing. "I do not understand you," he said.

The colporteur's tone was very tender, and the low, half-whispered words came with great impressiveness upon Wilhelm's soul.

"From God comes all true joy," he said. "God has told us he will dwell within us if we will give him room. According as God fills all our heart, according as perfect love fills it—for God is love—are we truly happy. All our noblest and best impulses come from the divinity that is within us. If we act ever according to them we are our best selves, we live the divine part of us. Were we to be wholly one with God, perfect in love, we might be in heaven here."

The colporteur's tones had grown ever more thrilling, and his eyes were glowing with the depth of his emotion. Through Wilhelm's heart, as he listened, had come a thrill like that caused by a strain of sublimest music. He leaned toward the colporteur with a face full of entreaty.

"Where is God?" he asked.

It was the old question that has silently risen from every heart since earth began. The colporteur looked into his face with tender compassion.

"Why, here," he said in a voice of quiet confidence; and Wilhelm started as though the bright wing of an angel had shot before him.

"Where?" he asked again.

"About us—in us," returned the colporteur, in the same voice of calm assurance.

"Then where is heaven?" asked the boy.

"Where God is," replied the quiet voice. "Could we but discern God fully, we would realize the bliss of heaven here and now."

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When Jesus spoke of the kingdom of heaven, I think he meant the life of the spirit. He spoke of it, you remember, as being within us, or above us. And is not the spirit-life truly the life above—above the things of earth?"

"Then where is the heaven to which the souls of the good go after death?" asked the boy again. His soul-life was stirring, and these questions were its cravings crying, "Give me meat! Give me drink!"

"I do not know," returned the colporteur, quietly. "But of this I am assured: it will be the state of seeing God—with no film between. The souls of the good cast off, with their bodies, every cobweb of earth, and see, then, face to face; know, then, heart to heart."

Wilhelm began rowing again. For some time he went on in silence. The lights of the city began to gleam afar off, and to send glimmering streaks across the black water of the canal. The colporteur had been leaning back in the end of the boat, with his hand over the edge, plashing in the water. He suddenly leaned forward and said, earnestly:

"What are you thinking about, dear lad?"

"I was just thinking that my heaven is pretty far off, I guess. I'm not very good, but I'd like to be better. All the boys feel so, too, I think, only they won't give in."

The stranger's face grew strangely bright, could Wilhelm have seen it through the gloom.

"My dear boy, this feeling is but Jesus himself calling you. Do not resist him. Draw closer to him."

"Why? He doesn't care about me, does he?"

"He loves you—loves you. God is love. He wants you to be his because he loves you. It pierces him to the heart to know that you are not loving him."

Wilhelm pondered. "How do you know this?" he asked.

"Because he died to show us his love. His feeling for us now is just the same as then. When one will die for you his love must be perfect."

Wilhelm rested on his oars a moment. "Well, it's a fact," he said at length, "that a fellow would be pretty mean who wouldn't think a little of him after that."

They were a boy's words, but there was reverence in them.

On they went again. They were nearing the boat-house. The colporteur almost whispered:

"Suppose you talk with Jesus a little while to-night about this."

Wilhelm made no reply. They got out of the boat, and parted, by the flickering light of a torch, with a warm hand-clasp.

Wilhelm was set a-thinking. That night he did pray for a realization of God, for the companionship of Jesus, and he felt happier than ever before. He dropped asleep wondering if he should ever again meet the gentle colporteur, and regretting that he had not even learned his name. He knew, however, that he should be able to recognize that saint-like face anywhere and under any circumstances.

CHAPTER III.

A CHANGE IN WILHELM'S LIFE.



THE years passed on. Time touched with gentle fingers the family in the white cottage, sprinkling snow upon the hair of the old man, coaxing Gertrude into the full-blown flower which the sweet bud of her childhood had promised, and ushering Wilhelm into the buoyant and hopeful period of early manhood. The young people were serene in the

apparent calmness of their lives, and, if Hermann was less confident, he kept his doubts to himself until he felt that he could do so no longer. The fact was that he had been losing money lately. Still, as of old, his chief aim in life was to leave to Gertrude such a fortune as would be likely to keep her from ever feeling the bitterness of want. With this in view he had entered into speculations which were proving unsuccessful. This was a terrible disappointment. Day by day he pondered on his lessening hoard, and considered means of reducing his expenditures. The cost of Wilhelm's education was the heaviest drain, yet for a long time Hermann shrank from the thought of taking him from school. Sometimes he would look at the two young people, as they sat talking together, and say to himself, "If I thought they would ever marry, I wouldn't do it. He should have his college course. But I cannot depend upon that. One can never tell what a woman will do;" and he would turn away with a perplexed air, muttering, "Gertie ought to have all that is left of it."

At last, one evening, the old man summoned Wilhelm to his private room, his little laboratory filled with bottles, mortars, half-finished machines, and chemical appliances of all sorts. He was sitting in his great arm-chair by the window, and as soon as Wilhelm entered he saw that there was something on the old man's mind. The black skull cap, which he nearly always wore, was awry, and the pale light of evening, creeping through the casement, cast an ashen hue upon his face, which heightened the despondent cast of his countenance. He motioned the young man to a chair.

Wilhelm sat down, and wondered what had come amiss.

"Wilhelm," said the old man, coming at once to the point at issue, "would you be greatly disappointed if you were obliged to leave school?"

Wilhelm looked up sharply. "I am quite

willing to leave at once if it is necessary," he said, quietly.

The old man tapped the arm of his chair restlessly and looked out over the tops of the garden trees. "I—I—the fact is," he said at length, "I have been losing rather heavily lately. Some speculations that I was induced to enter upon—the more foolish I—have failed, utterly failed."

Wilhelm understood now the worried, irritable air which he had noticed upon one or two occasions lately, in the old man's actions.

"Aye, Wilhelm," continued he, in a voice low and plaintive, rather than angry, "there are sharks, vultures—veritable wolves in sheep's clothing in this city! Aye," he continued, as if speaking to himself, "and they got around poor old Hermann with their blandishments and their fine words. They said to him, 'Hermann, will you not double your money?' and poor, simple Hermann fell into the trap."

Wilhelm took the old man's hand into his strong, warm grasp. "Grandfather," he said, "I am very sorry."

Hermann went on without looking at him. "Aye, aye, Hermann fell into the trap, but—" he paused, and turned a searching look upon the youth—"but do not blame him too severely for his foolishness, Wilhelm; he did it for Gertrude's sake. And when the crash came," he continued, "the old man went back to them and said to them, 'You have deceived me,' but they only laughed and said, 'Poor old Steinhoff! It was your own fault. Why did you invest so much if you feared to lose? We cannot help you.' Ah, well, Wilhelm," he concluded, "it has taught me a lesson. I shall trust still fewer in the future."

His voice sank to a whisper, and a tear rolled down his cheek. Wilhelm was thoroughly alarmed.

"Is the loss so very heavy, grandfather? Is there danger of our losing the home?"

The old man made an effort to recover

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himself. "No, no, boy," he replied. "With economy there is still enough left to keep Gertie and me for many years yet, but—but—" He paused and rubbed his hands over the chair-arms nervously.

Wilhelm divined what he would say. "I see," he said. "My school course is an expensive one. It will be better for me to make my own way now."

The old man nodded slowly. "Wilhelm," he said, "you have been a good boy. I wish I could afford to put you through; but," he added in a whisper to himself, "Gertie's fortune is going, and something has to be done."

"Indeed, sir," said Wilhelm, with emotion, "you have done too much for me already. I can never repay you for your kindness to me. I shall likely get a good situation at something soon. And remember, grandfather," he added, "in whatever circumstances I may be placed, my first thought shall always be of you and Gertrude. Wherever my home may be, there will be a home for you and for her."

"Thank you, thank you, lad. I know it," muttered the old man. "You were always a good boy, Wilhelm. Now then, find as good a situation as you can, and may prosperity go with you."

He waved Wilhelm from his side. "That is all I want of you now," he said. "Good-night, boy." And the young man left the room.

Wilhelm stopped school at once, and set out in quest of a situation. For the next three weeks he spent nearly all his time in going from place to place seeking for work. Finally he was glad to take the place of accountant for a large manufacturing firm, and when he at last sat down on a tall stool in his close, dingy little office, he felt as independent as a king on his throne. As the months went by, the constant addition of long columns, the writing of invoices and bills of account, grew often irksome. Every inclination of his mind turned towards

science and philosophy rather than to journals and ledgers. Yet he did not repine. He believed in doing with all his heart the duty that was at hand, so he entered into his monotonous tasks with a will, and still dared to hope that the future might bring with it something more congenial to his tastes. His faithfulness did not escape the notice and the commendation of his employers.

In the meantime he continued to study every night, and still felt that by concentration and persevering effort, he could accomplish much.

CHAPTER IV.

A DAY OF STRANGE OCCURRENCES.



O Gertrude, not an eddy had come with the current of life. She had now become the little housekeeper, and a pleasant sight it was to see the shimmer of her hair and the warm rose-bloom

of her face as it bent in sober interest over the crisp green salads or the soft white biscuits which her slender fingers often made for the dainty home table.

She seemed a part and parcel of Wilhelm's life. Together they walked down busy streets, or strolled through fields white with daisies. Together they went to church and sat with reverent faces, where the soft amber light from a great stained-glass window fell upon them. Hermann never went there with them. He noted their growing interest in things of a religious nature, and never attempted to interfere with their ideas in any way, yet he smiled at what he looked upon as a harmless and pretty delusion of young minds, and an excusable clinging to tradition of older ones.

Upon one occasion only had he crept within the portals of the church, and then Wilhelm and Gertrude did not know of it. It was at the time when they joined the professed band of God's people. Together they walked down the broad aisle among the crowds of new communicants. Together they knelt at the communion table, and acknowledged themselves followers of Jesus. Together they listened with a new reverence to the tones of the minister reading softly the words by which the Savior had instituted the feast of joy. And away up in the dim gallery, from the shadow of a great pillar, two old eyes looked down upon them, and an old heart was strangely moved, it knew not why. Then, after the service, an old, bent man hurried silently away, feeling unusually lonely upon this glorious Sabbath morning, for he was not one of these; he knew nothing of the spiritual rejoicing which these people professed. Hermann said nothing of his visit, and its emotion soon passed out of his mind.

The young people often talked of their grandfather's barren spiritual condition, and formed plan for securing even his interest in the worship which they were learning to love better every day; but when they attempted to speak of such things to him, they were invariably disappointed, for he ever put them gently aside, and would not listen.

So the time went by in which these two young people were united in thought, in aim, and in interest. Little wonder was it that they loved each other as few brothers and sisters, perhaps, do. To Gertrude, indeed, Wilhelm was ever the dearest, and best, and most respected of brothers. In Wilhelm, however, a different feeling was growing, with a power as awful as it was sweet, and one day he suddenly realized that he loved Gertrude more than he could ever love anyone else in all the wide world.

He and she had been out all the afternoon with a gay party of young friends who were roaming through a small wood in search of

flowers. Towards evening they became separated, in some way, from the rest, and found themselves in a wooded dell alone. They stopped to rest for a few moments on the bank of a gurgling stream which purred noisily below, winding its way over mossy stones and beneath tangles of bramble, and vines bright with red berries.

The girl was sitting upon the moss-grown trunk of a fallen tree. From the leafage above a flood of green gold burst through, seeming to form itself into a halo about her head. She wore a soft dress of white, and a bunch of wild roses was caught at her throat. Her eyes were raised thoughtfully to the glints of the blue sky above, and her tiny hands were caressing the little white dog that had crawled to her knee, with the sweet tenderness which marks the touch of every true woman towards that which is small, or feeble, or helpless. All at once Wilhelm realized that he loved her. He knew, too, that it was not the glamour of the place, nor the hour, nor even her radiant beauty, that had fallen upon him, but that he loved her for her noble womanhood, her gentle, joy-giving life, her tender, loving heart. He thought then that he must have always loved her thus.

He was sitting at her feet, and as he glanced up at her she caught a look so wistful, so pleading, that she started at its intensity, though she did not guess at its meaning. It reminded her of the look she had seen upon the face of the little lad whom she had gone to seek in the grimy, lower part of the vessel, so long ago. She mentioned the recollection to him. His face changed, the flush upon his cheek deepened, and the light in his eyes grew more intense. He arose and sat down beside her.

"Yes," he said, and a tremble of emotion was in his voice. "You became the guardian angel of the ragged little lad then. You have been his guiding spirit ever since."

She raised her head to look at him with a little deprecating gesture, and her soft,

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golden billows of hair almost swept his cheek. She dropped her little hand, like a warm, white rose-leaf, on his knee. It was an old habit of her childhood, and she thought nothing of it. Wilhelm's hand closed upon it, and he trembled.

Then speech came to him. He told her of his love in simple, burning words that were the utterance of his very heart. He asked her to be his wife. For one moment she looked at him with a startled expression in her gentle, blue eyes, then she dropped her head, and he could not see that she was quietly weeping.

"Gertrude," he pleaded, "will you not speak to me?"

She brushed her hands over her forehead with the little gesture that was habitual to her when she was troubled.

"Wilhelm," she said, with a tremor in her voice, "I am so sorry you care for me in this way. We have been so happy just as we were—and, oh, Wilhelm, I cannot give you the promise you ask of me! Don't you know you are just a dear, dear brother to me—and you deserve more than that in a wife, Wilhelm."

Her voice broke down. She bowed her head on her hands and sobbed. Wilhelm's face grew very pale. For a moment he sat as though crushed with the overthrow of his hopes, then he looked at her bowed head, and his face softened. Once more he took her hands in his.

"Gertrude," he said, "don't cry, little sister. Forgive me for distressing you, Gertrude. See, Gertie, listen. I will promise you that I shall never trouble you in this way again—unless," he added, in a low tone, "unless a time shall come when you may be willing to hear me."

"But," she sobbed, "I hate to have you hurt so, Wilhelm!"

"Never mind," he said, comforting her. "I shall always be a better man for having loved you, Gertie. You have been a great influence in my life, little sister. You have

always believed in me, Gertrude. Believe in me still. I shall try to be a good man, worthy of your trust. I shall try not to disappoint you."

He was trying to comfort her, but his voice had a hopelessness in it that was sadder than tears. Gertrude stood up, and dashed the tears from her face.

"Wilhelm," she said, "I cannot hear you talk like this. You are not thinking of what you are saying. To direct your life by what I or any other woman may think of you is not worthy of you." She paused, and her voice took a cadence softer, sweeter than that of the purling brook at her feet. "No, Wilhelm, my brother," she continued, "you will not disappoint your own best self. I know you will not. Your ideal of what is highest and noblest in life is independent of me, or of any human being."

Her voice dropped almost to a whisper, and into her eyes came the far-off expression which sometimes made her look as though she were gazing beyond the skies. "Dear Wilhelm," she whispered, "if you should never see or hear of me again, you would still be the best that you can be, for your own sake, and—God's."

He bowed his head, for her words had the effect, as they so often had, of directing his thought, not to herself, but to things higher than those of earth.

As she concluded, the merry laughter of the returning party was heard. In a few moments the bushes parted, and the young people, laden with gay trophies of the forest ramble, burst through.

"Well, I declare!" exclaimed one of the young ladies, "if this devoted brother and sister haven't been here all by themselves! We were wondering where you had strayed. Come, Gertrude, let me drape your hat with ferns."

The girls strayed off together, and Wilhelm followed with some of the others. As they passed out of the wood and took their way down the long white road that led to

the city, whose spires and pinnacles were now sparkling with the evening sun, some one else also emerged from it upon the opposite side, and took his way over a fence and across a green field. This was a lad perhaps fourteen years of age. His eyes were black and bright, his skin brown as a butternut, his smile merry. He wore a ragged felt hat, and trousers that reached to his knees. He had on no shoes or stockings, but his bare feet pattered bravely over hot sand and sharp stones, and trod luxuriously through the soft, cool green grass, dotted with buttercups. He was a thorough little street boy, shrewd, sharp, ragged and happy. He had lived mostly among men; he read the daily newspapers, which he sold at the street corners, and he knew something of politics. He saw and heard three times as much as the ordinary boy who walks in the usual paths of life, and his wanderings in search of work, of food, or of adventure, led him into all sorts of queer by-paths, and odd, out-of-the-way corners. This afternoon he had succeeded in finding an adventure.

He was laughing softly to himself, for he had been an unobserved spectator of the little scene between Wilhelm and Gertrude in the wood, and, as yet, he was inclined to look with a great deal of amusement, and, perhaps, a little contempt, upon all such displays of feeling.

"I guess Monsieur Adolphe Belleau got wan lesson dat trip!" he was saying to himself. "Ma foi! dey didn't know dey had an audience! Was it a mean trick to look on? But, no; Adolphe was dere first in de cool, grassy place. If de branches were not close enough, it was not at all a fault to heem. For why did dey come dere if dey wanted not to be seen?" He laughed again. "Well, it was better dan de theater, and Adolphe Belleau was de audience!"

He stopped, plucked a buttercup, and put it in his button-hole. "It's not so pretty as de hair of de lady," he said to himself.

"Pure gold, it was, very pritty. Heem, too, heem very handsome gentleman."

So saying, the French boy ran along, leaping over ditches and high fences, and careering gay little snatches of song to himself. Presently, as he crossed a green field, on the very outskirts of the city, he caught a glimpse of some one whom he thought he knew, just outside of the fence that bordered the road. It was a crooked figure, hobbling painfully along with a pair of crutches. Adolphe gave a shrill whistle. An answering whistle came back across the buttercups, and the owner of the crutches placed a very homely face, consisting chiefly of a wide mouth, and two great, wistful eyes, against the space between the pickets.

"Hi! I thought to myself it was you, Georgie," called the French boy, running towards him. "W'at are you doing here?"

The crippled lad looked wistfully at the blossoming field. "I was just wishing," replied he, "that I could get in there. The grass looks so cool, and my feet ache so to-day!"

"Oh, we'll feex dat all right," returned the other quickly. "I know a place w'ere de—w'at-you-call heem?—peecket is broken. I will help you t'roo. Den we will go and sit under de bushes."

He walked along inside of the fence, and the poor, weak lad hobbled along on the outside until the broken place was reached. Then Adolphe helped him through, and guided him over the rough, grassy ground until they came to a tall clump of bushes which grew beside a tiny rill.

"Now den, you can put de poor, sore feet into de cool water," said Adolphe, stepping in, and watching the little ripples curling about his own sturdy brown ankles.

The cripple sank down, with a sigh, upon a soft bank. "It is beautiful here," he said, "and you are very kind to me, Adolphe—so different from the other boys. Do you know," and he lowered his voice in

a pathetic whisper, "they call me, sometimes, 'bandy-legs,' and 'hop-and-go fetch!'"

"Dey do?" rejoined Adolphe, with emphasis. "Well, dey not do it if Adolphe Belleau is around. Dat's all I have to say!"

"What makes you so different?" asked the boy, looking at Adolphe with his great eyes full of wonder.

Adolphe reflected. "Why, I guess I caught any goodness I have from de kind doctor—Dr. Keith Cameron," he said. "Dat sort of t'ing is—is contagious, you know."

The lame boy nodded. He scarcely understood the long words which it was the French boy's pleasure to use occasionally, so he always nodded assent.

"Do you know heem?" inquired Adolphe.

Georgie's face brightened. "Know him! I should say I did!" he replied, with pardonable pride. "Why, he saw me on the street one day, and asked me about my knees; and then he came to our house."

"Talk about city missionaries!" remarked the French boy philosophically, "dere is not of dem one who can hold a candle to heem—among de heathens of dis city, at any rate."

He sat down, pushed his hat to the back of his head, placed a buttercup stem between his teeth, and put his hands in his pockets. He seemed to have something on his mind. Presently he jerked his hands out again in a very decided manner, and threw the buttercup into the stream.

"I am going to tell you somet'ing, Georgie," he said, "because you don't go around wit' de fellers, and you'll not tell, will you?"

"Never!" said the cripple, with emphasis.

"Well, den, it is wan secret. I have not told it to anywan more, except to dis same Dr. Cameron. You know de old house at 425 — Street, w'ere de boys sometimes go up in de loft to play 'Follow-your-leader'?"

Georgie nodded.

"Well, den, it is not empty, as we was t'ink at wan tam."

"Has somebody moved into it?"

"No. Hush! I will tell you all. Las' night, very late, I see a man, very ole, very bent, go down de street dere. Heem dressed very fine. I know he not belong to dat quarter. I follow heem away out to dat house. He goes in at de back; gets in, too, mind you, past all dose boards on de door. I creep into de shed. I see a red, very small light go up t'roo a crack. I climb up in de loft and look down. I see a room, wit' machines. Den I see de old man working wit' dem, and after while, so sure as my name is Adolphe Belleau, I see heem take from dem money—new bills. It nearly take my breath from me. I say to myself, 'Dis money not good, else he never work at it in dat ole house all barred up.'"

Georgie was listening in open-eyed wonder.

"Who is he?" he asked.

"I do not know," answered Adolphe, "but de police find out pretty soon, I guess. He is a man very ole, very t'in. He has a gray beard, and hair of gray dat trails out over hees collar. He wears a black coat, very fine, and on hees head he has a skull-cap of black, dat he did not wear on de street. Hees hands dey tremble very much."

"My!" said Georgie, "what did you do? Will he be put in prison?"

"I went to tell de police. I meet Dr. Cameron instead, so he tell dem, and take me wit' heem to de police station dis morning very early. As soon as dey get heem, dey will feex heem, sure."

Now, by a strange coincidence, it happened that this conversation was overheard by none other than Wilhelm Steinhoff. On leaving the party in the city, he had turned back in search of some spot where he might be quite alone. He felt that he did not care to see or talk to people this evening, and his feet, quite naturally, turned down towards one of his old botanizing haunts, the little rill that flowed through the buttercup-covered field. He lay down in the

shade of the evergreen bushes, and gave himself up to his own meditations. Presently he heard voices, but, perceiving that the new-comers were only two lads, dabbling their feet in the water, he paid no further attention to them. Then, in a vague sort of way, he realized that he had heard a few words which referred to something out of the ordinary. They were those relating to the making of the "not good" money. Without imagining that he was, in any way, playing the part of eavesdropper to anything of real importance, he continued to lie there.

Every word spoken by Adolphe, in describing the strange old man, came to his ear. What was there in them which caused him to start, with a sudden, keen awakening of every faculty? In vain he told himself that this was but the idle talk of a ragged boy. An indefinable horror seemed settling on his mind, for was not his grandfather, Hermann Steinhoff, also bent and thin? Had he not also trembling hands, and gray beard and hair? Did he not also wear a black coat, and, in the house, a black skull-cap? He tried to persuade himself that a dozen old men in the city might answer to just such a description, and yet, and yet—Wilhelm had a reason for having his suspicions point directly towards Hermann Steinhoff. Before his eyes came the vision of a strange occurrence, that had seemed to him, at the time, rather peculiar, but that was now fraught with a new and horrible significance. In vain he tried to think that it was but a trifling incident after all. It returned to him again and again, with awful force, with a poisonous breath of suspicion which he could not drive away.

Upon the night of the occurrence in question, he had been studying later than usual. At last, finding his eyes weary, he had put out the light and had sat down by the window to rest a minute before making ready for bed. It was a beautiful, calm night, and as he sat there looking out upon the waving

branches, and the lights twinkling like diamonds in all parts of the city, he fancied he heard the lower, outside door leading from Grandfather Steinhoff's laboratory, close quietly. A moment later he noticed a dark figure gliding along in the shadow of the trees. Snatching up his hat, he hurried quietly out, and followed on to the gate and out upon the shaded street. In a few moments the figure moving on ahead came out into the glare of a street-lamp, and Wilhelm saw that it was none other than Hermann Steinhoff.

Somewhat surprised that his grandfather should be making a journey out at such a late hour, Wilhelm resolved to follow, merely to see that no harm came to him. The old man went steadily on, seemingly with some object in view, towards the district of Lower Town, and, as the more forsaken portion of that vicinity was reached, the stillness was so marked that Wilhelm could hear the tapping of the old man's stout cane on the sidewalk. Perhaps Hermann, too, heard his following step. At any rate, he turned. Wilhelm happened to be immediately beneath a light. The old man recognized him at once, and came back towards him.

"What are you doing here, grandfather?" asked Wilhelm.

"Rather, may I ask, what are you doing here?" returned Hermann.

"Why," replied Wilhelm, "I saw some one leaving the house. I followed. The person proved to be you, so I came on to see that nothing happened to you."

The old man had started vigorously back towards home. "It's a pity," he said, "if I can't go out for a walk when I can't sleep. I'm not a child again yet, Wilhelm."

He spoke petulantly, and Wilhelm was willing to accept the explanation, though he wondered a little why Hermann should pass the beautiful residence streets above, and choose this lonely, forsaken locality for his walk.

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This evening, as the words of the little French boy fell distinctly upon Wilhelm's ear, every detail of that nightly adventure came back with condemning distinctness.

From the other side of the bushes he heard the French boy say:

"Now, Georgie, you'll no tell dis t'ing, because, you know, it mus' be kep' a grand secret, until de ole feller is caught."

"I'll not tell, sure, Adolphe, until you let me," replied the cripple.

"Now, den, we mus' go home," returned the other voice; "de dew she's fallin', and you'll have de cold, Georgie."

The cripple answered wistfully, "I'd like to stay here all night, Adolphe, along with you. It would be so beautiful to see the stars come out."

"But I mus' go home to Agnes," returned the French boy. "She is seeck, you know, an' not better yet."

"Very well, then; come on," said Georgie; and together they set out across the now darkening field, little dreaming of the uneasy mind they had left behind them among the bushes. As they disappeared, Wilhelm sat up, and once more tried to throw the anxiety from his mind. He reasoned with himself. "It is ungrateful, it is contemptible in you, Wilhelm Steinhoff, to let such a thing enter your mind! You dishonor your manhood by harboring such a sneaking suspicion."

But he could not satisfy himself. He could bear the suspense no longer. He must know the truth of this thing. He would go home at once and place the matter before Hermann. Then he would be sure. He got up immediately and took his way, with feverish haste, across the fields. The night winds blew softly, the stars came out calmly. But nature's balm brought no rest for his anxious spirit to-night. Truly, in the words of a great poet:

"We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live.

Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!

And would we aught behold of higher worth
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor, loveless, ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud,
Enveloping the earth."

CHAPTER V.

ADOLPHE'S REMARKABLE DISCOVERY.



HE manner in which Adolphe Belleau had happened upon his adventure of the night before, was somewhat as follows: Through the day he had been

working on the very outskirts of the city, and had been delayed until quite late in the night. Somewhat lonely, he was trudging along towards home with his hands in his pockets, singing merrily to keep himself company, when, just as he reached the commons, with the willow-shaded street running along beside it, he noticed the peculiar figure of the old man whom he had described to Georgie, and who happened, at the time, to be near one of the few lamps scattered along on the edge of the street. His appearance struck the boy. Altogether there was something strange in the presence of a man so old, so well dressed, and so business-like in his demeanor, upon such a street as this, at such a late hour, for it was verging upon midnight. Adolphe would follow, and see where he was going.

The bent figure glided on ahead, dimly, in the shadow under the trees; the boy crept along silently behind. The gay song was hushed, and the lad's whole being became focused in one idea — seeing. For the time he was all eyes. He saw the old man pause once and glance up and down the street. Adolphe stopped stone still.

The old man passed rapidly on again until he reached a passage leading in at the end of an isolated house. Adolphe knew the place well. It was a square stone house, with a partially open shed at the back. The door leading from this shed into the house was securely boarded up; so was every other door and every window. It seemed a very innocent structure, peacefully awaiting a new tenant. The passage into which the old man turned was a narrow one, sheltered on the north by a very high board fence.

Adolphe ran swiftly along and dropped down at the outer end of this fence. He was just in time to see the old man enter the shed, gliding like a dark shadow from without, into the darker shades of the blackness within.

Adolphe crept nearer. He heard a sound as of the cautious displacing of boards. Then a door seemed to creak. The boy's being was now resolved into one organ of hearing. Again came the sound as of boards, or a board, being gently shoved into place. What did it all mean? Was this man an old miser, entering here by night to secrete his bags of gold? Visions of buried pots and untold riches danced before the lad's eyes. He lay until all was still, then he silently entered the shed, and stood breathlessly ready to fly at the slightest warning.

He strained his ears to listen. There! A dull sound of tapping came faintly from within. This strange, nightly visitant was certainly inside the house.

Adolphe silently moved towards the door, and felt it cautiously. The rough boards were still there. He passed his hand along. Yes, the place seemed barricaded up securely as ever. How was this? Was this old man a wizard, that he could thus pass through barred and boarded entrances? There was some mystery here.

The boy listened again, and stared about in the darkness. Presently his sharp eye caught sight of a tiny ray of red light,

scarce larger than a thread, streaming out through the darkness above him, and visible through the interstices of a broken "loft." Adolphe would climb up and see. He had often gone up there before with the boys when playing "Follow-your-leader." His heart was throbbing until he fancied he could hear it. He slipped to the end of the shed and drew himself up by the beams and supports. Then he crept along until the little hole whence the tiny ray issued was accessible.

He placed his eye to it. The stone-work had cracked, and, at one point, the opening went clear through to the room below. Of a portion of this room Adolphe had a distinct view. It was filled with red fumes, and a pungent odor of chemicals came up even through the crevice. But what he saw distinctly was a part of a table, and upon it a variety of instruments of whose use Adolphe had not the slightest idea. Presently the old man came beside the table, and stood directly in view. Adolphe could not see the face very distinctly, but noted the summer overcoat of black and the round, black cap. The old hands, which were thin and trembling, were busied with the apparatus on the table, and, to Adolphe's great astonishment, he saw them take, from beneath a sort of press, what appeared to be a crisp, new bill. Like a flash it came upon the boy that this was spurious money. He almost caught his breath in astonishment.

"Whew!" he exclaimed to himself, "dat ole duffer knows how to make money. He mus' be a bad wan, no mistake!"

The old man below worked away, all unconscious of the bright eyes above that were eagerly watching his every movement. Meanwhile, Adolphe's acute brain was probing the consequences of all this, and revolving what his own course of action in regard to the matter should be.

"I ought to make a stop to dis leetle game," he was saying to himself. "De p'lice ought to know about it. Now, Adolphe

Belleau, what mus' you do? If you tell de p'lice somebody will pound you for it, sure. De aristocracy of de Champs Elysees, dey not make toleration for any wan who gets too intimate wit' de p'lice."

He pushed his cap back off his forehead, and drew his brow down in his dilemma.

"Dere's no help for it," he determined, "I mus' tell about dis. I'll run across de Champs, an' if dere's no p'lice about, I'll go on to de city above."

Cautiously he crept down from the loft, noiselessly he glided through the shed, and then his bare feet pattered off, swift as those of a young deer, through the dark, narrow streets of the quarter which he had called "de Champs Elysees." He began to feel quite important. It was not every day that he discovered a counterfeiter.

"Mebbe de p'lice will give me dollar for dis," he said, with business-like foresight; then, with a burst of patriotism, "But, if he don't, it will be all correc'. Adolphe Belleau can do so much as dat gratis for de sake of de state. I say, Monsieur Belleau, but you are to become of importance. You are jus' going to render a favor to de government. Mebbe you'll be on de civil service yet."

So saying he emerged from "de Champs," and sped through a long, narrow alley. At the end of it he came to a sudden stop, and an event happened which proved in the future to be of some importance.

CHAPTER VI.

DR. KEITH CAMERON.

LET us now look, for a time, upon this Dr. Keith Cameron, of whom Adolphe and Georgie had spoken in such glowing terms, a man who was destined to hold a rather close relation to all that concerns our story, and who became, somewhat un-

willingly, considerably involved in Adolphe's experience at the counterfeiting den. Let us, then, glance at him first in his home, then follow him on through his meeting with the French boy.

Upon Elgin street, but a few blocks down from the clatter of the business part of the city, stood a gray stone house of massive appearance. It was rather square and heavy-looking, perhaps, yet it had an air of dignity foreign to the turreted and porticoed structures about it. Across the front stretched a spacious veranda, whose roof was supported by gray granite pillars, the capital of each being formed of a solid slab of stone, fancifully carved with intertwining maple leaves, roses, thistles and shamrocks. Broad stone steps ascended towards the arched doorway. A few shrubs and overhanging chestnut trees bordered the walk leading to the steps, and a graceful naiad of white marble stood in a small fountain behind the shrubbery on either side.

Moreover — what a dignitary is title! — not a little of the imposing air of the place was due to a pretentious door-plate, on which was inscribed in bold letters, "Sir Allan Cameron, M. D." Now, be it said, Sir Allan Cameron was, at this time, no longer in the land of the living, nor had been for a period of some ten years. But the door-plate remained still.

The knight's fortune, as well as his practice, had descended to his son, Keith, with whom society was very well pleased indeed. So were the sick. Hence, on the whole, Dr. Keith Cameron might have been called a very successful man. In spite of the "posthumous" door-plate, for which his mother was responsible, Keith was a very sensible man, too, with a great, kind heart, and a level head.

Upon the evening of that night in which Adolphe made his discovery, Keith stepped out upon the veranda, buttoning up his coat, and looking dubiously, first at the sky, then at the little pools of water that lay in the

street; for it had been raining, and water-drops were still dripping from the points of the chestnut leaves, and trickling disconsolately down the faces of the naiads, like pearly tears. The sky was gray above, and ominous masses of cloud were crowding up the eastern horizon, but Keith did not hesitate.

Throwing back his shoulders, with that imperial dignity which suited him so well, he started off up the street, rejoicing in his strength and the full vigor of the prime of manhood. He was going, this evening, to visit his poor, and, when working among them, he seldom went in his carriage. It seemed that he could get closer to their hearts when he went unattended by any sign of wealth or luxury. And Dr. Cameron thought it no small matter to get thoroughly acquainted with his people. He aimed, not only at healing their bodies, but at touching their hearts and uplifting their minds.

After a brisk walk across the bridge and down the brilliantly lighted avenue of Rideau Street, he turned northward, and went on, on, into the vicinity of the poorest and most filthy part of Lower Town.

Do not wonder that this fashionable physician shrank not from such quarters. His heart was not smothered amid the blandishments of wealth and favor. He had been petted and courted and lionized by the most exclusive society of the city. He had ridden in his luxurious carriage to attend the Governor General at Rideau Hall, or to be present at her Ladyship's levees. With not less pleasure, but infinitely more, he now went, on foot, to carry hope and tenderness into the wretched halls of poverty.

He had many calls to make, and was delayed far into the night. Wearied in both body and mind, he was, at last, about to go home when he suddenly thought of Agnes Belleau, whom he had not yet visited, and whose case required much attention. He could not think of going home to-night without seeing her, so he turned

down a side street, and attempted to find a short way to her home.

His way led him into a broad and forlorn avenue, bordered by rickety houses, and almost destitute of light, save that of the stars above, and the reflection from street lamps in the distance. This desolate spot looked as if it had been intended, in some palmy day of yore, for a boulevard, for a few rows of straggling and neglected trees extended along it, reaching, as it were, their gnarled and ragged arms aloft towards a purer atmosphere than that surrounding the squalid houses below.

Keith followed a somewhat well-trodden path down the side of it, hoping to reach a cross street which might lead to the quarter for which he was in search. No such opening appeared. This locality was new to him. No one from whom he might inquire the way was in sight, and the sound of a rude voice singing somewhere, was the only definable noise that reached his ear.

He paused. The trees above creaked dismally. Dank vapors ascended from the sodden ground below. Keith almost shuddered with an involuntary horror of the place. He was about to retrace his steps, when some one sprang suddenly out from a hidden spot near him, and stood directly in his way, peering into his face.

Keith started and braced himself. This behavior was unusual. It was suspicious. Just such a place as this had often been the scene of robbery and crime. Keith was not a coward, by any means, but his pulse beat a little faster than usual. Then he smiled at his fears. This mysterious visitant from the gloom was surely but a mere lad. He was, at least, much shorter than Keith. Keith's surprise had magnified the danger.

Then a voice spoke.

"Are you de genteelman w'at 'tends our Agnes?"

"Why, Adolphe!" returned the doctor, "is it you? What is the matter? Is Agnes worse? Will you take me to her?"

"Yes—no—yes. Why do not you ask wan question at a time?" laughed the boy. "De saints preserve us! but you remind to myself of old Madame Benoit. She say, 'Good-day, Monsieur Belleau; how pretty you do look to-day!' Monsieur Adolphe, he say, 'Good-day, Madame Benoit,' politely, so. Den she say, 'Mademoiselle, your sister, is she well?' Adolphe he try answer, but she say, 'Have you been up to de city to-day? Will you run for me just wan leetle errand to de square of de market?' Very good. Monsieur Adolphe mus', of course, go for so polite a lady."

"Is Agnès worse?"

"Oh, but no! For why you not listen w'en I tell you so?"

"Then what do you want of me? I was looking for your house."

"I tell you den. I want to give you leetle peep-show, better dan de theater. Come."

"Nonsense, Adolphe! I have no time to waste. If there is a short way from this to your home, take me to it at once."

"But no, Monsieur, you come wit' me."

"But—"

"See, Dr. Cameron," interrupted the boy, seizing the doctor's arm, and lowering his voice mysteriously, "dere's deviltry in it, or call me no more Adolphe Belleau!"

"Well, then, tell the police."

"Tell de p'lice, w'en I find chance to get out of it! And let Adolphe Belleau get hees dear leetle bones broken for my pains! No, no! You see, de people in dis Champs Elysees, dey not like de p'lice. Dey very angry w'en anyone tell tales to dem about any'ing. Adolphe he tell de p'lice. Somebody find out about it. Adolphe he get t'rashed some fine day. But Dr. Cameron, he not have de privilege to leev near de Champs Elysees. He tell de p'lice—all serene, all very fair and good."

"What is it, then? Be quick, boy!"

"Come; it is not very far."

The boy was off, and Keith followed him.

half-curious, half-annoyed. Down a side alley, in and out between low houses, and through dark streets shaded with overhanging willows, they went. On and on, now one turn, now another, then across the common, until a close yard, back of a low, small, solid-looking stone house, was reached.

"Now, behold de Grand Opera House!" whispered Adolphe. "You and I will have de box seats. But, silent, quiet, no applause, mind!"

All was dark and quiet about the house. Silently Keith and his guide crept up to it, Keith wondering if he were not being made the victim of a practical joke. Into the shed they went, but no ray of light appeared. Then up on the loft; not a sight or sound of life was about the place.

"I guess de ole feller has skipped," whispered Adolphe. "He was preeety quick about it."

After a long and fruitless wait, the two came down, and proceeded back towards the "Champs Elysees," Adolphe describing vividly, meanwhile, the scene which he had witnessed.

"You are not playing a trick upon me, are you, Adolphe?" asked Keith.

"For sure no, Monsieur," declared Adolphe emphatically. "For w'at reason would I play on you a treeck, or tell to you lies?"

The lad spoke in such a tone, and with such a genuinely indignant air, that Keith knew he was telling the truth. Moreover he had heard, lately, rumors of the circulation of counterfeit bills.

"Believe me, Monsieur," continued the French boy, "I was on my way to tell de p'lice w'en I meet you. I t'ink more wise, more safe, for you to tell dem."

Adolphe paused at the door of a low, rather respectable-looking cottage, with his hand on the latch.

"Your evidence will be called into the case anyway, Adolphe," said the doctor, quietly. "Come to my house the first thing

in the morning, and we will go together to the Police Department."

"Yes, Monsieur," said Adolphe, without further remonstrance. When Dr. Cameron spoke in that way he could not choose but obey. Moreover, he had unlimited confidence in Dr. Cameron's judgment as to what was best in all things.

Together they entered the cottage. Dr. Cameron found that the girl was improving under the care of the woman who occupied the other part of the house, and who stayed with Agnes constantly when her brother was out. Keith had once urged upon the girl the advisability of going to a hospital, but she had persistently refused.

"Dey would not let Adolphe stay wit' me," she said, weeping at the thought of separation. So Keith had consented to her remaining where she was. The affection between this brother and sister was a beautiful thing, and the very strength of that love which Agnes bore for her younger brother helped her in the recovery from her long, painful illness.

As Keith left the house, his mind reverted again to the strange story which the French boy had told him. He felt that he must place the affair at once with the authorities. Then he would be conscience-clear. But his heart was very sore. The sin of the old man, as well as the suffering which now must certainly follow, cut him to the heart. "Oh, I am weary, weary of sin and its consequences!" he said to himself. "Turn where one will, it is still there." He thought of this old man until he almost seemed to see him, hiding there in the darkness, to work his deed of shame. Alas! was not this man but one of the myriads of earth who, in different ways, were working away for the deception of mankind, well content if the outside world might pass by, mistaking the false for the true?

Why, why were not these men conscious that the fruit of their work must finally injure, not others, but themselves; that the

greatest crime they could commit would be the wasting of a life which God had created? Ah, what awful results flowed from a mistaken conception of that which is worth securing in life! How the glamour of the search for wealth, for fame, for selfish advancement, dazzled men's eyes, making everything of that which was only perishable! The inner life, the character,—what of it? Let it alone, since it is hidden. The present is sufficient unto us. Let us eat, drink and be merry! Never mind the divine nature in us! Let it go and give place to a devil! Let us amass the treasures of this world, that all men may point to us and say, "There is a successful man!" "There is a learned man!" "There is a clever man!"

Keith would have been one of the last to decry the pleasant things of earth in this line. He believed in having comfort and beauty in our homes. He believed in money earned honestly. He believed in the acquirement of knowledge, and in the skillful use of a clever brain. These things were good. It was both lawful and honorable to pursue them. But this must not be done selfishly. A man must not strive for the sake of setting himself upon a pedestal, but in order that he might become of the greatest possible use to the greatest possible number of people in the world. This was one of man's highest privileges. Keith was sure of this. He regarded money, talent, brain, as sacred trusts, not as excrescences of self. Keith's mind would bow, with the profoundest reverence, before the most obscure individual whom one pointed out as good. "Behold," he would say to himself, "an unselfish man, a man of character." And he would feel as though the sight of this man had brought him nearer God.

When he reached home that night, he threw himself down upon his bed, but for a long time sleep would not visit him. He dreaded to expose this trembling, aged man. He wondered what the effect would be upon

the old, shattered nerves. Yet the thing must be done.

At last he fell into a heavy sleep, and, as had been arranged, early next morning he and Adolphe proceeded to the office of the Chief of the Police Department, and laid what information they possessed before Chief Watson.

During the day the house was examined, and everything found to be as Adolphe had stated. Then the barricades were carefully replaced, and the ferreting out of the case given to a little detective by the name of Sanders, who at once proceeded to take active measures for the detection of the culprit.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ESCAPE OF HERMANN AND GERTRUDE.



WHEN Wilhelm came to the gate of his home that evening, after his visit to the field, lights were already glimmering from the windows. The place looked inviting and home-like as ever, yet to-night he feared to enter it. It seemed

as though a terrible pall were hanging over and about it. He could see that Gertrude was standing in the door.

"Where is grandfather?" he asked, as he neared her.

"In the laboratory," she replied, with a smile.

He went on up the stairs. She noticed how haggard was his face, and withdrew with a sharp pang at her heart, for she attributed it all to her refusal of his proposal.

On reaching the door above, Wilhelm hesitated a moment, then knocked with a sudden decision.

"Come!" called a weak voice.

Wilhelm went in.

The room was filled with retorts, mortars and other chemical appliances. Bookshelves, filled with scientific works, were about. Hermann, wearing his black skull-cap, was sitting in an easy-chair. A paper, upon which he had been making computations, was before him. He looked up with piercing black eyes from beneath shaggy eyebrows.

"I tell you, Wilhelm," he said, tremulously, while a triumphant light beamed from his countenance, "I'll have a fortune for Gertrude yet! Yes, she'll be able to shine with the greatest lady in the land! My last two inventions are nearly completed. There'll be fortune for you both in them, maybe."

"Yes?" said Wilhelm, absently. "You haven't told me of them."

The old man leaned forward, and, raising one bony finger, said in an impressive whisper:

"No, because I wanted to be reasonably sure of success before telling you. It goes to my heart to see young hopes dashed. You know, Wilhelm, how often I have hoped in vain. But this time I have little to fear. There is just one trifle in each necessary to perfect them. I am telling you this, Wilhelm, so that you may, perhaps, be able to assist me in ferreting out this little catch which still bothers me."

"What are these inventions?" asked Wilhelm, still in the same absent-minded way. He was wondering how to broach the thing he feared.

"My inventions? One is for the better ventilation of large audience halls; that is a fortune in itself. The other is for making brick out of common clay; that will be a priceless boon to this country, as you may readily see."

Wilhelm looked at him sharply. Surely this enthusiastic old man, innocently carrying on his experiments here, absorbed, mind

and soul, in his innocent work, could have no crime on his conscience. No! Hermann Steinhoff must be innocent. Wilhelm had done him a great wrong in having harbored even a doubt of him.

A burden seemed to roll off the young man. The cloud left his face. He smiled, and listened with interest to a description of the "inventions," which, like many other ideas of the old scientist, seemed exceedingly plausible; so surprisingly so, in fact, that Wilhelm recognized the possibility of their completion.

"You are very happy in your work, grandfather?" he remarked.

"Why, bless your heart, yes!" replied the old man. "If I had the faintest idea of ever reaching heaven, I'd want it to be one big laboratory."

Wilhelm smiled sadly. He knew very well that Hermann Steinhoff had no belief in the after-life.

"There's an old man in Lower Town," he said, "about your age, I should judge, who, it seems, has been trying experiments of a different nature lately. If what I have heard is true, which may not be, a detective is now on his track. He is a counterfeiter."

The words had scarcely passed Wilhelm's lips, when he sprang up in horror.

The old man was leaning towards him with uplifted hands. His pallid face was the color of ivory. His eyes were glaring with unnatural brilliancy, and his mouth had fallen open in terror. But for the lurid, glaring eyes, Wilhelm might have judged him frozen in death.

"What is the matter, grandfather?" he cried, seizing him by the shoulder.

The old man staggered to his feet, and grasped Wilhelm about the neck.

"Wilhelm," he said, in an agonized whisper, "help me to get away! I did it for Gertrude's sake! Don't let them get me! The disgrace would kill her! Save us! Save us!"

Every word fell like a blow upon Wilhelm's heart. A momentary revulsion of feeling for this trembling old man seized him. He struck the tottering form from him, without realizing what he did. The old man's head hit against the corner of a shelf, and a thin, crimson stream trickled down the marble forehead. Wilhelm sprang forward.

"Oh, what have I done!" exclaimed he, and, with a sudden reaction of emotion, he caught the old man in his arms and pressed him to his breast as though he were a little child.

"Oh, grandfather!" he cried, "how could you — how could you do it? How, in the name of mercy, am I to save you now?"

"It was for Gertrude's sake!" replied the old man. "I thought my imitation so true that it would not be discovered. I never dreamed of danger otherwise. I wanted to save all the money I could for Gertrude!"

Wilhelm was white as death. He had loved and trusted this old man, and he was proving unworthy of trust. Moreover, this thing would bring disgrace and sorrow to Gertrude, who loved him and trusted him still more. How could she bear it? Wilhelm's whole being was fairly swayed with conflicting emotions. He felt as though all things were slipping from beneath his feet.

Meanwhile, Hermann Steinhoff was thinking deeply. A brighter look was stealing over his face, and his body seemed to be gaining strength.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, at last. "We will escape them yet, Gertie and I. Give us this one night's start, and I believe we can do it. I know a thing or two yet. Wilhelm, do you go and make ready the pony and carriage."

"But Gertrude — you will not take Gertrude!" said Wilhelm.

"Certainly," returned Hermann. "I will

tell her to get her things together at once. Now, get the carriage."

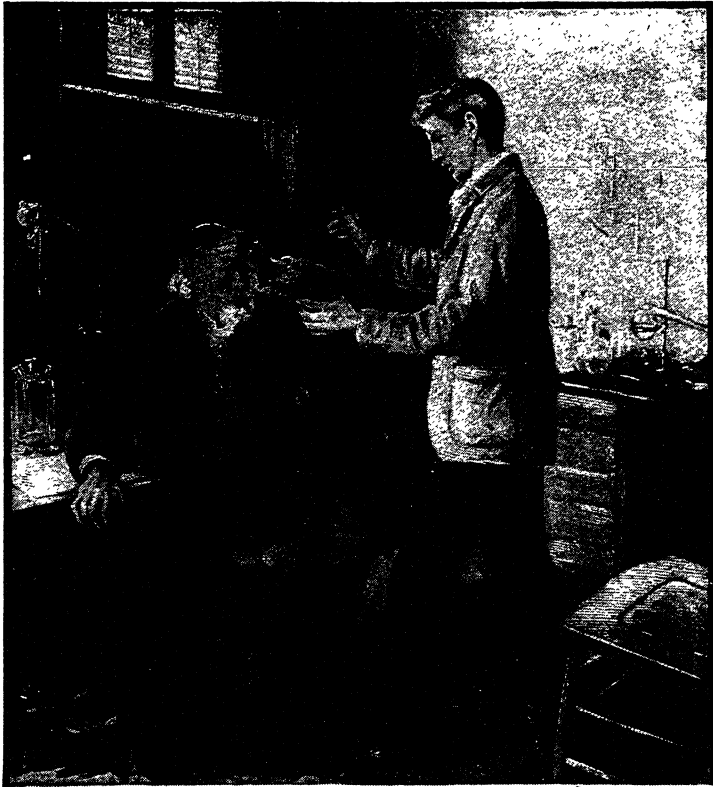
Wilhelm, half-dazed, went out to do the old man's bidding. For the time he was incapable of thought or of reason. He was conscious only of a terrible calamity hanging over Hermann and his granddaughter, and of a wild desire for their escape. He acted with feverish haste and as if in a dream. It seemed as though it was not he, but some one else, who was harnessing the horse and arranging the carriage robes.

In the meantime, Hermann had apprized Gertrude of the fact that she was to gather her clothes together immediately, in order to set out upon a long journey with him. More than this he would not tell her, and the wondering girl hastily collected her wardrobe, with a strange sense of fear at her heart.

When Wilhelm entered, the old man was sitting with his head bowed on his hands in an attitude of greatest dejection. He looked up and tried to speak, but the words would not come. At that moment he was experiencing to the full the retribution that is the inevitable consequence of wrongdoing. At last he broke down utterly and wept.

"Do not despise me altogether, Wilhelm!" he said, brokenly.

The young man knelt beside him. "Grandfather," he said, "this thing has been a great evil, but there is forgiveness for you still, if you will lay hold upon it."



"What is the matter, grandfather?" he cried.—See page 28.

The old man shook his head quickly. "It is not for that I weep," he said, "but for the ruin and desolation I have brought upon my little girl, and the sorrow I have caused you, lad. For myself, my evil deeds die with me. Yet—" He paused and looked at the young man somewhat wistfully,—"Keep your religion, lad. When men are sincere in it, it seems to keep them

straight, aye," he added, half beneath his breath.

Wilhelm knew not what to say. He was thinking of Gertrude. "Do you not think it would be well to leave Gertrude some place here?" he asked at length.

The old man's face brightened. "A few moments ago I gave her her choice," he replied. "She chose to come with me, bless her!"

"At least, grandfather," pleaded Wilhelm, "will you not tell me where you are going?"

The old man did not answer his question. "Go, go! See if Gertrude is ready," he said.

The young man left the room and knocked at Gertrude's door. She came out into the hall, and he saw that she had been weeping. But she was very calm.

"Wilhelm, something dreadful has happened!—I know it," she said. "Tell me what it is. Nothing can be so terrible as this suspense."

He took her hands in his, gently, timidly, as though they were something sacred.

"I cannot tell you, little one," he said. "Gertrude, Gertrude, it may be long before I can see you again, but I will seek you to the ends of the earth! Gertrude, even at this farewell, can you give me no hope?"

"Wilhelm," she answered, in a low voice, "seek me as my brother."

The quiet words sank upon Wilhelm as a death-blow to his short, sweet dream of ever possessing Gertrude as his wife.

"I will, I will!" was all his reply, "my sister!" He kissed her once, and they two went down the stairs together and out into the calm night, where the light carriage stood waiting in the darkness. Hermann was already there. For one moment the old hand rested in Wilhelm's young, warm grasp, then the horse was started, the wheels rattled on the driveway, and Wilhelm was alone, crushed, almost beside himself, with the weight of this, his first great trouble.

Mechanically he turned the key which

Hermann had left in the door, and put the bunch in his pocket. Mechanically he walked out upon the street and turned his steps towards the house in Lower Town, whose location he had overheard Adolphe describing to Georgie. He did not know why he was going there. He felt dazed and almost delirious. He had not been as well as usual lately, and the occurrences of this day had wrought upon him terribly. He had a sort of vague consciousness that he was going thither in the hope that all might not be as bad as he imagined. He would see for himself, at any rate. In the excited condition of his mind, it never dawned upon him that he was about to do a very dangerous thing, because, in all probability, the house was even then being watched. His brow grew ever more feverish, his pulses beat painfully, his steps grew faster and faster.

Ah, here was the common, here was the willow-shaded street, here was the lonely house! He examined the barricade at the back, and, knowing that it could be easily removed, was not long in discovering that a lift upward and outward was sufficient to remove it in one piece. He then felt the padlock. Mechanically his hand sought the bunch of keys in his pocket. He tried one key after another, and at last one turned. He went in and struck a match. A lamp was on the table near. He lit it, and closed the door without realizing that he did so. Then he looked about him. Ah, yes, there was the apparatus, curiously formed, which, in all probability, had been used for the old man's criminal purpose. About were other instruments, evidently used for more innocent ends.

Wilhelm sat down and bowed his head upon his hands in agony. Cold beads of perspiration came out upon his forehead. He prayed for strength, and arose, outwardly calm. His brain began to work more clearly. In one flash he saw what he had done; that in assisting a criminal to escape

he had become an accessory after the fact. Yet nature called out for the safety of his loved ones. He felt that he could not inform upon them. "I have broken the laws of my country in what I have done," he thought, "but I did it innocently at the time. The question is, what is my duty now?" In spite of himself he felt a sudden, wild gladness that even then old Hermann was speeding fast, perhaps, beyond the reach of justice. He could never do this again, Wilhelm thought. Perhaps it would be the turning-point in his life. Perhaps, through Gertrude's influence, he would at last become a changed man. As for himself, he was amenable to punishment. Truly, his part in the culprit's escape might never be found out, yet it would be a terrible secret to carry about with him. He felt that he could not be conscience-clear unless he delivered himself up. With the sudden resolution which marked all his actions when but one course of right seemed ahead of him, he determined to do this. But he could not do so until the poor, old, sinning man had had time to escape. In many ways Hermann was shrewd and crafty. He would probably find some place of safety.

These conclusions followed each other through Wilhelm's mind with amazing rapidity. Having laid out his own course of action, he turned to go out of the door, when it suddenly opened. A tall policeman, and a small, dark man, who afterwards proved to be the detective, Mr. Sanders, appeared.

"You are my prisoner!" said the policeman, quietly laying a hand on his arm.

Wilhelm turned pale as death. There was no need for him to think twice to understand what his discovery in this place must mean. The detective observed his changing color, and quickly noted it as an evidence of guilt.

The young man made not the slightest effort of remonstrance as his captors led him away. He went silently, almost hopelessly; yet determined, when the right time

came, to fight dearly for his liberty. Neither would he answer any question in reference to the old man whom the French boy had seen. Thoroughly exasperated, the detective left him, and began to prosecute his inquiries in another quarter. In a day or two he had succeeded in learning the history of the Steinhoff family, and had found out about the disappearance of Hermann Steinhoff and his granddaughter.

A keen search was immediately set afoot, and a description of the fugitives was sent to every available point. At last it was learned that an old man and a fair-haired girl had taken passage at Montreal, and had set sail for Europe. A message was sent ahead to Liverpool, but, as it happened, the vessel was disabled in a storm, and obliged to put into port in the south of England. There the supposed fugitives landed and were speedily lost sight of. The search was, accordingly, dropped for the time at the capital, and Hermann Steinhoff never knew of the coincidence which had, perhaps, saved him from a death-bed in a prison cell.

In the meantime, Wilhelm had been placed in the city jail to await his trial. For a few days a sort of apathy seized hold of him. He scarcely realized, and cared still less, where he was or what became of him. Then the fit of illness which had been creeping upon him, hastened by the shock, rendered him powerless in mind and body. For weeks he lay upon his bed, sleeping, for the most part, heavily. However, he was well cared for, and at last began to improve slowly but surely.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW DOROTHY CAMERON FIRST FOUND ADOLPHE.

KEITH CAMERON had a very lovable and very loving little sister. Her name was Dorothy, and, in all that concerned doing for others, or helping them

in any way, she was as earnest as he. Very often she accompanied him on his rounds, and occasionally she made little trips of discovery on her own account. In fact it was she who had first brought to his notice Adolphe Belleau and his sick sister. Keith remembered the occasion very well.

He had arisen quite late one morning in the early summer. The whole earth seemed clothed with beauty. The grass was green, and the mountains were deepening in the glad, fresh tints of springing verdure. As the bright sunlight shot in past the crinkled leaves of the chestnut trees, and fell in bars of crimson and gold through the stained window upon the physician's face, he awoke with a start, feeling that he had overslept himself. Hastily he dressed and descended the broad, softly-carpeted stairway. The rest had breakfasted long before, but the table, with its cut-glass and silver and snowy napery, stood awaiting him. Very dainty indeed it looked, with its loosely-arranged bouquet of pink carnations and maiden-hair fern in the center of the table.

A stately woman, in a trailing, gray-blue morning gown, stood near, glancing through the columns of the "Evening Journal." Her face was handsome, but rather cold in outline. She looked up with a smile as Keith entered.

"Good-morning, mother," he said.

"Good-morning, Keith. You were out very late last night, were you not?"

He sat down and arranged his napkin.

"Quite late. I was among my poor," he replied, simply.

Lady Cameron shrugged her shoulders.

"Why you will persist in prowling about among those people is more than I can fathom," she said. "The worst of it is, you are making Dorothy as foolish as yourself about it."

"Where is Dorothy?" he asked.

"Bless me, I don't know. I can't pretend to keep track of the child. She went out for a walk, half an hour ago, I think."

Lady Cameron went on with her paper, and Keith ate his breakfast in silence. Then he went to the Parliament Buildings to look up a reference in the great library. He often went there to read. The lofty chamber, with its beautiful wood-carving, its galleries, its book-lined walls, its secluded nooks, all illumined by the soft and diffused light falling softly from the great dome above the marble statue of the Queen, had ever a charm for him. There was inspiration in its atmosphere; there was rest in its seclusion.

When he had found the information he desired he took his way out again, through the long, silent corridors, which, lined with the painted faces of the speakers of the past, seemed continually to unfold page after page of the country's history. He stepped out into the fresh air, through the main entrance, and stood for a moment proudly regarding the scene before him. It was a scene worthy of any true Canadian's pride, worthy of the country's capital. Below him, green as emerald in the morning sun, stretched the spacious lawns, with their terraces, drives and clumps of gay flowers. At either side the stately eastern and western blocks of the buildings proudly reared their heads in massive, yet graceful, beauty. Beyond could be seen the trees of Wellington Street, and glimpses of the fine stone edifices which extended far on either side, forming a fitting frontage for Canada's most noble pile of architecture.

A light wind was blowing from the west. It was very fresh and cool. Keith would take a turn in the bracing air before going back to his office. Turning to the right, he passed around the corner of the main building, and went on to the brow of the precipice beyond. It was a scene of which no inhabitant of the capital could ever weary. About stretched the spacious grounds at the rear, with their curving walks and perfectly trimmed hedges. Immediately below, the sheer walls of the cliff fell away to the river,

its rugged side broken only by the blossoming shrubbery, and by the Lover's Walk, shining here and there like a thread of white through the trees, about half way down the steep escarpment. At the base of the cliff ran the broad river, its swift current curling into foaming waves and eddies, and sparkling brightly in the sun. Beyond, the roofs of Hull stood clear and distinct, in thin, smokeless air. Far up the river a railway train puffed its way along; and below, the Falls of the Chaudière, the "Big Kettle," boiled in mad confusion. Keith could plainly see its wild waters, white with foam, and its heavy roar fell distinctly upon his ear. He turned from it to look for a moment upon the mountains of Quebec, just across, with King's Mountain rising, as the father of the chain, black against the sky. His eye followed them as they became smaller and smaller, purple and more purple, in the long distance, following the winding, glistening river below. Then he ran down the steps to the cooler shades of the Lover's Walk.

For a moment he stood leaning upon the railing at the edge of the lower precipice. Above him a flood of green-gold light broke through the tender foliage. The trees farther down were just tipped with brightness. "What a glorious world!" he thought.

Then his eye fell upon something—a very strange and interesting something, yet pitiful withal. It was a little cabin, built in the fashion of a house-boat, upon a rough raft, and anchored to a sort of reedy island. This island was one that had been very unstably formed by the sawdust, which, in coming down from the great mills, had lodged, along with other sediment, until a low, spongy bank had appeared above the water. Some straggling bushes grew upon it and a few reeds, but water lay all about the stems. There was not a foot of solid ground upon which a human being could stand. On either side of the little island the current ran very swiftly. The

small house, therefore, could boast of no yard, save the logs of the raft. It was, probably, the home of some poor creature, who sought, in this way, to avoid the payment of rent. Fuel, too, would be supplied by the odd bits of driftwood floating down from the mills.

At one end of the cabin a rude, flat-bottomed punt was tied up, and presently a young girl and a boy, who looked, at this distance, almost a child, came out and got into it. The girl sat at the end, where there was, evidently, no rudder, and the boy took hold of the clumsy oars. Keith watched it rather anxiously as it moved out into the swift current and was rapidly carried on, sometimes being almost completely whirled around in an eddy.

The boy looked scarcely large enough or strong enough to manage the punt, yet he seemed to be making an effort to bring it across the current to the shore. In this he was making but slow progress. Slowly, slowly it came, now gliding with some ease across a comparatively smooth spot, now whirling half way about, or darting, swift as an arrow, down the stream and out of its course.

Keith watched with growing uneasiness. Suddenly his heart gave a wild bound. There was something familiar about that girlish figure sitting in the end of the boat. He looked again. Yes, it was Dorothy! Dorothy, with her pink dress and brown cape, and her brown hair flying in the wind. Keith paused no longer. He did not stop to consider that he could get no boat nearer than the end of the canal, and that, to reach it, he must traverse almost the entire length of the Lover's Walk. He was off like the wind. He had not practised cricket and base-ball fifteen years for nothing.

At a sudden curve of the walk he ran into a portly old member of Parliament, who was quietly taking a morning constitutional. The old gentleman's tall silk hat flew off one way, his spectacles another, but Keith did

not stop. The astonished member stood gazing after him in stupefied wonder. Farther down, he dashed between two students who were sauntering along, reading in the shade. They immediately ran after him to see what was wrong, and a gendarme, who appeared on the scene, followed suit. But Keith outran them all. By this time he had run down the stairs, secured a boat and was madly pulling out. His astonished pursuers did not know what to think of his actions. Yet there seemed to be method in his madness.

A few sturdy strokes drew him in sight of the old punt, and, to his intense relief, he saw that it was out of danger, gliding easily along in the calm water close to the shore. Dorothy recognized him and waved her hands, smiling, without the least sign of nervousness in the world. A moment later Keith was assisting her from the boat and putting a coin into the hand of the little boatman who had rowed her safely over.

"Dorothy, what does this mean?" he asked, as he led her away.

"Now, don't scold, Keith!" she said, with a pretty pout. "You can't find fault with your own pupil, surely!" and she caught his arm lovingly. Her face was full of enthusiasm. "Oh, Keith," she continued, "there's such a nice girl over there, but she's so sick, and they are very poor, and—"

"Easy! Easy!" interrupted Keith. "Give a man time to digest all this, won't you? Now tell me how you came to venture over there."

"Why, I heard the boy asking for some medicine in a drug store, and offering to run errands for it. But the man wouldn't give him either the work or the medicine. The little boy looked so sad, I asked him what was the matter, and he told me about his sick sister. I got the medicine out of my own money, and then—I did so want to see the girl! It wasn't very wrong for me to go, was it?" and the thoughtful gray eyes looked up pleadingly.

Keith looked down with the glimmer of a smile in his own. "Perhaps not wrong, but very foolish and venturesome, Dorothy."

"But I didn't know where we were going, Keith. I just followed the boy, Adolphe."

Keith stopped and looked at her a moment.

"Dorothy, you would venture in—"

"Where angels fear to tread," laughed Dorothy. "Now, Keith, don't finish the quotation, please."

He smiled. "I will talk to you further about this when we go home," he said. He then led her to tell about the little household on the raft—of how it consisted of a pretty French girl, seventeen years of age, and her brother; of how the girl had had work in a factory, but had become so weak that she could not do it quickly and was discharged, and of how since then they had scarcely had enough to eat. The girl, Agnes, indeed wanted but little, for she was very ill. But Adolphe almost starved in order that he might get things for her. Then the house was so damp, being upon the water, that Agnes' pain was aggravated—and Keith would see to her from this time forth, wouldn't he?

Just here it may be said that Keith did not disappoint his sister in her expectations. From that day the world became brighter for Adolphe and Agnes Belleau. As Agnes refused to go to the hospital, she and her brother were removed to rooms in the cottage at which we first saw them, and the damp house on the river, with its marshy odors and chill mists, was quietly allowed to go to ruin. More than that, henceforth Adolphe had little lack of work, for, when other sources failed, the good doctor usually had some message to be run, or some job to be accomplished.

Well, then, to resume. When Keith and Dorothy reached home that morning, he drew her into the library and closed the door. Then he took her in his arms.

"Dorothy," he said, "never let me hear of your doing this thing again."

"Keith!"

"Don't you know how treacherous the river is? Not only on account of the current, but there are beds of sawdust in the more sluggish portions which explode sometimes. I myself once saw a boat overturned by just such an explosion."

"I know, Keith," she said, pinching his cheek. "but I didn't like to turn back when we got to the river. Anyway, I wasn't a bit afraid."

His face was very grave.

"See, little sister," he returned, "you must never go about alone in this way again. I say 'must,' and in this-thing I hope you will be willing to respect my wishes."

"Not even to help poor, sick people? They are so lonely sometimes. Are you angry with me, Keith?"

Keith drew the sweet face up to him and kissed it.

"No, Dorothy," he said, in the low, gentle tone that always went straight to Dorothy's heart. "Your heart is right in this matter. How old are you, dear?"

"Fifteen, on Monday. Why do you ask such queer questions, brother?"

"My little sister, will you promise me never to go off on a wild goose-chase like this again, without some older person with you, no matter how much you may want to go?"

"Yes, Keith."

He kissed her again. "Thank you."

"If only Octavia Edgar would go with

me sometimes!" mused the girl. Octavia Edgar was a very aristocratic young lady and a beauty. She was an intimate friend of the Cameron family, and had, conse-



Keith's voice joined hers.—See page 36.

quently, been marked out by the social world as the future bride of Dr. Keith.

"Have you tried her?" he asked, with a smile.

"Yes. She says it makes her morbid to see people in want and suffering. So she

gives money to the Sisters of the Church instead."

Keith almost frowned.

"Keith!"

"Yes."

"Why do the Sisters of the Church wear such horrid, loose cloaks, and long black veils that look so hot and uncomfortable?" She referred to a society of women bound together for purposes of charity and mercy.

"Why do you ask?" he inquired.

"Because I think there's something of the Pharisee about it. It looks as though they were saying, 'Look at me. I am not as other women are. I am religious.'"

Keith smiled. "No, it is not that," he replied. "These consecrated women have to go into many rough and wicked places. But even the lowest people have a sort of respect for those whom they look upon as truly 'religious.' The clothes these women wear show who they are, and thus act as a protection. Besides, these dull, black dresses are very serviceable and very economical, and you know the good Sisters have little money to spend upon themselves."

Dorothy looked enlightened. "Oh, I see!" she said. "Do you know, Keith, when I am quite grown up. I think I shall be a Sister."

A light like a gleam of sunshine broke over Keith's face. He drew his sister still closer to him, and hid his face in her hair for a moment, then he went abruptly out. When he returned, an hour later, Dorothy was at the piano, singing softly:

"Oh, to be nothing, nothing!
Only to lie at His feet
A broken and emptied vessel,
For the Master's use made meet."

Keith went quickly over, in his impetuous way, and placed his hand over the leaf. Dorothy looked at him in astonishment.

"As the writer of this meant it," he said, "it is probably all right. As it is often interpreted, it is all wrong. The Master wants us to be everything for him, because

he is everything for us: He wants us to be the very best of which we are capable. He does not always want broken vessels, but strong, useful vessels, filled with love. He does not want them emptied, except of selfishness and sin."

He paused and opened the book anew. "Sing this," he said. And Dorothy sang:

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.
To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill,
Oh, may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will."

Dorothy looked perplexed. "Keith, that does not mean that people have to do all in regard to their salvation, does it?" she asked.

"By no means," he replied, "but they have to do the choosing, the turning to God, who will separate them from sin. Now, then, I have but five minutes at my disposal. Sing this."

Her voice rang out again clearly:

"Tell me not of heavy crosses,
Nor of burdens hard to bear,
For I've found this great salvation
Makes each burden light appear.
And I love to follow Jesus,
Gladly counting all but dross,
Worldly honors all forsaking
For the glory of the cross."

Once more he turned the pages and stopped at a favorite. She sang, and this time Keith's voice joined hers:

"For the love of God is greater
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

"If our love were but more simple,
We should take him at his word,
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord."

"Now, Dorothy dear," Keith said, as she concluded, "suppose you study over these

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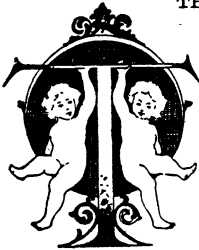
verses that you have been singing. There is a connection in the thought. Find it out if you can."

He went out, and Dorothy sat for a long time thinking, with her chin in her hand. At last she said to herself, "It's something about action, and burdens, and love. Love is the last, so I suppose it is the greatest thought. Why, of course! I see now! I love Keith. I would do just anything for him, and it would be no burden at all, but a pleasure. That must be the way people ought to feel towards God. Besides, I think I love all the people Keith cares for. I can't help it. Then, shouldn't a true Christian care for everybody, because God cares for everybody?"

Was Dorothy right?

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRIAL OF WILHELM STEINHOFF.



THE months dragged on slowly, in which Wilhelm gradually regained his health, and kept, for the most part, a suffering silence. Then came the time for his trial.

There was considerable excitement in courtroom circles over the case, but, in spite of Wilhelm's youth, and the spotless reputation which he had hitherto borne, there was but little sympathy for the handsome young prisoner. He was looked upon as a hypocrite and an impostor of the worst kind, and even his former friends began to forget the hearty candor and frank manliness which had ever made him a favorite among them. They were "really sorry he had turned out so. Who would have believed it of Steinhoff?"

On the morning of the trial the court

room was crowded. Wilhelm appeared at the bar, pale from illness and worn by mental suffering. Conscious of his innocence, he looked calmly and bravely over the sea of upturned faces, vaguely hoping to see one friendly countenance, one glance of sympathy, one heart-to-heart gaze which might tell him that even one believed in his honor. He searched in vain. People regarded him curiously, contemptuously, scornfully; nay, perhaps, one or two pityingly; but it was the pity with which one might look upon a Judas, grieving, not for the punishment of his sin, but for the sin itself. Wilhelm read all this in the countenances of the people below. He did not notice one little, round face, half hidden by a pillar, gazing at him with sympathy and remorse. Adolphe had crept in, and was saying to himself, "I wish I had kep' my nose out of dat ole place, for de bad wan has skipped, an' dat Wilhelm is not de wan at all." With, perhaps, the innocent instinct of childhood, the French boy read, in this young man's countenance, the truth which others were failing to find there.

Wilhelm's spirit rose in arms against the antagonistic temper which he felt round about him. He blamed the cold crowd for their want of penetration; he accused his friends of inconstancy. A spirit of defiance seized upon him. He folded his arms and looked down with stern face and compressed lips. The expression of his countenance was, of course, noted by the reporters, who remarked in the evening paper upon "the hardened face of the prisoner at the bar."

The calling of witnesses began, and an amazing array of them was produced. Little incidents, which were true yet harmless as the play of a child, were brought in, and pointed, with a poisoned meaning, to "ad" cate the guilt of the accused. Even the fact of his proficiency in all branches of science, and his practice of carrying on experiments with old Hermann, were brought in to serve

as a condemning evidence, while one witness deposed that he had once, quite late in the night, met Hermann and Wilhelm Steinhoff coming from the direction of the house in Lower Town. Wilhelm remembered the occasion well. It was the night upon which he had followed Hermann.

Adolphé gave his testimony impetuously, almost excitedly, yet every effort made to confuse him in his statements was unsuccessful. At the close of it, he electrified his audience by turning fiercely upon the judge.

"I tell you!" he exclaimed in the exceedingly broken English which he used when greatly moved, "you sentence heem over dere for prison, you was do great sin! Heem no wan w'at do mischief! Heem innocent, so innocent as you!"

He was, however, quickly called to order, and sat down, with flushed cheeks and flashing eyes. One grateful look he caught from Wilhelm, and the little brown face went down, to hide the tears that would not be checked.

Wilhelm was at last called upon to answer for himself, and a great hush settled upon the chamber. He began, in a low voice, his plea of "not guilty." For the first time he told his story, and told it with a consistency which the severest cross-examination failed to shake. "Your worship, and gentlemen of the jury," he said in conclusion, and in a voice whose tender pathos thrilled even the unsympathetic, "I have willingly, though not deliberately, if it please you, assisted in the escape of one whom I can scarcely choose but believe guilty of the fearful crime which you have attributed to me, as his confrère. To this I plead guilty, but to naught else. For this, which was, after all, gentlemen, but the impulsive following of the dictates of natural affection, I am willing to suffer the penalty. But in the other matter, my hands, thank heaven, are as innocent as those of a little child! You may condemn me. You cannot take away my innocence! You cannot bestow

upon me a guilty conscience! Gentlemen, I plead only for justice, the justice which our free and glorious land concedes to the weakest of her citizens!"

He sat down and a tremor of reaction succeeded the intense silence which had prevailed while he was speaking. But even those who had been touched by the simple directness of his speech, felt throughout that there was no hope. The evidence against him was too strong. His explanation of his presence in the old stone house had not been deemed satisfactory, and that, of itself, was held sufficient to condemn him. Besides, the lawyer upon the side of the prosecution was a man gifted with unusual eloquence, and the force of his words was pointed, in this case, by the firmness of the conviction which he held in regard to the guilt of the prisoner.

The jury adjourned, and when they brought in the verdict of "guilty," a murmur, chiefly of approval, went throughout the breathless audience. Wilhelm's face blanched. He cast one appealing, imploring look upon the judge, then he folded his arms and bowed his head in bitter hopelessness, scarcely hearing the sentence to a long term of hard labor in the penitentiary, which was being pronounced upon him.

As the last words fell from the judge's lips, a shrill, boyish voice rang through the court room. "You wan wecked ole man! You all wecked! Heem never do it! Heem—"

The French boy was standing with flushed face, wildly gesticulating, as his bright black eyes glared upon the judge and the jury. But his passionate appeal was never finished. He was immediately silenced and dragged out of the chamber. As he was hurried through the door, he caught a glimpse of a fine, pale face, whose unutterable sorrow and unspoken indignation found a chord in the boy's own soul. Yes, Dr. Keith Cameron felt in his soul that Wilhelm Steinhoff's statement of innocence might be true. Yet

what could he do? Absolutely nothing. He had not the slightest means of proving one opinion which he held.

Wilhelm suffered himself to be led out, scarcely realizing where he was going. When once again in his cell in the city jail, he threw himself on his cot in an agony of despair. Even yet he could not see all that was before him. He had never been within penitentiary walls.

His brow was burning and his lips were dry. His head ached, and a strange, cold, heavy sense of pain was at his heart. He felt that he could scarcely breathe for the oppressive weight that lay upon him. Then suddenly a light seemed to flash upon him. He turned to God. Ah, he had forgotten God during the terrible court-room ordeal! He prayed for strength, for companionship, and was comforted. His earnest communion with God caused him to feel that everlasting strength still was his; that he could never be utterly alone. He knew that by prayer he did not change God's attitude to him, but his toward God, for God was ever loving, pitying, sympathizing. He grew willing to trust, and such a peace came upon him that for the time he felt that nothing could ever greatly disturb him more. God might not see best just now to deliver him from this bondage, yet in the end it would be well. He would wait, and trust, and be strong. So he fell into a deep sleep. On the morrow he was to be removed to the penitentiary.

CHAPTER X.

WILHELM LEAVES THE CAPITAL.

NEXT morning Wilhelm awoke, refreshed in body, but with a crushing sense of calamity bearing upon him. He pressed his hands upon his brow, and gradually his confused impressions resolved themselves into memories, into thoughts.

He saw again the court room full of pitiless faces, heard again the hum of voices that intervened between the calling of witnesses, as men whispered and laughed, all regardless of the young life that hung in the balance there—freedom, liberty, manhood, on one side; a living tomb on the other. He heard again the deep, clear tones of the judge ringing out, as though afar off, a terrible sentence. The words "Wilhelm Steinhoff!" smote upon his ear, and he started up with the awful consciousness that he had been the prisoner there in the dock; that his was the doomed life, condemned to ignominy, to that fate worse than oblivion, the branded shame of the prison-house.

He was now keenly awake. "I am innocent! Oh, heaven, I am innocent! It was all a lie, a shameful, despicable lie!" he cried, and buried his face in his hands.

Alas for poor human nature! His peace of the night before had flown. He had not yet reached that blissful height before which earthly griefs fall back abashed. After all, it was not an easy thing for a young man, refined, educated, in the very blossom of life, to look calmly forward to the penitentiary. Then he thought of poor, feeble, old Hermann, who was even now breathing the free air of heaven, perhaps in some far-off clime, and of Gertrude, calmly unconscious of the terrible fate which had overtaken her brother, and with her beautiful confidence in her grandfather all unshaken. "For her sake I can bear it!" he thought. "It would have killed her to know all!"

So he pondered until a voice bade him make ready, for it would soon be train time. Then he realized that this was the very day upon which he was to bid farewell to society, to the beautiful earth, to liberty—all, all that men usually consider necessary to make life worth living. He dressed hurriedly and ate a little breakfast. Then he went with his conductor to the depot.

People turned to look at him curiously. He shrank from their gaze. On the way

he met two young men whom he had known and turned away his head. He could not bear to look into the faces of those who must now despise him, and he was thankful when he was at last able to sit down upon the hard seat of a second-class coach.

As the train sped from the city, dashing along with its feverish energy through the hazy sunshine of the late autumn, Wilhelm looked wistfully back at the mountains, at the tall spires of the churches, at the flashes of blue water shining occasionally through between trees all gorgeous in crimson and gold. His heart called out a sad farewell, and nature seemed to smile pitifully back. He watched the yellow stubble-fields that went hurrying by, the farm-houses with little, free children loitering on their doorsteps to see the train pass, the orchards gay with scarlet apples, and the lanes edged with purple sumach; and all the way the rumble of the train resolved itself into a plaintive refrain which seemed to echo continually in his ears with a pitiful reiteration, "Farewell, farewell, farewell! All that is lovely, farewell! Life, and hope, and joy, farewell! Friends, and home, and loved ones, farewell, farewell!" The words sang on and on, forming themselves into a sort of low, monotonous chant that annoyed him with its persistency, and he was almost relieved when the flash of broad, blue waters, and a glimpse of the solid stone forts about old Cataraqui, warned him that his journey was coming to an end.

No time was lost. He was put into a hack and hurried on to the prison. From the hill above he caught a view of long, white walls, with sentries upon them, and of a massive, pillared front. Then a cold, iron touch seemed to fall upon his heart. He cast one longing glance about him. Waving woods, decked in the glorious garb of autumn, appeared above him, and an expanse of broad, grass covered fields. But, in the midst of these fields, stood a great round tower,

whose windows stared out like huge, unwinking eyes, in all directions.

"The quarries," muttered Wilhelm's guide. And the young man looked away again. In a moment he was at the pillared portal and ushered into the gloomy entrance, whose floor has echoed to the sullen tread of so many of earth's wasted ones. Blue-coated men, with peaked caps, stood about in the great hall. They glanced at him carelessly, and, for one moment, in his seeming degradation, he almost felt as though they were a higher order of beings than he. Then the proud consciousness came upon him, "Whatever they may think of me, I am innocent. I am still myself, and they cannot wrench my individuality from me!" and he held up his head with manly fearlessness.

"Good-looking fellow," he heard one of the guards say, in a low tone.

"Yes," returned another, in a half whisper, which Wilhelm's keen ear caught, "but a bad one, they say. For downright, refined badness, trust one of the gentleman sort!"

A heavy iron door was then, swung open, and he was conducted down a well-kept garden walk towards the office, in a large building below. Here he sat down. His every nerve was on a tension, and his brain was afire with the unusual mental activity that sometimes attends the most painful crises of life. His very senses seemed to be more acute than usual. Not the smallest detail of the room in which he sat, not the most trivial peculiarity of the men who were in it, escaped him. It was the hungry glance of a man who, in full possession of all his faculties, feels that he is bidding farewell to life.

A bright fire was in the grate, for within the stone walls it was cool. His eye sought the glowing, sparkling, joyous flames, and he wondered that they could leap so gayly in such an atmosphere. The clerk and one of the guards laughed at some little jest. He was shocked at their levity. It seemed to

him that he was in the very presence of death. Yet it was a living death, and he shuddered.

The clerk produced a large book, took up his pen, and proceeded to ask Wilhelm the usual routine of questions. Every answer was carefully recorded, then the young man was once more given over to a guide. As they entered the corridor he saw men going to and fro; men with hard visages, each bearing a number upon his shoulders. These, then, were some of the men with whom he must live. He knew how near, yet he little realized how far off from the most of them he should ever be.

His guide now conducted him to a bathroom, where his clothing was taken away from him, and a prison suit substituted, an ill-fitting set of coarse, gray garments, bearing the number 875. An accurate description of his person, and of every mark upon it, was written down, and he was taken to a room where his beautiful, waving hair fell beneath the hair-cutter's scissors.

As the relentless blades cringed about his head, he closed his eyes and sat immovable as a statue; but his clenched hands told of the turmoil of rebellion within, and his lips closed until but a line of white appeared. As the soft locks fell, touching his brow and his cheeks, he felt the bitter bondage of slavery closing upon him. His will was his no longer. His hands, his feet, his body, were no longer his to use as he pleased, but were parts of a machine, which might go only at the bidding of another. He was now the slave of the state, whose laws he was supposed to have outraged; he, as loyal a supporter of right and law as had ever drawn breath. Oh, it was cruel, cruel!

Yet, bitter as were the thoughts that crowded upon him, his cup yet lacked the drop of gall which renders the draught of the guilty criminal so dreadful upon a like occasion. The very sense of not deserving the penalty made it seem lighter, for a clear

conscience gives the spirit wings, even when the body is fettered.

Wilhelm was then measured, his height, the size of his head, the length of his arms and middle and little fingers, being accurately taken. Then he was given into a photographer's care, and when that was over he was left for a time in a room where, through a barred window, he could see night creeping down. Lights began to twinkle afar off. Upon the rapidly darkening water beyond, an up-going steamer sped past, its windows gleaming like a string of jewels, and its flash-lights turning in every direction, in a cone of soft radiance. Beauty and peace everywhere without, horror and despair within!

He heard the tramp, tramp of many men echoing through the great corridor. The prisoners were, then; returning from work. He was not required to form in line with them that night, but was presently taken to his cell alone. Iron gates swung again before him and his guide, and were closed with a relentless click. At length a great, round hall, surmounted by a lofty dome, and flagged with stone, was reached. About it ran numerous iron galleries, ascended by means of narrow iron stairways.

From this dome-covered space large wings led off in every direction, and in the center of each wing arose a huge, cube-like structure, pierced by innumerable doors formed of iron bars. It seemed to Wilhelm like an immense catacomb, honeycombed with numberless, rock-hewn graves. Towards one of these iron doors he was now conducted, and above it he noticed a placard bearing the same number, which he now bore upon his shoulders—875. Involuntarily he paused, before entering the narrow, windowless aperture. He was reminded by the guide that this was his cell. He stepped in. His supper was handed to him in a deep tin dish. The iron-grated door swung behind him into its place. The bolt fell. Wilhelm was at last a convict, in a convict's cell.

He could eat nothing, but sat on the edge of his bed for hours, looking dreamily out into the dimly-lighted passage, where a ghostly light burned all the night through. Then he crept silently into his hard, narrow cot. At intervals a hollow cough sounded from a neighboring cell. Occasionally the passing footsteps of a guard grew fainter and fainter in the distance. But for these all was still.

As he lay there in the darkness, his mind was working, working. Into the future he could not look, into the present he would not; but every incident of his past life floated before him as in a dream, and where links were all but forgotten, he wrestled with memory until they appeared.

He looked again upon Fisherman Jack in his cabin, and heard the swish of the water lapping upon the beach. He saw the blue-eyed child who ran about at Jack's angry bidding, but who yet was free, free, in comparison with the man who there lay in his coffin-like chamber behind the bars. Again his mind ran on, and the sweet, golden-haired child came before his vision, the child who had gambolled with the boy and the black dog in those happy days ere trouble or anxiety or care had entered that earthly Eden. Once more the scene changed. He lived over again that brief hour in the woodland dell in which he had realized that he loved her. And the memory was not all pain. He saw the beautiful child now grown a more beautiful maiden, heard the soft tones of her voice, and saw the sweet face bathed in tears because of his sorrow. Ah, he loved her now not less than then. His was an affection which stormy vicissitudes of life, grief, nay, even death itself, could not change. He thought of her until she became woven with his waking thought, woven with his dreams, and when at last, almost at daybreak, he fell into a troubled sleep, it was with the shimmer of her golden hair before his eyes.

In the morning the sudden clang of a

gong awoke him. He sprang out of bed and dressed hurriedly, for he knew that no loitering would be permitted. In a few minutes he heard the tread of many feet, as of men marching along the galleries, but no cheerful "good-morning," no sound of word, or gay whistle, or merry laugh, arose above the dull thud, thud, that echoed to the dome above.

Then he heard the locks along his own corridor click. He stepped out, and found himself marching along with a column of men, — gray-coated, shaven, cropped men — each bearing the fatal number on his shoulders. He glanced, with a sort of repulsive horror, at those who trudged silently ahead of him. The visages of those whom he could see seemed to him mostly dull, or sullen, or misshapen; but then, he had not had time to study them yet. Still, his heart bled for them. "Poor fellows!" he thought, "the wonder is that they are not wholly idiotic! A silent life and a guilty conscience! What punishment could be worse to anyone who had a trace of manhood left?"

He glanced at the one who marched beside him. His face was shrewd and intellectual, but lines of keenest suffering were about the mouth, and there was a bitter, hopeless look in the dark, sunken eyes, which seemed to flinch under Wilhelm's straightforward glance. Wilhelm saw in him at once a gentleman who had fallen, and who was suffering, not only from the restraint, but from reproaches of conscience. He was evidently French. The black hair, the sallow skin, the fine features and slight, lithe build, proclaimed the fact. For the moment Wilhelm felt almost glad that he had not been compelled to walk in touch with one of the lower class — for there are classes even in prison — in whose faces he could read little but sullen indifference, the record of a debauched life, and excess in every manner of evil-doing.

By this time the long lines were ready for breakfast. Prisoner attendants stood wait-

ing with deep tin dishes of food, and huge piles of bread cut in thick slices. As the men passed in rapid succession to make way for those who were swarming down from the iron galleries, each took his dish and the quantity of bread which he required. Wilhelm shrank from this coarse and roughly served prison fare. He took but one slice of the bread, and he noticed that the Frenchman, No. 869, took none at all, while others helped themselves to six, seven or eight great slices.

Turning about, the long line tramped back again towards the cells, and, glancing upward, Wilhelm saw that the galleries above and the narrow iron stairs were filled with single files of men hurrying on, in gray, wriggling lines, inside of the iron railings. At the word of a keeper, each line came to a halt, with one simultaneous movement, the doors were opened and the men went in. Then the doors were shut again with an echoing clang, and each convict proceeded to eat his solitary meal within the gloom of his cell.

The awful, mechanical movement of it all struck Wilhelm as something that must, in time, grow unbearable. He realized that only thus could order and system and economy of time prevail, and that the prison discipline must be enforced. Yet he was innocent, and his whole nature cried out against this enslaving of his feet, his hands, his body; this treating of him as though he were a machine, to go only at the command of a keeper, to stop only at his word. He was innocent, he was innocent! he kept crying to himself; he could not bear this injustice! As he sat beside his almost untasted breakfast, his hands clenched, and a heavy scowl furrowed his smooth, white brow.

Then other thoughts came to him. His head drooped, and a heavy sigh burst from his lips. The brow grew smooth, the mouth tender, and when the call came for the men to go to work, his face was calm, and his

blue eyes looked up fearlessly and bravely. He was to go to the quarries.

As the men formed in line he once more found himself beside No. 869. Walking in step with him, somewhat heavily by reason of the heavy prison shoes, he passed out with the others, through the long corridor, and into the yard, whose neat walks and velvety grass borders bore evidence to the spirit of prison reform that really characterized the Canadian penitentiary. He looked about him. Walls, walls, everywhere walls, with a patch of blue sky framed in between, and the dark figures of the guards walking along on top, rifles in hand, and outlined darkly against the clear, morning sky. On their approach the heavy iron gate at the rear of the entrance-hall turned slowly open. The convicts passed through, and thence, between the graceful pillars of the entrance, into the free air beyond the walls. As Wilhelm's fine, pale face again crossed the threshold, the guard at the gate whispered, "Fine-looking fellow! What a pity!" And another rejoined, "Face as innocent as a child's! Who would have believed it!"

On up the road went the convicts—the road, free to prattling children, nay, even to the dogs of the street, but these strong men were obliged to walk in close order; and by their side walked blue-coated guards, whose long rifles held death within their steel muzzles; death, relentless, certain as fate, were it required for the too-daring one who might think to escape the prison cell by flight.

On, on, past a waving, glorious wood, and towards a grassy field bounded by a high picket fence, and guarded by the tall watch-tower which Wilhelm had noticed on the preceding day. And the convicts knew well that within that tower stood armed men whose nerves were steady, and whose duty must be done. In this field were the quarries, where, day by day, great quantities of the solid bed-rock were raised from its hid-

den bed by the gray-clad men shuffling rapidly towards it.

Wilhelm glanced at the man beside him. His eyes were fixed on a passing cloud, and a look of unutterable sorrow was on his pale face. It was the expression of a man whose conscience is not dead.

"Poor fellow!" thought Wilhelm. "It is something worse than prison that brings such a look into his eyes. Can it be that remorse is eating his heart out? Perhaps he is not so bad after all. Heaven only knows what temptation he has had, or how many men with worse natures than his are sitting in the high places of the social world!"

Wilhelm felt as though he should like to speak to him, to ask him his name; but that could not be, so he was, and had to remain to Wilhelm, as yet, just the Frenchman, No. 869.

At last the gate of the field was reached. The key was turned in the heavy padlock by the guard who walked in advance, and the convicts passed through, walking silently and rapidly towards the derricks that marked the depression from which they were taking the huge blocks and slabs of cream-white sandstone.

The men took up their implements of toil, some indifferently and stupidly, others sullenly and resentfully; some with a piteous patience, others with a savage and feverish energy which betrayed the restlessness of minds that sought lethe in the exhaustion of physical labor. For the present Wilhelm belonged to the latter class. His first task was not a very heavy one, but he plied his hammer with a restless vigor, a sort of feverishness, that soon wearied his weakened body. His hands, too, were white and soft and tender, and long before the noon hour came, painful red patches were appearing on his delicate, girl-like palms. He was compelled to work less fiercely, though he dared not stop to rest. His blows fell less rapidly, and he stopped for a moment to

regain his breath. One of the convicts who was passing him half whispered:

"I thought you couldn't keep that up long, mate."

The voice sounded strangely familiar to Wilhelm, and he raised his fair, boyish face to look at the speaker. Each gazed at the other for a brief moment in recognition, then Wilhelm exclaimed, "Jack!"

Yes, it was none other than Jack. Jack, with his bushy beard all shaven, and a sullen, bitter, hardened look on his face. For a moment his eyes brightened a little, then, with a hasty glance at an approaching guard, he passed on. A moment later Wilhelm, turning, caught Jack's gaze fixed upon him in a sort of pained surprise.

The young man bent again over his work, with a hot flush upon his face. Even rough Fisherman Jack, then, condemned him! Later in the day he heard the voice whisper again:

"I never thought you'd turn out bad, Bunny. I thought you were a good one!"

Wilhelm's breath came fast. "I am an innocent man, Jack!" he whispered.

Jack looked at him sharply for a moment. "Aye, I believe you," he said, and passed on.

As Wilhelm turned to his task again, his eye fell upon a man who was working near him, and who had overheard his declaration. "I am an innocent man." It was No. 869. Oh, what a hungering, longing look was there! What a world of meaning was in that one timid, envious glance! It said, as plainly as in words, that he, poor No. 869, would have given life itself to be able to say those precious words. Immediately the dark, deep-set eyes drooped. The man was hacking away again at the stubborn stone, and Wilhelm noticed how frail and weak the body was, and how emaciated were the hands.

The youth brushed away a suspicious dimness from his eyes. He pitied this man from the bottom of his heart; pitied him

most because he saw in him great possibilities wasted, thrown aside with prodigal hand. He wondered what his life had been and why he was here. He wondered if he might ask at least his name. He did not want to do what was contrary to rules, but, though conversation was in nearly all cases strictly forbidden, he observed that in the quarries where men had often to assist each other in their work, they were permitted to speak occasionally in low tones, but to hold no uninterrupted conversation for even a moment's time. Even then their remarks were supposed to be about their work. This accounted for Jack's low, half-fearful words.

Noon came, and with it the march back to the penitentiary, whose great dome arose below the hill. Wilhelm was so weary that he fain would have lain upon his cot to rest. He was not yet fully strong after his illness. But there could be no rest yet. Once more he must march over the dusty road and take up his tools. The autumn was unusually warm, and the sun shone down hot and pitiless. His hands grew more and more painful, and white blisters came out upon the soft flesh. His head ached, and he grew almost faint. He was engaged in separating a slab of the stone, and as he bent over it he felt as though he should fall. Then a hammer, wielded by a powerful hand, fell upon it in heavy blows, and a pick, swung by the same strong arm, completed the operation. It was Fisherman Jack. Wilhelm looked up gratefully and murmured, "Thank you." Jack answered not a word. Without bestowing even a glance upon Wilhelm, he strode off.

Wilhelm was deeply pained at seeing Jack in prison. Although in those old days by the lake he had feared the man, he had not wholly disliked him. Tender memories, though few, were still connected with that early period, for Jack had been the only father of his early childhood, and had sometimes been kind to the fair-haired lad. He recollected that when Jack had abused him

he was almost invariably under the influence of drink, and he surmised that the fisherman was now in prison owing to some act committed at such a time.

When the evening at last fell, Wilhelm sank wearily down upon a block of stone. His detachment of convicts was the last to leave the field, and while waiting for the order to move forward, he watched the gray, moving lines, shuffling off past the watch-tower towards the gate, followed by the ever-vigilant guards with their rifles upon their shoulders.

Then the order came to fall into line. He arose and dragged his aching limbs into his place. The order, "Forward!" was given, and soon the dry, waving grass of the field was left behind, and no sound was heard save the heavy tramp, tramp, tramp of the men down the white, dusty road towards the great dome below.

Wilhelm was indeed glad when he could once more throw himself down upon his narrow bed. That night, out of utter exhaustion, he slept a heavy and dreamless sleep, from which he awoke refreshed and in better condition for his work. He did not again during that week have any interchange of words with Jack, but more than once when the youth was wrestling with an unusually difficult part of his task, the great, strong arm of his former foster-father took the heaviest part of the work, and Wilhelm was deeply touched.

However, as the days went by, the youth grew more accustomed to the labor, and his muscles grew firmer. Then his work slowly settled down into the dreary, mechanical monotony of a daily treadmill, and he began to chafe more and more against his fate. He felt as though he must lose his reason ere he had put in ten years of this silent, slavish drudgery, and he began almost to hate the glaring white road and the hazy sun, which was sinking each day farther and farther to the south. Yet he dreaded to look forward to the long winter, with its

new toil, which would necessitate remaining constantly within the walls. He forgot Jack, forgot poor No. 869. Wholly occupied with his own misery, he lost sight of theirs. It made him almost frantic to think that the very best part of his life was to be thus thrown away; that every ambition, every hope for the future, was to be thus overthrown, and that he must go out at the end of his term a branded, despised creature, spurned from every man's door as the very scum of the earth.

He brooded over his troubles every day, and kept them before him in his cell every night, until his life grew unbearable. He now took little comfort in knowing that he was innocent. He tried to pray, but his prayers arose from a heart hard as the stone which he handled day by day. Unwillingly he was beginning to have a conviction that there could be no God, else why this injustice?

During these terrible days but one thing kept him from absolute recklessness — his love for Gertrude and his grandfather. That one touch of the divine, still kept alive in him, was his salvation. In his moments of deepest misery the thought of them came as a balm upon his spirit, and for their sakes he grew more patient, less bitter.

But his most awful, haunting fear was the consciousness of his loss of confidence in God. He went to the chapel on Sundays, but there was little comfort in the services for him. The man who preached was not in touch with his hearers. He spoke from a sense of duty, and as though from a height of superiority unattainable to his pitiful audience. His sermons were a series of flowery harangues, with occasional conventional appeals and set phrases of religious exhortation, which could have no effect upon the hearts of the men who sat listening to him with folded arms and cold faces.

Then came a vague rumor of a new chaplain. The news spread slowly among the prisoners, and awakened in them the excite-

ment which any novelty possesses for men whose changeless life is continually hedged in between four walls. Wilhelm, however, was at that time in such a state that he heard of the new chaplain's arrival with but little interest.

One night he was sitting in his cell, moodily thinking. He had been attempting to read one of the books from the prison library, but, though his light was still burning, the book had fallen from his hand, and he was sitting on the edge of his cot with drooping head. He was feeling utterly hopeless and alone. A keeper had just passed, bearing letters for some of the convicts. For Wilhelm, alas! there was never one. None of the gay band of companions with whom he had laughed and talked in the dear old capital, had ever sent even one message of sympathy or encouragement. Day by day he had seen the keeper advancing with the letters. Day by day he had watched, through the bars, with a face of hungry longing. But the keeper had ever passed on without even glancing at the cell, and Wilhelm had turned away again with a cold, gnawing pain at his heart.

To-night he was thinking of Gertrude, Gertrude who was still his friend, for she at least was beyond reach of the calumnies which had assailed his name on every side. He wondered where she was, and if she were a little happy. He wondered if she thought of him often, and if she would ever find out his sad story. He wondered if she still believed in God's goodness as she used to do. The thought brought a sad smile to his lips. Ah, Wilhelm was drifting far from his heavenly Father, yet that Father was tenderly near would he but have seen him.

Presently he heard the bolt of his cell drawn back. Some one entered, and Wilhelm looked up to see a sweet, familiar face beaming down upon him. For a moment he could not realize who it was. It was a man dressed in black, and wearing a venerable beard slightly tinged with gray. The face

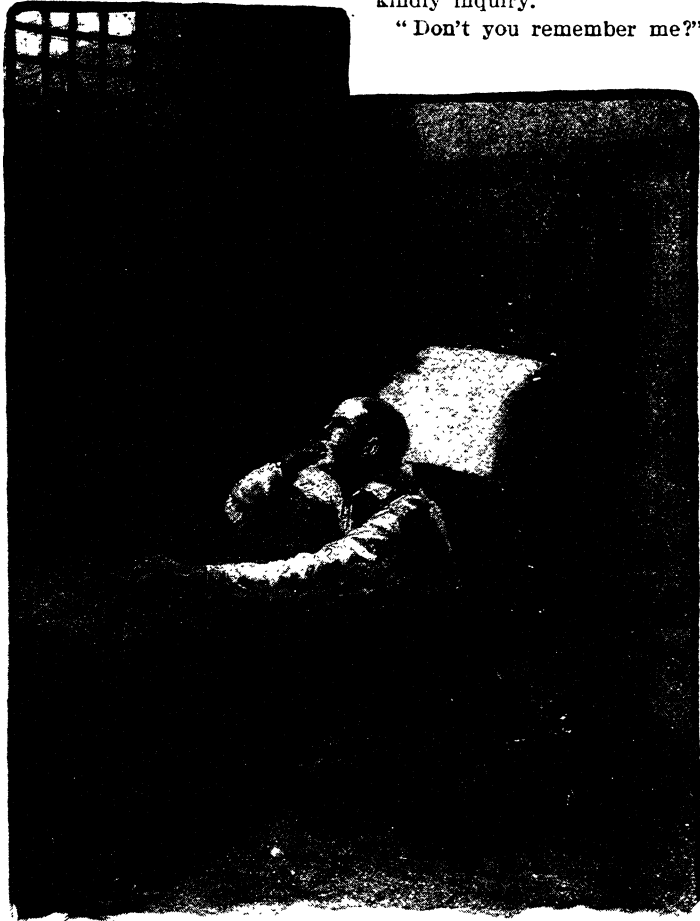
drew Wilhelm's gaze with a sort of fascination, so kindly, so pure, so tender, yet so well known was it. He looked into the deep, loving eyes, and fought with recollection. Then his glance fell to the hands. One was weak and withered, though white and shapely withal. Then all came back. Wilhelm saw again the deep, cool canal, with its wooded banks fading in the twilight. He heard the splash of oars, and saw the gentle face of the colporteur shining through the gloom. He heard the echo of a sweet voice saying, "Even in prison they may have risen above their environment, and soared to heights which they never could have attained otherwise. God is here, within us, if we will. Where God is, is heaven."

Ah, as he looked upon this man's face, how the snatches of that conversation came ringing down the years of the past, striking upon Wilhelm's ears with a sound sweet and faint as that of a heavenly chord!

"The warden has been telling me of you, Mr. Steinhoff," now said those same sweet tones. "I have taken the liberty of coming to see you."

Yes, it was—it was the colporteur! Wilhelm sprang to his feet and grasped him by the hand. The other returned the pressure warmly, and looked into the now glowing face with an expression of kindly inquiry.

"Don't you remember me?"



Wilhelm sat leaning on the edge of his bed for hours.—See page 42.

asked the young man eagerly. "Don't you remember the boy who rowed you down the canal years ago?"

"Why, certainly," returned the low, calm voice; "is this the lad?"

There was, perhaps, an almost impercep-

tible note of surprise in the accent, and Wilhelm dropped his head. He had forgotten that he was a convict, branded as a criminal.

"Pardon my presumption," he stammered. "I—I had forgotten."

The other seated himself on the cot and drew Wilhelm down beside him.

"There is no presumption, dear boy," he said. "We will be able to renew our friendship, will we not? You see I expect to be here the most of my time. I am the new chaplain."

There was no tone of condescension in the simple greeting, nothing but the courteous simplicity with which one gentleman may speak to another. Wilhelm looked again into the magnetic face, more saint-like even than of yore, and felt the thrill of brotherly love spring up at the touch of the gentle hand. Hope again lived in his heart, and he felt once more a man, not the despised convict, No. 875.

"I am very glad you have come here," he said. "Just now I was feeling, keenly enough, the need of—of a friend."

The chaplain's eyes grew strangely tender. He loved as much as he pitied these men.

"Yes," he said. "I do not wonder that you feel lonely sometimes. It is an unnatural state of affairs that separates man from his fellow-men. That is not as God planned it should be. He rejoices when we have friends and home and happiness. He is glad, I am sure, at this our meeting."

Wilhelm turned sharply upon him.

"Then why," he asked, "does he allow the state of things to exist which has helped to drive many a man here? The liquor traffic, for instance. While it continues, men will continue to commit crime. Why does not God stop it? While poverty lasts men will cut through hades itself to rid themselves of it. Why are not things equalized?"

Wilhelm spoke passionately, longingly. His bitter, atheistic impulses were not rendering him happy, though he was honest in them.

"Dear lad," returned the low, gentle voice, "how could people be free if God compelled them to act in any way, even though that way were right? How could people love God, who is Love, and the source of all truth and right, if he took the power of choice away from them?"

He paused and looked searchingly into the young, boyish face. "My dear boy," he continued, "God wants us to be men, not machines. If we be men, we must choose. If we be Christians, we must choose the right in spite of every circumstance."

Wilhelm was pondering deeply.

"Then you think that choice has been offered to all these men, even to the lowest, and that each one has recognized the possibility of it?" he asked.

"I should say so," returned the chaplain with a sigh. "God could not leave his children ever out in the cold. He must plead with them in some way; they must choose him or refuse. They must take him as their dear Friend, their Companion and Father, or else they must go their own way, unhappy, erring perhaps, and alone, because away from him."

"But look at the different chances people have!" cried Wilhelm, with a deep tremor in his voice. "One boy is brought up in a Christian home, with Christian teaching; another lives all his life amid the evil of the slums. How can the one love God or even know of him as the other does?"

The chaplain turned his face, full of love and tenderness, towards the unhappy young man.

"He cannot, perhaps," was the low reply. "Yet I am inclined to think that the boy in the slums has his own promptings towards the right. I am sure God considers all the circumstances. My dear lad, one thing we

know: God is absolutely just. He makes no mistake in considering these things. He probes the motives of each man down to the very root, and he will do what is well towards every soul."

He stopped speaking for a moment and looked off through the bars, with a rapt expression upon his countenance.

"Do you know," he said, "sometimes I think we shall be surprised at how many people we meet in heaven—the future heaven, I mean," he added. "The trouble is that so many miss the heaven they might have here."

He suddenly turned, and the radiant light of truth was in his eyes. "Yes," he said, "God is Love. Can we not trust his love?"

The look, the tone, the earnestness of the speaker, brought the words home to Wilhelm's heart. He dropped his face in his hands, and a wave of remorse for his own heartlessness and his own doubt swept over him. His old, child-like faith returned, and tears dropped through between his fingers.

The chaplain's own eyes grew dim as he looked upon the bowed, shaven head of the convict, and noted the quiver of suppressed emotion that was passing over him. He had, he thought, said enough for the present. In a moment he arose and placed his hand upon Wilhelm's shoulder.

"Mr. Steinhoff," he said, "I shall see you again often. I am sorry for you, lad. You must be very lonely here. But remember, whatever your past may have been, you may still become strong, triumphant, even in this prison. Nay, you may even rejoice in it, if you will but come close to Jesus and stay there ever. The past is gone, the future is before you."

He paused and when he spoke again the tone was even lower and sweeter than before. "You are in a narrow cell," he said, "but Jesus can fill it with his own radiance. Ask him to help you. Trust in him, dear lad, for he is love. Good-night."

Wilhelm looked up and grasped the chaplain's arm. "I think heaven must have sent you to me," he said. "Come often." Then—he could not let this man go without knowing his name—"What am I to call you?" he asked.

"Francis Hare," replied the other, "is my name. Good-night, and sweet dreams to you."

Wilhelm gave a start of surprise, but the chaplain did not see it. He closed the door and a keeper fastened it for the night, then his footsteps echoed down the stone-paved corridor.

"Hare—Hare!" murmured Wilhelm; "how strange that he should have my own name! But"—and the convict thought of his friendless childhood—"tis only a coincidence. I shall not tell him my name. It is not a convict's place to claim kinship even in a name."

Then Wilhelm fell upon his knees. He prayed that he might understand something, even if it were but little, of this depth of divine love which he had been slighting.

He arose and went to bed, but he could not sleep. For hours he lay awake, and it seemed that all the feeling, all the affections of his life, burned with redoubled intensity during those hours of waking. He thought of Hermann, whom he had loved and venerated; Hermann, who had proved unworthy of his confidence; he thought of Gertrude, and longed, with unspeakable longing, for the sound of her voice, the touch of her hand. Yet he thought of her with intense pain, for she had rejected his love. His brow grew hot, then cold. Heavy and wet, the perspiration came out upon his forehead, and the unwavering light, shining from the corridor, fell, barred with black shadows, through the grated door upon his clenched hands. He agonized because, though loving, he was loveless.

Then a vision comes to him. He sees a garden of old, gnarled trees, through which

the moon struggles fitfully. A Man is bowed in anguish there, but on his brow are drops of blood—great cruel drops. And why? Because he loves a sinful world, and is not loved.

Ah, Wilhelm can catch the faintest glimpse of that anguish now!

"Jesus," he whispers, "I love thee!" Over and over again he repeats this.

He sees the Man go to the cross. Awful loneliness! Awful torture! And for what reason? This Man is going of his own free will.

Ah, that the poor, erring world which he loves may see his love, may realize what he is, and turn from sin! "He will save his people from their sins."

"Oh, blessed Lord!" exclaims Wilhelm. Now that is all his prayer, just exclamations of love and devotion. Wilhelm has given but a drop of his blood, his life, for love's sake, yet he can understand a little better the spirit of the Lord Jesus.

"Blessed Lord!" he cries again, and a great joy fills his heart.

Henceforth Wilhelm was a new man, in a new earth, albeit that earth was a prison-house. He had "risen above his environment."

CHAPTER XI.

DOROTHY IN THE BELLEAU HOUSEHOLD.



LET us now glance for a few moments upon a little scene which might have been observed, had one been there to see, in a very small and poorly furnished, yet very cheerful room of a small cottage in Lower Town, upon one of those warm autumn days. It was

in the home of Adolphe Belleau and his sister.

Through the south window, gay with pots of scarlet geranium, the sun came creeping gently, casting its brightness in a checkered patch upon the cleanly-scoured pine floor, and seeming to reflect its radiance up to the snowy cloth on the table and the white spread on the bed. It did not occur, perhaps, to the little group gathered in the small room that that same afternoon sun was reeking down its beams upon the hot, glaring limestone of a quarry in which the one of whom they spoke was silently working.

Upon the bed Agnes lay, with the flush of returning health on her cheek. Beside her, gently stroking the thin, white hand, sat Dorothy, as sweet as a rose, dressed in her favorite color, pink. And upon a footstool near, holding his knee with his hands, sat Adolphe. Adolphe, jaunty and self-possessed as ever, with his straight black hair wetted and combed until it showed the trace of every tooth in the comb, and with a flower in his button-hole.

Agnes had never seen Adolphe greatly agitated except upon one occasion. That was on the evening of Wilhelm Steinhoff's trial. He had returned that night with flushed face and blazing eyes, and when she asked him what was wrong, he had thrown himself down with his face upon her pillow and sobbed. Since then he had stoutly maintained his belief in Wilhelm's innocence, asserting for his grounds of thinking so that he "knew dat man not guilty. De ole wan all to blame."

This afternoon he had just finished giving Dorothy an account of the trial, recounting with many a gesture the arguments as given by both sides, and inveighing with all his might against the decision of the judge and the jury, whom he classed as "wan pack of stupides."

"Heem guilty no more dan Adolphe Belleau is guilty!" he finally exclaimed. "Dat

Monsieur Sanders, heem t'ink heem do great t'ings. Heem very smart detective!" and the French boy gave a contemptuous shrug.

"But every circumstance seemed to be against young Mr. Steinhoff," remarked Dorothy. "I do not see that the detective was at all to blame."

Adolphe gave another shrug. "Well, I do know wan t'ing, Mademoiselle Cameron," he replied. "dat if ever I can find dat ole Hermann Steinhoff, I will keep to him like wan leech, till de truf come out. He is de wan w'at mus' clear dis Wilhelm."

"But they are in Europe," returned the girl. "How could you ever hope to find him, Adolphe?"

"Dat is so," replied Adolphe, and his countenance fell. "If he is in Europe, den Monsieur Wilhelm is done for." Then he got up and went slowly out. He did not imagine, upon that bright afternoon, that he had done anything which could ever bear in the slightest degree upon the fortunes of the Steinhoff family; yet he had succeeded in interesting Dorothy Cameron intensely in the young man whom he believed an innocent sufferer, and in the golden-haired girl of whom he had given, in his own way, a vivid description.

"She very sweet, so sweet as Mademoiselle Cameron in de face. She very golden hair, all bright, like de statue on de Basilica w'en de sun shines from de west."

When Adolphe had gone the two girls, the one strong, beautiful and wealthy, the other weak, equally handsome, yet poor, relapsed into that sweet personal conversation which ever followed Dorothy Cameron's tête-à-tête chats with her girl friends.

"W'at makes you so good to me?" asked Agnes, wonderingly.

"What a question, Agnes!" exclaimed Dorothy, with a smile. "Because I like you, of course."

The sick girl smiled back again. "It seems to me strange," she said, "dat great

lady like you is care for working-girl, very poor, like me."

Dorothy held up a small, white finger in reproach.

"Now, Agnes," she said, "you are of just as much account as I, you know you are! It is very honorable to work. I believe I'd like it, only I wouldn't care to be very poor. Jesus was a carpenter, and his best friends on earth, when he lived in Palestine, were people who worked too."

"And you tell me many times dat he care for me, too, like dat," remarked Agnes, thoughtfully.

"Certainly," returned Dorothy. "He loves everybody, and he wants us to love one another. He said, 'This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.'"

Agnes closed her eyes and lay for a moment thinking, then she opened them and her earnest gaze rested upon Dorothy's face.

"Mademoiselle Cameron," she said, "if all de people dey was always so kind, so good as you, it would have been den more easy for me to be good, too. Long time ago, 'fore you and de kind doctor came to us, we were very poor, you can know not how poor, Mademoiselle. Sometimes den I have no work, den we have leetle to eat. 'It is not pleasant to have not enough satisfy hunger. Den I wear rags. De people pass me by. Dey treat me as dirt of de street. I grow in despair. I t'ink nobody cares for me. If I go hell, w'at matter? I tell no wan for pride. You winner, Mademoiselle, but in dem days I steal 'fore I beg. Not so now. I pass a grocer stand or shop of a meat-man, I see so nice vegetable, so t'ick fish near. I reach my hand to steal, den I t'ink of Adolphe. I say to myself, 'For Adolphe I will do w'at is good, Adolphe he never steal, no, never, never! So, you see, w'en I grow frantic, I t'ink of Adolphe. I no steal, I no beg; we starve. But w'en I get very seeck, I glad I was kep' good, a leetle bit. I read de blessed words. Den you come talk to me

like sister, no pride, no making me feel like dog beneath you. I feel I can be somebody after all, and hold up my head."

"At least you will," my poor Agnes, "as soon as you are able to stand," smiled Dorothy. "Don't forget you are to come to me to be my very own maid as soon as you can go about, which will not be long, for Keith says you are doing finely now. Wasn't it fine that I happened to find you on that queer little house-boat! Keith calls you 'The Lady of the Lake.'"

Agnes scarcely heard what she was saying. She was gazing intently into Dorothy's face.

"If I were wan great artiste," she said, "do you know w'at I do, Mademoiselle?"

"What?" with a smile.

"Paint wan beautiful picture, tres grande. It would be de Queen of Heaven, and she would have de face of Mademoiselle Cameron!"

Dorothy laughed, the little, rippling laugh that sounded like the murmur of a brook.

"Nonsense, Agnes! You flatter me!" she said.

The sick girl was drawing something out from beneath her pillow. "I was try draw you, wan day," she said, as she unfolded a sheet of paper, upon which a head was sketched. It was roughly done, but the expression was almost perfect. It was Dorothy's own face.

The girl exclaimed in pleased surprise. "Why, Agnes, you are a regular genius! I should have known this was I, any place."

"You like it?" asked Agnes, with a flush of gratification on her thin face. Then her dark eyes grew wistful. "I do have dreams of beautiful t'ings I want to make," she said. "Dey float about me all de time, in de air, on de wall, every place. If I could only paint dem all!"

Dorothy was gazing at her in amazement. "Why, you have the soul of an artist!" she exclaimed. "You never told me this

before, Agnes. Have you tried to sketch much?"

The girl shook her head. "No, so very leetle," she replied. "You see I have not had de time nor de money. I have draw on wrapping-paper lots, but den I look at de pictures in de gallery and in de church, and my own look so poor, so foolish, I grow in despair and do no more for long."

Dorothy was still looking at the sketch in her hand, when the rumble of a carriage was heard, and in a moment Keith came in. She flew to show it to him. He took it up, and an expression of surprised interest crossed his face.

"Who drew this?" he asked quickly.

"Agnes."

He looked keenly at the sick girl. "How have you come by this?" he asked. "Was either of your parents talented in this way?"

"My moder has said dat our fader was wan artist very excellent," she explained, modestly.

He scrutinized the picture again closely.

"Indeed! When you come to take care of Dorothy here," he said, "we must see that you have some instruction."

The girl's face lighted up, fairly beamed, with delight. "Oh, you are too good, too kind!" she exclaimed, with tears in her eyes.

"Your father is dead, is he not?" asked the physician.

The girl's face clouded. "But I do not know, Monsieur," she said in a low tone. "W'en Adolphe was a baby, he leave us all. He never come back more."

After this, Agnes rapidly improved. By the time winter had set in she was comfortably ensconced in the Cameron mansion as Dorothy's maid, and found that she could get all the material she needed, and could also secure much valuable instruction, for which she paid with part of her own earnings. Keith preferred to have her do this for her own sake. He did not believe in putting a premium on idleness by indiscrimin-

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ate giving, and though he did not fear idleness in the case of Agnes, he thought it better, so far as her own self-respect was concerned, to let her earn her own way as yet.

But both he and Dorothy watched the girl's progress with interest, often marveling at the great artistic talent which she displayed. Adolphe, meanwhile, continued to pick up jobs, and to stay on in the little cottage, getting ready his own meals and proving that he was possessed of no mean skill in domestic matters. He was very proud of Agnes' success in her sketching, and insisted upon pinning any which fell into his possession upon the wall, so that ere long the little rooms of their old home in Lower Town were bedecked with Madonnas and angels, heads and wings, in all stages of development. In many of the faces Dorothy's features appeared; in most of the others the features were those of a sweet, sad woman, whom Agnes declared she often saw before her in her dreams. "I t'ink it mus' be my angel moder," she would say, "watching for Adolphe an' me."

"Are the features hers?" Dorothy would ask.

Agnes would nod her head thoughtfully and say, "I t'ink dey are a leetle like de way I remember her, but more beautiful. Of course she mus' be more beautiful now in heaven."

CHAPTER XII.

AN ARTIST IN PRISON.



FROM that night of the new chaplain's first visit to Wilhelm, the young man's spiritual life was a brighter, more glorious thing than ever before; and with the brighter spiritual experience came a more happy temporal

one. He began to take a new interest in everything about him. His fellow-prisoners, instead of seeming as before for the most part repulsive outcasts of earth, became, as God's creatures, tender, diseased plants, worthy of the gentlest care and consideration.

He longed to talk to them, to tell them about the source of his own strange happiness. But that was impossible, so he contented himself instead with watching his beloved chaplain going about among them, winning their love and confidence, and leading them back to hope and manhood with the tender touch of love.

In his own way, too, Wilhelm, though he seldom dared speak, yet found opportunities of helping others. Hard work was developing him into a young giant, and when among those weaker than himself he was ever ready to take the heaviest end of a lift. The news that he had said he was innocent spread about among the men in some unaccountable way. "I believ he said the truth about it, too," had muttered Fisherman Jack. And his opinion had rapidly gained footing among the others. Even the vilest criminal respected the young man the more because of it.

And now the report that he was "religious" had been circulated. "I said he was a good one, and he is!" was the daring Jack's half-whispered comment; and that observation, too, had spread abroad. These sullen, impatient men could scarcely understand the change that had come about in Wilhelm. They felt it in his look, in his smile and in his manner, and their hearts were drawn to him, one and all.

An especial affinity seemed to have sprung up between him and the Frenchman, No. 869, who was growing more haggard and weak every day. Instinctively each felt that the other was more than ordinarily interested in him. The Frenchman would fix his hungry eyes upon the youth's frank face, and Wilhelm would smile back at him, with

that smile which ever seemed to spread sunshine about it.

How many times each longed to talk to the other neither could tell, but until the snow came no word passed the lips of either save the murmured "Thank you" of the Frenchman when Wilhelm managed to lighten him of some heavy burden.

When the winter came, however, an opportunity for somewhat frequent interchange of words was most unexpectedly given them. It was found necessary to do some remodeling to one of the chapels, and the task of decorating it was put into the hands of a few of the prisoners. Wilhelm's course in science had necessitated a study of mechanical drawing, and his services were now brought into requisition. He found that to No. 869 had been allotted the work of painting the pictures and the ornaments.

"You'd better have a talk with him about it," said one of the officials. "We can trust you two, I reckon."

So Wilhelm had at last an opportunity of hearing, in intelligible conversation, the voice of him whom he had watched with interest so long. True, their talk was always about their work, and a guard stood ever near, but even that was a satisfaction. During the winter they had several such watched interviews as this, and yet neither knew the name of the other.

One morning Wilhelm came into the Catholic chapel. He had not been there for a long time. His gaze was immediately riveted on two pictures, newly painted. One represented the Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. Wilhelm paused before it. Time, place, everything of earth, vanished in his contemplation of the unutterable anguish, mingled with love, pictured in that wonderful face. How long he had stood there he knew not. Then his eyes fell upon the other, a large painting, filling the space above the altar—the Christ ascending; triumph, joy, that same unutterable love, fill-

ing the calm, sweet eyes upturned towards the rejoicing hosts of heaven. This wondrous expression of love above all struck upon Wilhelm with a power that made his pulses throb.

He was dimly conscious that some one had come in and was adding a few finishing touches to the draperies about the feet. At last he looked down to the painter. It was No. 869! Wilhelm marvelled that a shaven convict could form the conception of such a face. In this man's heart love could not be dead. Wilhelm looked at him with a sort of pitying awe and whispered:

"What is your name?"

The melancholy, sunken eyes turned wistfully upon him. The low, timid voice answered:

"Pierre Adolphe Belleau."

CHAPTER XIII.

SOME CONCLUSIONS OF WILHELM AND KEITH CAMERON.



W HILE, as we have seen, Wilhelm's heart was glowing with a new fire, in spite of occasional fits of despondency and loneliness, his body and his mind were also being developed. The wielding of hammer and mallet was making him a physical giant, for the figure of a Hercules was already there, needing only the training of constant exercise. As the months went on the great muscles began to stand out like iron bands, and his physique became the admiration of all the prison officials.

He also applied himself to study. He observed his fellow-prisoners closely, and in this way learned many truths in regard to the laws that govern the human mind. In

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the evenings he fixed his attention, with that power of concentration of which he was master, upon the books which he got from the library, or which the chaplain procured from outside sources for him. As far as possible he went on with his old, favorite branches of science and mathematics, and many an abstruse problem was untangled in his unwearied brain.

He was often lonely, often impatient, but never now wholly despairing. He realized the truth that those who trust in God can never be "utterly cast down." In Chaplain Hare he found a constant friend and source of inspiration. He had wondered a little that no mention of his supposed crime had been made by Mr. Hare. He learned that the chaplain's plan was ever to point to higher things, rather than to dwell on the evil.

Wilhelm had at first forbore to speak of his innocence and unjust punishment, fearing that he would not be believed. At last, however, he did so, and felt that Mr. Hare had confidence in his story. It was not within the power of the chaplain now to do anything which might hasten his release, yet the fact that even one had implicit confidence in his honor was a great solace to him. As far as possible Wilhelm avoided the subject entirely.

He and Mr. Hare had, however, many talks on other subjects. Mr. Hare was a constant source of inspiration to him, and many hints and ideas which the older man threw down, Wilhelm seized and probed to the very bottom. These, in the young man's mind, gave rise to other trains of thought, so that his brain was never idle, while his heart was never cold.

And while in this way Wilhelm in his prison cell was forming many important conclusions, another, in the dear old capital, had by a different route been drawing the same inferences. This other was Dr. Keith Cameron, upon whom we will again look, at a time in which we may see the workings of his mind.

One Sunday evening the doctor set out to call on a patient in the West End, intending to stop on the way back in time for service at Christ Church. It was quite late, almost dark, when he reached the church. He went quickly up the steps and paused for a moment in the vestibule. The soft chanting of voices reached him through the closed door. He opened it and went in. No one was in the back seat. He sat down and folded his arms.

Softly the lights shone down from the carven capitals, lighting up, with a softened glow, the white marble pillars in the nave, the bowed heads of the people, the white robes of the choir-boys, and the golden stars on the walls of the chancel.

Clear rang the voice of the curate, deep rose the murmur of the people. "And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life. To the glory of thy holy name. Amen."

It was very beautiful, Keith thought. Bit by bit, he went over the petition.

"Father—merciful Father." Not God of justice, God of wrath, but loving Father.

"For his sake." He was God, and he was man, too.

"Godly life." Ah, yes! What is a godly life? Keith's mind ran back to his old studies in philology—the suffix "lic," or "ly," meaning "like." Godly, then, means God-like. What a glorious thing it would be to live a God-like life! And this was the life God wanted man to live. For this end was he brought into the world. Who is God? "God is Love." Then a God-like life must be a life of love. What is the most striking characteristic of this life of love? Back, back to Jesus, as he showed himself to be when in the body. Jesus' life was a life of giving, from beginning to end; giving of himself. Of all lives in earth's history, his is the only one in which no taint of selfishness appears. Hence, the God-like life must be a life of

giving. Yet this giving must be voluntary, spontaneous, joyous, free.

"To the glory of thy holy name."

Now, what does this "glory" mean? God knows not selfishness. He desires not power for his own sake, neither the glory before which the world stands dazzled, which is as dross in his sight. What then? Is not the glory of human character unselfishness, self-giving? Must this not also be the glory of divine character?

Self-giving — not the giving up of one's individuality, but the spontaneous, voluntary offering of one's self for others. This, then, is an interpretation worthy of association with the character of God. This is the glory of God, of the cross. God gives himself for others. He would desire us to give ourselves in order that we may live God-ly lives.

"Thy holy name."

What is the meaning of this word "holy"? Something high, mighty, too far off for the grasp of the human mind? Ah, no; but something sacred, precious, something which one can clasp to one's heart.

So Keith's mind ran on. He had fallen into a dreamy, half-listless state, so far as his body was concerned. Yet it seemed as if his mind had risen above and separate from his body, and was passing from thought to thought with unusual activity.

He had not knelt. His head was thrown back against a pillar, and his pale, clear-cut face and black hair rested in striking relief against the whiteness of the marble. He did not realize that he was not kneeling. The thought of what he was actually doing never entered his mind. Yet who can say that the man, sitting unnoticed away in the background, with folded arms and head erect, was the least sincere of the worshippers? Keith Cameron was scarcely conventional enough for a conventional age. Sometimes he acted differently from other men. But he never knew it.

The service had outrun him during his

cogitations on the "General Confession." The joyous outburst of the Cantate Domino had been sung. He had heard the voices as it were afar off. The sweet sounds of the music had uplifted and blended with his thought, though he knew it not. When he came to himself the curate was reading from the Gospel of St. John.

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."

During a period of trial, yet fresh in Keith's mind, these words had been a source of supreme comfort to him. He had not reached the age of twenty-eight years without having suffered.

His mind again wandered off, and paused in reflection upon those who look anxiously for the actual, personal appearing of Christ before mortal eyes. It did not seem to him that he cared to wait for this. Had not the Comforter already come? Was he not already upon earth, the Holy Spirit, even Christ? Some chose to puzzle themselves about the mystery of the Trinity. For Keith it was enough to know that each of the mysterious three is God. It was immaterial to him whether he thought of them as Jesus, the Spirit, or as God, inasmuch as the same mind is in one and all, in inseparable union.

Sometimes he had been tempted to think, "If only Jesus had not left the earth!" Then the words had come, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you," and he thought how practical, how scientific even, God is after all. Had Jesus not come, we could not have really known God or his

love. Had Jesus remained in the body, but few of earth's millions could ever have seen him.

But, since the Comforter had come, every one—he, Keith—could have Jesus always with him, in every place, at every time. True, he did look forward to a gloriously vivid realization of his presence at some time and in some mysterious way in the future. Yet he was contented for the present to know that Jesus is really among men, and more truly among all men than when his poor, weary feet trod the sands of Palestine. For is not God omnipresent?

"He will reprove the world of sin." Ah, yes, is not this one of Jesus' divine missions, —to separate from sin, to burn out the chaff from the wheat, to keep the good, casting out the evil of men's hearts?

"Ye see me no more." With mortal eyes, no; with spiritual eyes, yes, dear Lord.

"I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." How tender and considerate is Jesus! A little at a time, as much as they can assimilate, do the disciples receive. What comfort these words bring to those who are impatient to know all of God at once! Character must grow, even as grow the plants, taking in what is needful to the perfect life, rejecting what is unnecessary or harmful. Jesus says, "When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth;" not, he will open unto you all truth. He will guide you. You must do the walking, the choosing to walk, else your love will not be real. Love can never be forced, and only love can form the pathway to God, who is love.

Keith's mind was off again, and the service had once more got ahead of him. What was the matter with him this evening? He sat up, determined to follow the order more closely. The choir was singing the sweet "Benedic Animea Mea."

"Who saveth thy life from destruction and crowneth thee with mercy and loving

kindness. . . . Oh, speak good of the Lord, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominion: praise thou the Lord, O my soul."

"Speak good of the Lord." Yes, all nature was doing this, everything going on beautifully, harmoniously. What was man, the crowning work of the Lord, doing? Was he speaking good of the Lord? Keith was inclined to look leniently upon men and women, yet he was obliged to face a bitter question here.

His eye wandered on up the church, between the rows of white pillars, over the silks, the laces, the soft plumes of the ladies, over the white and bared heads of men grown old in the church; on to the altar with its "Holy, Holy, Holy," symbol of the presence of the God whom all these people reverently acknowledged.

There were many beautiful Christians in this church, people whose lives were a constant revelation of the Bible to the outside world. Keith wished the number of them had been greater. Alas, was it not the case in every church of the land, that people were "speaking good" but too feebly of the Lord? When, oh, when would the church fully awaken, and its people become mirrors of Jesus unto all men! By the lives of professing Christians only, is the Lord known to the world.

Then, practical as ever, Keith began to think, or rather to collect his former conclusions, not only on this principle, but on the way in which it may be attained and disseminated. In what way may Christians reflect Christ?

First, as a condition, they must be with him constantly. No one can help being like those with whom he constantly associates. Hence, in living with Christ, we grow like Christ, and the world, in seeing us, may take knowledge of him. But the companionship must be constant.

Again, what is the only free—the only real—condition of this companionship? Is it not love? By loving Jesus we choose to be with

him; the more we love him, the more we become like him in our nature.

Then what is the evidence of loving? Is it not giving — giving of self — for another? Why does the mother work for her children, thus giving of herself for them? Because of her love. It is as natural to give as it is to breathe, when one loves fully.

What is love? "God is love." What is the greatest commandment of God? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Can this commandment be burdensome? A free soul in a free country wants no shackles. Joyously, triumphantly came the answer, No, a thousand times, no! Love knows no burden. Love takes us out of our own narrow selves. Love leads us to make the best of ourselves for those loved. It is only when I am truly unselfish that I am truly free. It is only as I forget myself for the sake of others, and in doing and caring for them, that I rise above earth's sordid things. It is only as I pour myself out in thinking of others that I become like God. As long as I think and work only for my own ends, my own advancement, regardless of what my life can do for the world, ready to trample on others that I may rise, I am living the life a devil might live in the perfect following of his evil nature.

Keith suddenly recollected his straying faculties again. Ha! His mind had been playing him strange tricks this evening. The sermon was over. He had not heard a word of it. He had merely had a vague consciousness that some one was talking. He was sorry now for this, because the bishop's sermons usually contained many beautiful and helpful thoughts. However, it was too late now to listen. The last hymn was being sung. Two by two the little choir-boys were marching slowly down, singing like angels, the light streaming

upon their white surplices and upon their sweet faces. On they passed, with the aged rector and his curate last of all. Keith watched them idly as they passed out, the sweet refrain of the parting hymn floating back faintly from beyond the sacristy. Then he bowed his head. There was silence in the church. How many souls were in communion with the Divine? And from afar off the voices of the choir came like a benediction, or an echo from heaven, in a long "Amen!"

Keith arose and stood in the entrance. Many people bowed to him as they went out, but before one only did he incline his head with something of the reverence one feels for a being of a higher order. Octavia Edgar swept by with her patrician air. A swift glance of recognition was all he received, but Keith stood with his head bared a moment longer than usual. Yet his soul bowed, not before Octavia Edgar as she was, but as she might be. He recognized the immense possibilities in her.

Some called her proud. Perhaps she was so. She was certainly regal. The poise of her head, her carriage, would have done credit to a queen. Her hair was brown, shimmering with golden threads. Her eyes were blue and thoughtful, her mouth and chin decided. She looked like a woman who had thought much, if, perhaps, on mistaken lines. On the whole she had a very beautiful and rather noble face.

This was the girl whom Dorothy had once mentioned to Keith as feeling "morbid" at the sight of suffering. She was an intimate friend of the family, and an especial favorite with Lady Cameron. She was bright, witty and educated. People had marked her out as the future bride of Dr. Keith, and, indeed, Keith had sometimes thought how lovable she might be were she a little more impressionable, a little less absorbed in her own circle of society, her own aims for gaining merely selfish information.

He did not think she was truly happy.

CHAPTER XIV.

DOROTHY AND OCTAVIA.

Sometimes he tried to introduce, in a natural manner, a few words which might help to bring her to a Christian life. She invariably either "laughed him off," or else discoursed calmly, but without feeling, upon the whys and wherefores of the case. She seemed to understand with her head, but her heart appeared dead to all such things.

Keith had hoped lately that by arousing her sympathies for the suffering ones of the city, he might draw her out of herself, away from her self-satisfied clique of associates, and reveal to her her own heart and the need of a more useful and noble life.

To-night he walked with her to her carriage.

"Miss Edgar," he said, "to-morrow I set sail for Europe. It is an unexpected call on business, but I may stay two or three years to study in the German schools while I am there."

"Yes?" Octavia suddenly realized that it would be somewhat lonely without this calm, strong doctor, who sometimes ventured to tell her what he thought of her, in a way to which she was not accustomed.

"Will you do me a favor, Miss Edgar?"
"Certainly."

He hesitated a moment. "If you think well of it, perhaps you will occasionally accompany my sister to see some of our poor in the flats. Dorothy sometimes finds it very hard to get any one to go with her."

"Certainly, I shall be happy," murmured Octavia. In truth she was a little disappointed that this was all. "I wish you a pleasant voyage."

He bowed, said good-by and handed her into the seat beside her mother. Not a word more. She sank back, half vexed, as the carriage rolled away; and Keith went home, a little lonely, a little in wonder as to the success of his parting shot.



With her mother and little brown-haired Dorothy sat in the depths of a great arm-chair, alternately rubbing her eyes, and caressing a beautiful Persian cat that was purring contentedly on her knee. Agnes en-

tered to announce a caller, Miss Octavia Edgar.

Dorothy sprang up exclaiming, "Oh, Octavia, is it? Show her right in here, Agnes." And a moment later the queenly Octavia entered, faultlessly attired. Her cheeks were colored by the cool morning breeze, and her rich coils of hair were arranged most becomingly about her finely formed head.

Dorothy caught both of Octavia's hands in hers.

"I am so glad you called, Octavia!" she said. "I have been very lonely all morning;" and she nestled her pink and white face on the brown velvet shoulder.

"I thought you would be feeling so, dear," returned Octavia, looking down into the great, brown eyes. "I thought I might be able to cheer you up. But see, Dorothy," and she placed her slender, gloved hand under the girl's chin, raising the face to hers; "I have also another object in coming. Behold, Octavia hath actually a piece of business on hand! Don't you feel a quiver of dispatch in the air?"

She spoke jestingly, but there was a ring of irony in the tone. Octavia evidently was not wholly satisfied with her pleasure-seeking life, for even her studies were carried on merely for the sake of the pleasure which they afforded her.



"Well, what wonder hath happened!" smiled Dorothy.

Octavia sat down and proceeded to draw off her gloves. "Dorothy," she said, after a long pause, "a few evenings ago your brother and I had a long talk. At the end of it he said, 'Miss Edgar, I have come to the conclusion that the truest Christian is the one who lives least for himself; that the worst heathen is he who lives most for himself.'"

She paused again and tapped her foot on the carpet.

"It was just like Keith to say that," returned Dorothy. "What then?"

Octavia suddenly sat up very straight and turned her beautiful eyes upon the girl. "Well," she said, briskly, "he knows very well that I am of no use to any one in this world except myself, and I doubt if I count for much even for myself,"—with a touch of bitterness. "Now, do you think he could have told me in plainer words how he despises me?"

"But, Octavia dear," urged Dorothy, "I am quite sure Keith didn't think of you at all when he said that. He knows how good and kind you are at home, and—and, besides, Keith is too much of a gentleman to say such a thing to you in that way, if he did believe it. Keith's whole life is based on ideas such as these, dear, and he just can't help telling his thoughts sometimes."

"At any rate, the point came to me very forcibly," returned Octavia, with the ghost of a smile. "I must be very vulnerable in that respect."

"But," said Dorothy, "what has all this to do with the business you have on hand, Octavia?"

"I'm coming to it. My story is not finished yet. Last Sunday evening he asked me, as a favor, if I would accompany you on some of your rounds."

Dorothy sat down at the older girl's feet, and gave the jewelled hand a squeeze.

"Oh!" she said, in an enlightened tone; "so you want to come with me soon?"

"Merely for the sake of ease of conscience, dear," replied Octavia. "I gave him my promise to do so. Besides, his words have been troubling me considerably. If I have been living in heathendom, I want to get out of it. You know Luther's definition of repentance is, 'Do so no more.'"

Dorothy sat very still for a few minutes. "Octavia," she said at last, "do you think this spirit is the right one to take with you into the homes of the poor?"

The question was a searching one. These girls were accustomed to talk to each other very plainly. The closeness of their friendship gave them this privilege, and the one never misunderstood the other. Octavia looked up quickly.

"You mean," she said slowly, "that my very selfishness is the motive for my going there? Well, perhaps you are right."

"You have put it very harshly," replied Dorothy. "I simply mean that we should go among these people because we care for them, not for any satisfaction we may derive from it ourselves."

"Which amounts to the same thing," said Octavia, with a shadowy smile. "But, Dorothy, how am I going to learn to care for them if I never go to see them?"

"That is so," admitted Dorothy. "I'll be delighted to have you go with me."

"Well, then," returned Octavia, "my carriage is waiting here. Come, get on your hat, and take me off at once, or the fever may go away from me. You will have to instruct me as to what has to be done. Dorothy. The breathing of foul airs and smelling of filthy vapors come as a matter of course; but must one coddle the dirty children, and all the rest of it?"

She spoke with a light, half-bitter air that distressed Dorothy, whose every emotion showed in her face. "You must not act in any way differently from the way in which you feel like acting," she said, slowly.

Octavia, seized with remorse, leaned suddenly forward and caught the sweet face between her hands.

"Forgive me, little Dolly!" she said. "I am not so cruel as I seem."

Dorothy's brow cleared. "I know that, Octavia dear," she said, "but please don't speak so."

"I will speak with the greatest respect henceforth," rejoined Octavia, kissing her again as she arose to put on her hat.

After they had entered the carriage, which was rapidly rolling towards the business part of the city, Octavia asked, "What are we going to take with us, Dorothy?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"Why, provisions, of course. Don't you carry things everywhere you go?"

Dorothy smiled. "Why, no, not always, Octavia," she replied. "They don't want things, so much as sympathy and encouragement in a great many cases. Many of these people would be deeply offended if you went in bluntly with a filled basket. Others would take all you could give them, and look for more, without stirring a finger to earn anything for themselves. Of course some really need to have food or fuel or clothes brought in at once. We have to consider all the circumstances of every case before acting in this way."

"So we'll not take any oatmeal and potatoes to-day, then?"

Dorothy reflected for a moment. "There's John Howard's family," she said; "he is sick. We might venture to take something there, and to Granny Holmes."

"Very well," returned Octavia. "What next do you do? Read the Bible?"

Dorothy's face grew very grave. "Sometimes," she said, "when heart touches heart immediately. But often one simply cannot broach this subject before becoming really acquainted with the people. It is too sacred, too dear, to be roughly intruded before the way is clear. And, Octavia dear, I don't think our Bible-reading has very much

effect upon these poor creatures until the bond of friendship and confidence has been established between them and us."

"So your tactics are all taken at first with a view to making friends with the people?"

Dorothy shook her head. "We don't use any tactics at all," she replied. "We just try to let the people understand that we care for them and are anxious to help them in the best way possible. After that the way is easier."

Her face was glowing with enthusiasm, and Octavia looked at her rather curiously.

"How did you get so much wisdom, you fairy?" she asked.

"Why, from Keith," replied Dorothy, with surprise.

Octavia smiled. For a time she did not speak. She was stroking Dorothy's hand lovingly, and thinking that this girl, with her sweet enthusiasm, her hopefulness, and her aims for making the little world about her better so far as she could, had found a happier life than she—she, the beautiful Octavia, admired, envied by nearly every young woman in society circles. This morning she almost felt as if she would give half of her privileges for the greater privilege of being able to live an unselfish life. She was an only child and an heiress, petted and a little spoiled and willful. As she thought of her home, she felt that there might be some room there for unselfishness on her part. Yet she had an idea that she could not really be a heart-helper, for there was something lacking in her own heart.

This morning she felt a little weary of her ceaseless round of pleasure, of parties and operas and yachting trips, and although she shrank from the ordeal, she almost hoped that this visit to scenes of misery such as she knew nothing of, might awaken a germ of real unselfishness sleeping in her heart.

The purchases were made and the carriage rolled on through the narrow streets of the poor district. Even, the prancing horses seemed to find themselves out of their ele-

ment and lifted their fine feet daintily over the rough, broken road. The coachman, in his tall silk hat, sat haughtily erect, wondering what the world was coming to.

Then the calling began. As the two girls walked through dirty halls and up dusty stairways into close, badly-ventilated rooms, filled with ragged children and haggard, often squalid women, they were touched with very different emotions. Dorothy's busy brain was constantly revolving plans for bringing about a better state of affairs, for inculcating ideas of cleanliness, for obtaining work for those in bitter need of it. In fact, as it was, she haunted the agencies of industry with unflagging persistence.

But Octavia's sensitive nerves suffered at the sights she witnessed, and her esthetic sensibilities received but one shock after another. She showed her disgust in her face and in her actions, much as she tried to conceal it. She could not refrain from lifting her silken skirts about her in dainty horror and keeping her filmy lace handkerchief at her nose. In a way she pitied these people, but she blamed them far more even for their poverty. She did not see how any one could really care for them, although she scarcely had an opportunity of judging them, for they were half afraid of her and acted in a strained, unnatural way. She was heartily glad when she was once more reclining on the luxurious cushions of her carriage and on the way home.

At last she said, "It's no use, Dorothy; I can't go there again. I almost hate those creatures. I know I despise them. Take my purse, dear, but leave me."

"Perhaps you have been intended to be useful in some other way, to some other class of people, Octavia," returned Dorothy, gently. "Yet," she pleaded, "you don't know these people; there is really more worthiness in them than you imagine."

Octavia looked at her seriously. "Do you really care for them, Dorothy?"

Dorothy's face lighted up with an expres-

sion that answered the question for her. "I think I do," she answered modestly, "because I want to help them more than anything else in this world."

She sat quietly thinking for a few minutes, then she said, "Jesus loves them, you know. If he were here now in the body again, he would not shrink from them. And why should we?"

Octavia turned to her. "Dorothy," she asked, "is it your love for these people, or your love for Jesus, which makes you take such pleasure in this work?"

Dorothy looked up in surprise. "Why," she replied, "of course my love for him makes me care more for them. You see, when Keith loves people I cannot help caring for them too; and in the same way, when I know Jesus loves people, I cannot help thinking more of them."

Octavia did not answer, and Dorothy continued, "Yet my love seems so feeble, when I think of that of others. Love for Jesus and for humanity has led people to go through a thousand times worse scenes than these, Octavia. You know it has inspired many to go out and live even among lepers, at the risk of contracting the terrible disease themselves. While there I am sure they must often think of Jesus as he walked about among the hills of Palestine, touching just such poor, blighted ones. Octavia, what a sight his face must have been as he did so! How full of divine love, divine compassion!"

Octavia could scarcely understand the depths in Dorothy's voice. She closed her eyes and wondered if she should ever learn to feel so about these things, and ere she opened them again the Cameron home had been reached, and it was time for Dorothy to get out.

Dorothy wrote a short account of this trip to Keith. She carefully avoided any reference to Octavia's actions, simply saying:

"Octavia says she cannot go again, Keith. She does not like such work at all. I do

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wish she were really a Christian. Don't you think it would change her feeling towards almost everything?"

Keith wrote back: "We will indeed hope that Octavia may yet be truly a Christian. But you must not forget that there are different kinds of Christians, Dorothy. Octavia may never be fitted for the work which seems to suit you so well, little sister, yet she may some day do as glorious a work in her own home, in her own circle of society. You know the educated, non-Christian rich are often harder to reach than the poor, and Octavia's fine personality should give her great power there. As for yourself, little sister, take care of my people while I am away, and never despair. You may meet some discouraging characters, Dorothy, but remember we cannot call any one with a soul utterly unclean. There is something, however feeble, in every man's soul which is beautiful. The best thing we can do with these poor people is to set this something going in the right direction; and the very best and highest direction is towards God."

And Dorothy kissed the letter and carried it about in her pocket for several days. During this time she was seriously considering the desirability of becoming a Sister of the Church. She desired to give all her time to her beloved work, and deemed this way the easiest method of attaining her object. At last she determined to broach the subject to her mother.

Lady Cameron was sitting in her own private chamber writing a letter, when Dorothy went to seek her. It was a pretty picture. The room was furnished in pearl-gray and old rose, and was one of the daintiest in the house. Lady Cameron, too, looked very stately, like a tall, white lily, in her morning-gown of white, with its golden girdle. Dorothy sat down on a footstool at her mother's feet—her favorite position with those she loved best—and Lady Cameron's hand dropped lightly upon her soft hair.

"Well, daughter," she said, looking into the anxious face, "what is the trouble?"

"Mother," returned Dorothy, in her business-like way, "I want, very, very much, to do something, and I am afraid you will not approve of it."

Lady Cameron smiled. "Oh, is that it? Well?"

Still Dorothy hesitated. She knew that Lady Cameron had a will strong as steel. At last, making a brave effort, she began:

"I should like very much to become a Sister of the Church. You know all the Sisters are very good, lovely women, and— and highly respected by all the church people."

The calm, half-amused expression of Lady Cameron's face had not changed in the least while her daughter was speaking. She now replied, in her low, musical voice.

"'Respected' is scarcely the term I would care to hear applied to the daughter of Sir Allan Cameron," she said. "One speaks of tradespeople and such as respectable. Really, Dorothy, you have no consideration whatever for the duties of your position."

"Mother, 'God is no respecter of persons,'" replied Dorothy gently.

But Lady Cameron did not appear to hear. "Dorothy," she said, "I am astonished at your want of good sense. Here you are, just grown up and ready to enter society. You are considered very pretty, my dear, and may associate with the best in the land. There is nothing to prevent your having a very brilliant social career. Instead you prefer to don a hideous black costume and bury yourself like a nun."

"But, mother," Dorothy ventured, "I have no objection to society—I think it's lovely. But—but I'm afraid that I shall have to give all my time to it, by and by, and—and I couldn't be happy then, I know."

"Why not, then, keep on as you are, prowling about in the slums occasionally, without making yourself ridiculously odd by wearing that ugly dress?"

"I will if you say so, mother," returned Dorothy, "but—"

Lady Cameron arose with a determined air. "Dorothy," she said, "if you have any respect for my wishes, do not mention this thing again. It is too utterly absurd. I had thought better of you."

The girl's face flushed crimson. "Very well, mother," she said, "I shall drop it here and now. But may I ask you for just one favor?"

"Certainly. What is it?"

"May I go out visiting occasionally with Sister Dell? She is such a lovely character, and I haven't any one to go with since Octavia will not go again."

"Yes, yes!" was the impatient reply. "go with her as much as you please. Child, child! you will drive me crazy with your notions!" And Lady Cameron pressed her white hands to her head as though half-distracted.

Dorothy arose and threw her arms impulsively about her mother.

"Dear mother, I will not make a friend of even Sister Dell, if you do not wish me to."

Lady Cameron's face softened.

"I have no objection to Sister Dell," she said. "I believe she is a very fine person, indeed. In fact, her brother is one of the most prominent clergymen in the diocese. Now, then, are you satisfied?"

"Yes, mother," Dorothy returned; then, with a sudden impulse, she kissed her mother on the cheek, and a hot tear fell upon it as she said, "Mother dear, thank you."

When she had left the room Lady Cameron half sighed as she thought, "If she were only more like Octavia Edgar in her tastes!" Then she smiled as her thoughts ran on, "But she is such a dear, little creature, after all! I don't know as I would have her different."

From that day Lady Cameron smiled on her daughter's growing intimacy with Sister Dell, and when the hot days came consented

to the Sister's proposal that Dorothy should accompany her to a place in the wilds of the mountain country, at which her brother had once had a mission church, and whither she was going for the sake of recuperating her health and for the unbroken rest which such a spot of entire seclusion would afford.

Thus the visit was arranged for, and, in great delight, Dorothy prepared for the holiday, little dreaming that ere its close she was to be brought directly to Gertrude Steinhoff, of whom she was of late beginning to grow forgetful.

CHAPTER XV.

THE STEINHOFFS AGAIN.



URING all this time, Adolphe Belleau, the French boy, had been going about, picking up odd jobs here and there, and

keeping always tolerably happy. As he grew taller and stronger, he found it much easier to obtain work, and he at last succeeded in getting a situation with a party of lumbermen who were going far up one of the numerous rivers, down which lumber is continually being floated throughout the timber limits of the Lower Province.

After that he drifted from place to place, in all sorts of out-of-the-way corners, until one day he found himself upon a small island in the midst of a rushing river. Upon this island was built a very curious little village, inhabited by a few French lumbermen. The houses, of which there were less than a dozen, were built of logs, in a style peculiar to themselves, low and with widely

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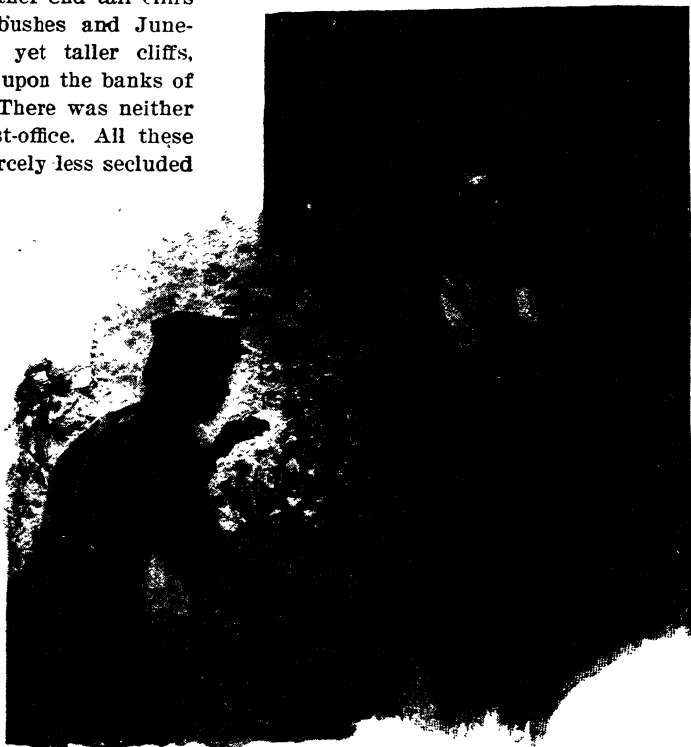
projecting eaves, and seemed to have been set down without any regard to system or order. There was no semblance of a street, but grass-grown paths led from house to house.

A saw-mill was built at one end of the island, and a strong bridge led from it to the main shore. At the other end tall cliffs covered with blueberry bushes and Juneberry trees arose, while yet taller cliffs, densely wooded, closed in upon the banks of the river on either side. There was neither store, nor school, nor post-office. All these were to be found at a scarcely less secluded mountain village across the forest, to which pilgrimages were made at different periods once or twice a year by a few of the denizens of the hamlet, who there purchased supplies of provisions for all the rest.

The few people who lived on the island spoke only French. It seemed a spot hidden from the world, and, indeed, these simple people had but little intercourse with any one outside of their own small sphere. Most of them could not read. Interested only in their mill and their lumber, they lived a hidden, sleepy and not unhappy life.

Adolphe, of course, almost immediately started on a trip of discovery about the island. As he reached the cliffs, he noticed a small and secluded cabin at the foot of the rocks and partly hidden by trees. Opposite to it, upon a broad granite boulder, sat a girl, dressed in the short, coarse, yet pictur-

esque, garb of the French peasantry, but before Adolphe reached her he caught a glimpse of bright golden hair. He started and looked at her sharply. She was sitting looking into the water, with an attitude that betokened deep dejection. He crept be-



Upon a granite boulder sat a young girl.

hind some bushes closer to the water, so that he might see her face.

Yes, it was Gertrude, paler and thinner than before, and with a hectic flush on her cheek.

"Poor little creature!" thought Adolphe. "So dis is w'ere she is come, instead of in Europe! It is no wonner she have de face pale an' de head down!"

He could not decide what would be the

best thing for him to do. He could not tell Dr. Keith Cameron of his discovery, for he had not yet returned from Europe. Then he bethought himself that Miss Dorothy Cameron, with Adolphe's sister, Agnes, and a black-gowned lady, was to arrive at the village of L—, across the forest, in a few days. Agnes had written him so. He would wait until they came and confer with Miss Dorothy. In the meantime, he would try to get a glimpse of Hermann, if he were still there.

He crept away without alarming the girl, and ascertained from one of the children that an old man lived in the cabin before which he had seen the golden-haired girl; that his name was Monsieur Adler, and that the pretty lady was Mademoiselle Adler; that Mademoiselle Adler was very lovely and kind. She had been teaching the children to read and write until lately, but she was very often ill now, and could do so no longer.

That evening Adolphe lay on the cliffs above the cabin, concealed among the blueberry bushes, and watched once more to see the old man. He was at last successful. Just at twilight the two fugitives issued from the door and walked slowly down by the river bank, Hermann leaning upon the arm of the frail girl for support. His steps were tottering, and he seemed on the very brink of the grave.

Adolphe Belleau's pulses beat faster at the sight of him.

"Ah!" he thought, "dere is de man w'at can set Wilhelm Steinhoff free if he will do it! Heem not leev long anyway. Some wan mus' hurry up make him spik queeck. It is wan beeg shame for de young man in de 'pen' an' de young lady in dis hole so long, all for dat mean ole duffer keep too quiet! I wish de doctor come home soon. Heem de wan to mak' de ole feller confess!"

Hermann Steinhoff and his granddaughter had come, by a circuitous route, directly to this island, which Hermann had come upon

by accident when trapping years before. Here, almost out of reach of telegraph or newspaper, he had felt quite secure. The passing curiosity of the few people who lived here was easily satisfied. Besides, the cost of living, in this hidden spot, was exceedingly small.

But, notwithstanding all this, Hermann was far from being contented. He felt that he had wrecked Gertrude's life, yet he feared to return to civilization with her. He had never confessed to her, or given her any inkling of the cause of his hiding. He had impressed upon her the need of absolute secrecy, and had insisted on their adopting an assumed name; and, filled with a nameless dread of she knew not what calamity, his granddaughter had yielded to his will.

Gertrude was often very unhappy. She felt that something dreadful had happened, and her very ignorance of that terrible thing invested it with a vague and awful horror. This preyed upon her day by day, until it was little wonder that her face grew pale and her round cheeks hollow.

Then, too, she missed her old, happy life in the city, and the many young friends she had known there. Above all, she felt the loss of Wilhelm. Too late she had come to realize that she cared for him even as he had cared for her. She wondered if he would ever find her. She thought he was assuredly searching for her, for he had said he would. The temptation to write to him was at times almost irresistible, but Hermann had forbidden her to do so, claiming that harm would follow, both to themselves and to Wilhelm.

Then, with a fear of becoming wholly melancholy, she had sought for some work to do, and had gathered in the little ignorant children in order that she might teach them. Their loving, innocent ways had touched her, and her heart began to go out to those about her. She had ministered wherever there was sickness or death, and the simple folk of the secluded hamlet blessed

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her. So the days passed on, long, lonely, yet not altogether wasted, until she grew too weak to go about longer. One day she was suddenly obliged to take to her bed. Adolphe, who was still in the vicinity, heard of her illness, and grew still more impatient for the arrival of Dorothy Cameron at L—. She arrived before he was aware of it.

One hot day towards the end of July, an unusual sight might have been seen on the banks of the stream just below the village. In a green bower, formed by overhanging beech and maple trees, sat a fair girl and a woman whose sombre and loosely-formed garments could not rob her of the sweetness of her face. Dorothy's head was on Sister Dell's knee, and her broad hat, wreathed with ferns, was thrown on the ground near. Great rocks, green with mosses and lichen, arose beyond, and a little waterfall, whose crystal drops trickled and dripped from ledge to ledge, murmured musically near. Sister Dell was quietly enjoying the rest. Dorothy was thinking that it was indeed a day whereon it was enough "not to be doing, but to be."

They were startled by the sound of someone breaking through the greenery of the underwood. Then a face appeared, and Dorothy cried in surprise, "Adolphe!"

He advanced, hat in hand. "You will pardon me for dis intrusion, Mademoiselle," he said; then, glancing at Sister Dell, he went on in a half-whisper, "I have found de Steinhoffs!"

"What! Where?" exclaimed Dorothy.

"Very near—jus' on de oder side de fores," he replied. "An' w'at is more, de golden-hair is very seeck. De ole man is very much distress. Somet'ing mus' be soon done. If de ole man die very queek, dere's no more hope for Wilhelm Steinhoff to get free."

Dorothy was staring at him in perplexity. "But what can I do, Adolphe?" she asked, helplessly.

"If you would write to de good doctor, to ask what he say about it—queeck, Mademoiselle. Den if you could perhaps see de golden-hair—"

Dorothy nodded. "I see," she said. "But we will keep very quiet about it until we hear from my brother."

"Certain," returned Adolphe, emphatically, "we mus' not alarm dem. Dey safe anyway. Dat ole man heem now too ole, too feeble, to put in de 'pen.' Dey never put heem dere now."

He then proceeded, with many a gesture, to relate all the circumstances of his visit to the island, and his story was heard with the most intense interest both by Dorothy and by Sister Dell, to whom the main facts of the case were already known. When Adolphe had departed to the village in search of his sister, the two friends had a consultation as to what they should now do. It was decided that, in consideration of Sister Dell's connection with a charitable and religious body, she might pay a visit to the sick girl without fear of being thought presumptuous, and, if necessary, might continue to wait upon her. Dorothy for the present would remain where she was.

Accordingly, dressed in her long black robes, Sister Dell set out across the forest on the following day. She found Gertrude very ill indeed, and Hermann in despair. He had forgotten his own danger in that of his darling, and was ready to welcome this calm, kindly woman, who so sweetly offered to take charge of the sick one.

During the long, hot nights that followed. Gertrude raved incessantly, talking now of some almost forgotten incident of her old life, now of Wilhelm, calling upon him to come and save her from her loneliness, from the dreadful dangers that were closing in about her. Sometimes old Hermann would hear her, and would bow his head and rub the tears from his eyes.

At last one night, towards morning, Sister Dell, looking up from her book, for she was

quietly reading, found Gertrude's great, solemn eyes fixed upon her.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"I am Sister Dell."

"And you have been taking care of me?"

"I have been trying to."

The sick girl closed her eyes for a moment, then opened them again, with the same wistful, half-fearful gaze.

"I have been talking a great deal, have I not?" she asked.

"Yes, dear. Now, try to go to sleep."

"But I cannot go to sleep, and I must talk. I have been speaking about Wilhelm, haven't I?"

"Yes."

"Do you know whom I meant?" Gertrude raised her head from the pillow and asked the question searchingly.

Sister Dell could not evade the question.

"I think we had better not talk about this, to-night," she said. "You must not excite yourself, by talking."

"Tell me," pleaded Gertrude. "I shall be much more excited if you do not answer my question."

"Well, then," replied Sister Dell. "I thought you meant Wilhelm Steinhoff."

Gertrude returned in a low voice, "Yes, I meant Wilhelm Steinhoff. Can you tell me anything of him?"

Her great eyes were again reading the Sister's face, and the latter answered hastily, "I can tell you that he is well. He is not in the city now, so I know little more about him. Now then, I insist on your not asking any more questions, dear. Remember," she added in a low voice, "for Wilhelm's sake you must grow strong and well." And Gertrude was then willing to be patient.

In the meantime, Dorothy had written to Keith. He received her letter just as he was starting for home; and, after a short stop in the capital to see his mother, he proceeded at once to the mountain village at which his sister was staying.

One fine afternoon he and Dorothy arrived

at the island. He proceeded at once to have an interview with Hermann. For hours the two men were closeted together. No one ever knew what was said in that long, secret conversation, but Dorothy noticed that when they came out the expression of Keith's face was almost triumphant, while Hermann had been weeping.

In his hand Keith held a paper upon which something was written. Sister Dell was asked to read it. Then it was placed on a table, and the faltering old man, with the tears still wet upon his withered cheeks, sat down and slowly signed his name, though the hand trembled so that he could scarcely hold the pen. Then Keith and Sister Dell also affixed their signatures as witnesses. It was Hermann Steinhoff's confession.

CHAPTER XVI.

JACK LEAVES A FAREWELL FOR BUNNY.



URING that spring, before Keith Cameron's return, a terrible thing happened in the Canadian penitentiary.

For many, many days Fisherman Jack had been revolving a bold plan in his mind. Day after day he grew more and more sullen, more and more moody. Day after day, when working in the back of the prison, he thought of the ice-covered channel that lay just without the walls. Then, when the ice grew thin and rotten and began to break, he wrote a letter. It said:

"Dear Bunny: I am going to run away if I can. I want to say good-by to you, for mebbe I kant get across for the ice and

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mebbe the gard will see me and shoot, but I kant stand this life any longer, and I am in for fifteen yeres more. I always thot a lot of you, Bunny; don't forgit me, and if I get drouned plese don't think eny harder of me than you have to. I beleave you're not gilty as you say, and I hope you will soone get free. Good-by from Jack."

This letter he addressed to "Mr. Bunny Hare, No. 875;" but he did not give it to the keeper who carried the letters. He pinned it very carefully on the under side of his hard pillow.

That day he had, with a number of others, a task at repairing the wall close beside the water. As the shades of evening began to draw on he watched for his opportunity. The guards, deeming the rushing, swollen current, covered with blocks of ice, a sufficient preventive of escape, were keeping a rather careless watch upon the men under their care.

At a moment when no one was looking, he dashed into the boiling flood, and, trusting to his giant strength, began swimming for the opposite side. The prisoners who had been working with him stared, dumb with astonishment. Now they saw his great head appear above the mad waves; now it suddenly disappeared as he dived beneath a floating piece of ice. The men watching moved not a muscle. As they realized what he was attempting to do they gazed breathlessly, hoping for his success, and determined not to tell on a comrade. Then a guard, turning, saw the gray, motionless figures below, staring out over the water. He, too, looked, and saw for one instant the black head appear, about half way across. He raised his rifle to fire, then lowered it and raised a loud alarm, commanding some one to go across by the bridge to the other side.

In the meantime, the convict's strength appeared to be failing. The ice-cold water seemed to be cramping his limbs. His strokes grew weaker and more spasmodic.

Once more he disappeared beneath a floe of pure, white ice, and this time he rose no more. Fisherman Jack was dead.

Slowly and sadly the shivering group of convicts returned to their cells, and those within, looking at the excited, frightened expression of their faces, wondered what had happened. It was noticed that Fisherman Jack's great, burly form was not with them.

That night Chaplain Hare carried the letter to the cell of No. 875. It was the first communication which Wilhelm had received in the prison. He read the note, and looked anxiously at the chaplain.

"He did not return with the rest," he said; "he is—"

"Drowned," supplied the chaplain, sorrowfully.

Wilhelm placed his hands across his eyes for a moment, then sadly folded the paper, with its pitiful story, and placed it in his bosom. "Poor Jack!" he said. That was all. There was nothing more to be said.

"Mr. Steinhoff," said the chaplain after a time, "you will pardon my curiosity, will you not? I have an object in asking. Why did poor Jack address you as Bunny Hare?"

"Because," said Wilhelm, "that is really my name—William Hare."

The chaplain was regarding him anxiously and tenderly. "Do you know what your father's name was?" he asked, "or anything whatever about him?"

"I know nothing of him," returned Wilhelm, slowly, "except that his name was Northcote Hare, and that he and my mother both died when I was almost a baby."

The chaplain seized him by the hand. "Northcote Hare!" he exclaimed. "There could be only one of that name, and he was my brother, my long-lost brother! Dear lad, why did you not tell me this before?"

Wilhelm's hearty grasp was returning the pressure of the other's hand. "Because," he said, "it is scarcely a convict's place to claim the relationship even of a name."

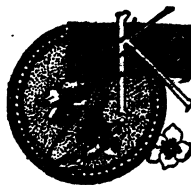
The chaplain was regarding his face with a gaze of penetrating tenderness. "Ah, I see it now," he was saying to himself, "the look that seemed so strangely familiar—Northcote's own look. My boy, my boy! this is a glad revelation to me."

Then the two men sat down upon the cot upon which they had so often rested, and Wilhelm related the little he knew of his childhood—of how an old woman had once told him that his father, when dying, had given a woman money to pay her for keeping the little lad and giving him a trade, but that she had kept the money, and had managed in some way to get little Bunny off into Fisherman Jack's care. Bunny had always remembered the words, for it had seemed to him strange that he had ever had a father.

And Wilhelm rejoiced in this new-found relationship. He felt that in this uncle his father had returned to him.

CHAPTER XVII.

KEITH VISITS THE PENITENTIARY.



KEITH and Dorothy had returned to the city. By reason of Hermann Steinhoff's great age and exceeding frailty, the doctor felt quite confident of preventing an arrest. He had great influence with the city officials and knew it. Consequently he had given Hermann some security for believing that his liberty would not be interfered with. However, he had requested him to come, as soon as convenient, to the capital, where his presence might possibly be required in hastening the matter of Wilhelm's liberation. To this Hermann had at once given his assent.

Keith had promptly taken steps towards securing the young man's speedy removal

from the prison, but, owing to some complications, the matter was delayed, much to the physician's annoyance. In the meantime, Keith took a trip to the Limestone City.

At the penitentiary he was received by the warden himself, and shown into a private chamber. It was not considered necessary for the distinguished physician and philanthropist, Keith Cameron, to be taken to the iron-barred apartment in which, in the presence of a guard, the convicts were obliged to hold all conversations with their visitors.

"Can you send Steinhoff to me immediately?" he said. "My time is limited."

"Certainly," returned the warden. "By the way, a rather peculiar thing has happened. It turns out that this man, Steinhoff, is a nephew of the chaplain here. Mr. Hare believes him to be innocent."

Keith gave a nod of approval. "The matter has been, to my mind, proved," he said; "only some miserable technicalities are preventing his immediate liberation."

"Indeed! I am glad of it," was the warden's reply. "His conduct has been most exemplary. I am under the impression that he is a fine fellow."

The warden departed, and in a moment Wilhelm Steinhoff entered. He recognized the noted physician at once, bowed low, and then stood in silent courtesy. The day was rather warm. Wilhelm had been working hard, and the only upper garment he wore was a coarse, sleeveless woolen shirt, opened at the throat, and thus exposing a chest massive in its strength. His arms were bare, and the great muscles stood out like ropes beneath the skin. There was no look of prison depravity about the frank, manly countenance, no look of dulled mental faculties about the deep, intellectual eyes. None of these details escaped the sharp, quick scrutiny of the doctor. Keith had the greatest admiration for a grand physique.

He felt the profoundest sympathy for this

young convict thus bravely enduring a trial wrongly imposed upon him. Without speaking a word, he held out his hand. Wilhelm hesitated, their eyes met, then the convict seized the white, shapely hand of the other in the strong, warm grasp of his hardened hand.

"Steinhoff," said Keith, in a low, exultant tone, "I have come to bring you good news. Your innocence has been fully established."

For one moment the strong man felt as though he should fall. He grew pale to the lips. Then a great light shone in his face, a sudden, glorious light, that quickly vanished.

"But Hermann — Gertrude — where are they?" he asked, his voice full of anxiety.

"They are safe, and he will be so, I trust," returned the doctor. "Hermann has, indeed, confessed, but he is now almost on the verge of the grave. In fact he cannot live longer than a year. He will not be arrested."

"And my sister?"

"Will be in the capital at an early date."

The terrible strain was at an end. The convict dropped into a chair, bowed his head upon the table and trembled. Could it be possible that the weary days of drudgery were over? that once more he was to go forth to life, with his name unsullied? He could scarcely realize it, and Dr. Cameron stood by, looking down upon him with a great joy at his heart, scarcely less moved than he.

Then the convict raised his head and there were tears in his eyes. "Dr. Cameron," he said, "you have been the means of bringing this about. I cannot thank you, unless the knowledge of my joy and gratitude can be your reward."

But Keith shook his head. "I have had little to do with it," he said. "Keep your thanks for the French boy, Adolphe Bel-leau — you remember?"

Wilhelm did remember. That scene of the court room, the flushed boyish face full of

sympathy and indignation, the shrill treble which had cried out, "Heem never do it! Heem innocent as you!" had been often before him; but now, whenever he thought of that young face, another arose beside it, a sallow, sunken face, with great, haunting dark eyes — that of No. 869.

Then Keith sat down and told him all the circumstances, as they have been related in these pages; circumstances fraught with intense interest for the man who listened as though his life depended upon every word. Wilhelm would not be immediately released, but that mattered nothing now. He could dream of the earth that seemed fair as paradise, and of blue skies and floating clouds unbounded by prison walls, of friends — ah, of his friend, for had he any now but Gertrude? The waiting would be a fever. But he could wait.

"Will you tell me," said Keith, drawing out his watch, "what is your impression of human nature as you have observed it during your stay here?"

Wilhelm looked off through the window to the garden, in which silent, gray-clad figures were bending over the ground, occasionally lifting expressionless or scowling faces as they stood up from their work.

"I have found this to be true," he said, in his deep voice; "that scarcely a man of these fallen ones is utterly, irremediably bad. But they need the most careful treatment. In many of them sin seems to be a disease, perhaps hereditary. These find it hardest to arise. But in every one there is some spot which might yet be touched, some germ of good which might yet be developed."

He paused and passed his hand across his brow.

"I believe this also to be true," he said: "that every man, no matter how vile, has at some time, at many times, during his career, had the experience of being drawn towards a higher life. Of not choosing to follow these promptings a fall has been the

result. In some, gradually, falling has grown to be a habit, until the will has become almost paralyzed."

Dr. Cameron had arisen, and was pacing up and down the floor with folded arms.

"Yes," he exclaimed, in the low, musical voice which invested everything he said with a peculiar charm, sending his utterances to the hearts of his hearers, "would God that some one would blazon abroad from end to end of the land the proclamation, 'Choose ye, for in not choosing there is death!' Yes, death of the faculties, which is the natural, inevitable consequence of drifting—of sin!" He paused. "And yet it would be sufficient to show men God," he continued; "that would change all things, bringing brightness and light where all is dark."

The convict's face grew strangely tender. "Yes, Dr. Cameron," he said in his rich, deep tones, "the knowledge of God and his love has been able to transform even this prison for me."

The doctor turned and laid his hand upon Wilhelm's shoulder. He seemed to understand this man. "Steinhoff," he said, "I believe this world is on the verge of a great revival. The signs of the times point to a forward movement, perhaps unprecedented. Unless I am greatly mistaken you will be one of its most powerful vicegerents. A man who can thus rise above such an environment may be a power for good, were it only in letting his life shine."

Wilhelm did not reply, and presently Dr. Cameron took his departure. The convict went back to his cell, but from that day he enjoyed comparative liberty, and his shaven hair was allowed to grow until the glossy waves again began to appear about his finely formed head.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LADY OCTAVIA OLDBURY'S PARTY.



UPON the evening of Keith's return from the Limestone City, he attended a party given by Lady Octavia Oldbury. For Octavia Edgar was married. She had married a man of wealth and title, and every one said she had done well.

Her dinners, her luncheons, her select evenings and receptions, were the admiration of the social world, and Octavia seemed gayer, more beautiful, more fascinating than ever.

Keith was the lion of the occasion. Every one was glad to welcome him back after his long absence in Europe. Rather late in the evening he went out alone upon a broad balcony, filled with flowers, and sat down. The house was on the high bank of the river, and mountain and water were bathed in moonlight. It was very still and peaceful. Only the sound of the orchestra floated out softly upon the crisp autumn air.

A step sounded behind him and he looked around. Octavia stood in the doorway, radiant beneath the glow of a colored light and framed in by the leaves of tall palms behind her. She was magnificent in golden-hued silk and diamonds.

She came over beside him. He arose. "Shall I bring you a cloak? It is cool," he said.

"Thank you, no; here is a shawl. I am hostess now, you know, so must go in very soon."

"You have a beautiful home," he remarked. "This view of river and mountain is inspiring."

She replied absently, "Yes, I suppose so;" then, turning towards him suddenly, "What new thing did you learn while you were away, Dr. Cameron?"



"Many things; but, most of all, the same old lesson over again."

"What is that?"

"That God is love, and that we become like him to the extent that we live in communion with him."

She looked out at the rippling river silently.

After a pause she said, "I suppose you intend plunging back again among those filthy poor people, as soon as you are settled."

"No mud can soil us but the mud we throw," quoted Keith with a smile. "I shall certainly go back among my poor. I am very anxious to see them again. Yet," he reflected, "sometimes I think I should like to do more among the non-Christian rich, if only I knew how. Their opportunities for coming to the light are so much greater than they are far more responsible for their rejection of Christ."

"You are hitting at me, as of yore, doctor."

"I was not thinking of you in the least just now," he replied, absently. His thought, indeed, was of his mother.

"You think God is love, whatever happens?" she asked.

"We are told that 'God is love,'" he replied, gently.

She turned suddenly and leaned towards him. "Dr. Cameron, you are clever, learned, handsome, benevolent, useful, with the prospect of a long and bright life before you. If you were to become suddenly ill and perhaps have to die, would you still think that God is love? I know the Bible says so, but would you feel it, really?"

"I do not know," he replied. "It is a hard test that you would put upon me. Yet I think I should trust that in the end all must be right and best. Mortal eyes are dimmed by a thousand mists and vapors which give distorted views of things. 'At eventide it shall be light.'"

"I cannot understand this," she said, with a sigh. She stood leaning over the balcony

railing for a moment, then added, with a start:

"What made me say those words? I try always to shut my eyes to everything disagreeable. What possessed me to think of anything so gruesome to-night? Forgive me, will you not?"

She gave him her hand for an instant and went in.

"After all," she was thinking, "it is a blessing he never cared for me and asked me to marry him. I suppose I should have done so once. We would never have understood each other."

Keith had turned his eyes again to the black, silver-tipped range. Unconsciously with his thought was blending the emotion of the Psalmist. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help." His lips moved. He was praying that the life of the woman who had just left him might not be wasted, but be fruitful unto good works.

On the way home Keith was very silent. Dorothy was tired and was sitting with her head on his shoulder. He caught her warm hand and held it in his all the way. He took great comfort in this sweet, sympathetic little sister.

CHAPTER XIX.

A GAME OF POLO.



URING the long autumn evenings one of Dorothy's favorite amusements was to sit upstairs, at one of the front windows of the house, and watch the games and exercises that were usually carried on in Cartier Square. Occasionally a foot-ball match was played there, and people going past stopped along the sidewalks until the board fence was lined with spectators. Very often

the red-coated soldiers of the infantry battalions were brought out there to drill, or a troop of dragoons would be put through their military exercises. It was always a delight to Dorothy to watch the horses as they formed in line, now two abreast, now four, now six, and then walked, cantered, galloped, over the field.

Especially did she delight in watching the games of polo which were occasionally played there. There was something very fascinating about the gracefulness of both horses and riders, the swaying bodies of the men, the quick turns of the cantering horses, so skillfully managed to follow every move of the ball that it seemed as though the intelligent animals went after it of themselves. Dorothy would watch every maneuver closely, and clap her hands whenever a particularly clever stroke of the long polo stick was made. This was Keith's favorite game, and he often played it. Perhaps that was the reason she liked it best.

Towards the end of October this year a game had been arranged for. Heavy early frosts had rendered the ground hard and bare, and it was in excellent condition for this the last game of the season. Keith was to take part, and long before the game began Dorothy was upstairs in her place of vantage. While waiting she sat down upon a heap of cushions on the floor, and was soon deeply absorbed in a book.

Keith came in, dressed for the field. She thought she had never seen him look better. His eyes were sparkling with good spirits in anticipation of the sport, and his cheeks were slightly flushed. He looked so healthy, so tall and strong! She felt very proud of her brother.

He drew a big arm-chair directly in front of the window and placed her in it.

"Now," he said, "sit there from the very beginning to the very end of the game, little sister. You know the knights-errant of old had their ladies wave them on to victory. You are the only lady-love I have, so

mind, I'll expect to see a white handkerchief floating up here at your lattice presently."

"H'm!" she said, "what will be the use? You'll not look up if I do. You'll never think of me at all!"

"Won't I?" he replied, kissing her. "See if I don't! I'll wave to you in the very middle of the game. Well, good-by. Be good." And he was off.

She watched him ride his favorite horse, Macbeth, into the field. Then, after a few preliminary pacings to and fro, the game began.

Maria and Elgin streets were black with spectators. Dorothy, unheeding the cool air, threw up the window and leaned out. She snatched up a field-glass from the table near, and was immediately in the thick of the game. She could hear the clanking of the horses' feet on the ground distinctly. The little white ball, aimed by strong, winding strokes, flew over the ground. The horses pranced and turned and curvetted. The game was a very close one, and the contest was growing hotter every moment. Dorothy felt her cheeks flush and her pulses throb with excitement.

All at once Keith seemed to remember his promise. He looked towards Dorothy, raised his polo stick and gave it a wave over his head. The suddenness of the movement seemed to startle Macbeth. He reared madly upward and plunged. Keith was off his guard. He lost his grip of the stirrups, made a wild effort to regain them, and was thrown to the ground.

Dorothy uttered never a sound. As if turned to stone, with white face and terror-stricken eyes, she still gazed out of the window. She saw Macbeth dash away madly with flying stirrups. She saw the players leap from their horses and gather about the prostrate form. She saw dozens of men and boys spring over the fence and mingle in the increasing knot of anxious people. Then she saw the crowd separate and something being carried slowly across the field after a

white-faced, hatless man, who was running towards the house.

The pearl-cased field-glass fell from her fingers and rolled down with a crash on the pavement below. She moved not, but stared on as before. Then people began to look up at her, and to call one another's attention to her pityingly.

A reaction set in. She threw up her arms and fell back in the chair in a dead faint. There she was found, in blessed unconsciousness, and when she awoke from it Octavia, strong and magnetic, was with her, soothing her and stroking her poor, wildly-throbbing head.

"Is he dead?" Dorothy gasped, with white lips.

"No," answered Octavia.

"Take me to him."

"The doctors are with him. Besides, it might harm him if you went to him now." Octavia's voice was calm and reassuring.

Dorothy sank back with a moan.

"Do they think Keith will get better?"

"They have every hope."

Dorothy closed her eyes, and Octavia's strong, warm hand folded over hers.

Dorothy was still so long that Octavia fancied she must have fallen asleep, and left her, going softly on tiptoe over the thick rug to the door.

But Dorothy was not asleep. Presently she opened her eyes, slid from the couch and went quietly out of the room. The house was strangely silent and lonely. She shuddered. She stole past the door of her mother's room and heard sobs within. She pushed it slightly open and looked in. Octavia was bending over Lady Cameron's bed, and Dorothy turned away again. She went on quickly towards the room where Keith had been taken.

At the door she met Agnes coming out with a basin in her hand. The French girl's eyes were red with weeping. She put the basin down, and, catching up Dorothy's hands, kissed them over and over.

"Is he worse, Agnes?" whispered Dorothy.

"No, Miss Dorothy, no; not worse than he was," stammered Agnes, but she looked at the other strangely.

Dorothy pushed open the door and went in. The room was darkened by shades drawn low over the lights, and a nurse was already in attendance. Keith's favorite physician, old Dr. Lambert, was standing by a table working with some bandages. The girl went straight on to the bed.

Keith was very, very white. His head was bound across with a white bandage, and the coverlet rose and fell quickly with his heavy breathing. He seemed to be aware of her presence and opened his eyes. She kissed him gently and took his hand in hers. He smiled, then closed his eyes again, and Dorothy sank on her knees beside the bed.

There she remained until the nurse whispered in her ear that she must go to bed and try to get some sleep.

"No, nurse," she said, "I will stay with you." And no entreaty could alter her decision. All through the night she sat, holding Keith's cold hands and looking at his dear, white face.

Once he muttered something. She bent her ear down to his lips to hear. "At the window—Dorothy—bless her! Take care, Macbeth! Take care, good horse!"

Dorothy's head went down upon the pillow and her breaking heart found vent in sobs. But Keith began to stir and she immediately hushed them again. He opened his eyes.

"Dorothy! You here?" he whispered. "Oh, yes, I remember," he added, with a sigh.

She stroked a few locks of waving black hair escaping from beneath the bandage into place and kept her hand on his forehead. It seemed to soothe him.

"I didn't get it after all," he said, faintly.

"What, Keith?"

"The pardon for young Steinhoff, you

know. I—I didn't have time enough. Will—you—see about it, Dorothy, if you can? Don't let them delay, will you?"

"Yes, yes!" she cried, to satisfy him, but with a cold horror stealing over her. What did he mean by charging her to see to this? Did he think he was going to die? She arose and went steadily out into the hall, then she staggered into a seat. Old Dr. Lambert followed her and took her into his arms, as a father might have done.

"What does he mean? Oh, what does he mean?" she whispered, wildly.

The good old man's cheeks were wet with tears, and his arms tightened about her.

"Dorothy, my dear little girl, you must keep brave—for Keith's sake."

She looked at him sharply. "Keith is going to die?" she said, turning white to the lips. She had read in the doctor's face that which he could not find words to tell.

"My poor dear, it is better for you to know the worst," he said.

"Doctor, tell me truly, how long can he live?"

The doctor wiped his eyes. "We'll—we'll—Dorothy, we'll hope to keep him two or three days!"

She sat straight up and stared at him for a moment with wide-open eyes. Then she rose and walked steadily back to the bedside. She could not lose one moment away from him.

Before morning Keith spoke to her again.

"Dorothy?"

"Yes, dear."

"To-morrow send for all my poor. I want to see them all once more. Doctor says—nobody—can come in, but someone can run my bed to the window—and I'll look down at them all."

"Yes, Keith!" Dorothy was choking to keep back the tears.

"Where is mother?" he asked.

"In her room. Agnes says she is sleeping. Do you want to see her?"

"No, not now. Don't forget to go to her

often, Dorothy." And he closed his eyes again.

From that moment on, for the next three days, Dorothy hardly closed her eyes in sleep nor ever went out of his chamber except to go up to her mother's room occasionally. Her great eyes grew hollow, and heavy black rings came about them. Yet she did not feel weary. Agnes would bring her coffee and a little of some dainty trifle, served up in the most tempting manner possible. She would eat and drink mechanically, then return to her vigil again. She made no outcry, but was calm and self-possessed throughout, only for the awful look of loneliness on her face. Dr. Lambert and the nurse could have wept for her many times a day.

Lady Cameron was completely prostrated by the shock, and unable to leave her bed. Octavia stayed with her a great deal of the time, but Dorothy nursed her trouble alone. To her, in this early stage of her grief, no human being could bring comfort. Her whole life, thought and feeling was, as yet, bound up with Keith's flickering torch of life. Nothing else in all the wide world was real to her.

CHAPTER XX.

KEITH'S "POOR."



As the gray dawn, after that first fearful night, stole up over the sky, Keith seemed to grow restless, and, at times, half wandering.

"Have you sent any one to tell them yet?" he would ask every little while, and then he would

turn his shining eyes toward the window.

Dr. Lambert had at first objected to this scheme of Keith's for seeing his poor. He

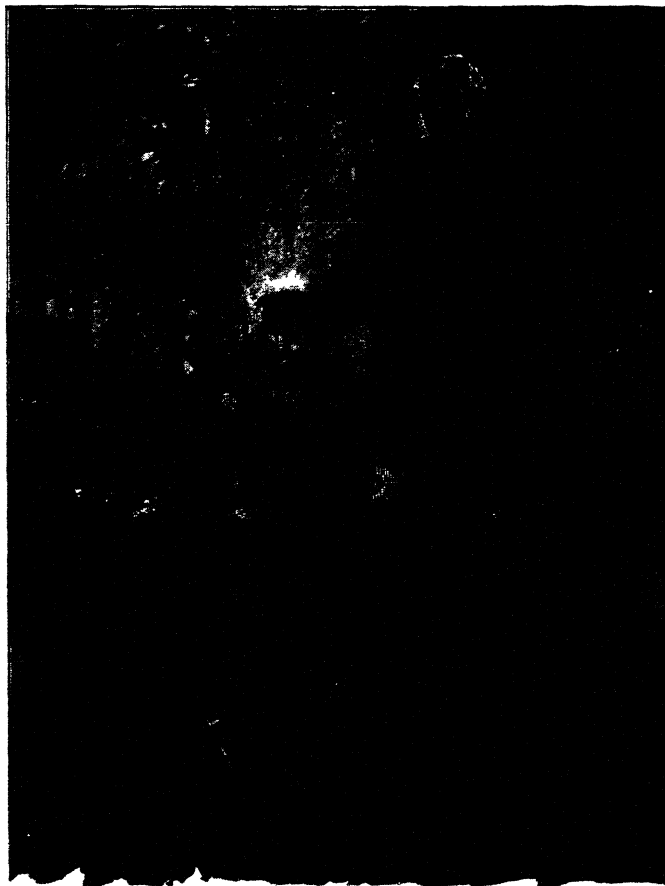
feared that the excitement might quench too soon the candle which was so speedily burning out. But Keith insisted so anxiously, that in order to save the little strength he had left, his wish was granted, and, ere the sun arose, a swift messenger was speeding on horseback from house to house among the flats of Lower Town. The people, unaccustomed to controlling their emotions, gave full vent to their grief, and exclamations of sorrow, sobs and tears greeted the message given by the horseman that all who could do so were to meet at Dr. Cameron's house at two o'clock that afternoon.

In the meantime, Keith was suffering much pain from internal injuries. His brain grew clearer as the day wore on. He kept his eyes closed most of the time, but he seemed to be thinking, for at times his face grew radiant.

As the appointed hour drew nigh, his bed was gently rolled to the window. But the blind was not yet raised.

Octavia, from the window of the room above, looked down upon the strange scene without. A little before two o'clock a wondrous concourse of people began to gather on the broad pavement that led up to the steps of the Cameron home—ragged people, lame people, people with the marks of vice and dissipation in their countenances, but all with sorrowful faces.

Silently they took their places and there remained, almost motionless, save when urged forward by the crowd that pressed on from behind. So great was this crowd that those in front were pressed upward



A hush spread over the motley concourse.

upon the very steps, while many others scattered at either side of the broad walk. Yet there was no noise, no confusion.

Precisely at two o'clock Dr. Lambert stepped out upon the veranda. Every eye was on him in an instant, and a hush as of death spread over the motley concourse.

"Friends," said the old doctor, with a break in his voice, "I need not warn you to be as quiet, as self-contained, as possible. Any loud expression of your grief may be harmful to our—our brother. Watch this window and you may see him for a few moments only. Now, I depend upon you."

"Amen!" responded two or three. And every eye was turned on the window.

The blind was drawn up. Every one could see clearly the beloved face of their mutual friend and benefactor, white and wan, in the dark setting of the window. Keith was propped up on pillows, and was supported by an old college friend, and by Octavia's husband, Sir Henry Oldbury. Dorothy stood behind, weeping silently.

A momentary swaying took hold upon the people. Uncouth faces changed instantaneously. Pity, pain, anguish, were written on every countenance. Some nearest the window knelt as if beseeching his blessing. One woman held aloft her little child to look at him. Tears ran down cheeks rarely visited by them, and heavy sighs and sobs burst from the woe-stricken multitude.

Keith looked over the faces, as though he would gaze at each one separately; then he smiled and pointed upward. Many eyes looked towards the sky as though expecting to see an angel in visible form. Groans and smothered sobs broke out afresh. But their friend was growing weaker. He smiled once, and waffed a kiss from his fingers to them. Then the blind went down and they saw him no more.

Octavia, looking from above, had been strangely moved. These ragged people, weeping as though their hearts would break, were revealed to her as never before. So was the life of Dr. Keith Cameron; and, in contrast with it, the empty shell of her own rose up in condemnation of her. She understood at last that these people were of flesh and blood, and hearts, and emotions, even as she, and that the power of Christian love had touched them as nothing else

could have done. The divine beauty of a Christian life, a revelation of the spring from whence that life is filled, appealed to her with wondrous strength. She sank on her knees by the window, and tears rained down her beautiful face.

The people were at last turning to go away, when they were suddenly arrested. Some one was speaking. Every eye was again turned towards the house.

Upon the step beside Dr. Lambert stood a man, a little, shrivelled man, with a few strands of thin, white hair trailing over the collar of his long, black coat. So old was he that he looked like a mummy to whose eyes the life had suddenly returned.

The tall, ruddy, white-haired doctor beside him, looked at him in amazement, the more so that this old man was leaning on the arm of a young and frail-looking woman. Not less astonished was, at least, one other person in that audience, a young man who stood near the street, Adolphe Belleau, who wondered greatly what was about to happen now.

"Friends, listen!" the old man was saying in a weak and quavering voice. "He has pointed us upward. Let every one of you heed his last entreaty and look upward to God. You see before you the last poor fragment of a wrecked and blasted life—blasted because it made no account of God. Thanks be to him, my eyes are at last opened, but this poor wreck is all I have left to consecrate to my Maker. Our dear friend in the house can speak to you no more, but for his sake, if for nothing else, look into this thing. Begin to live Christian lives—you will not regret it.

"And now, friends, listen to my confession. I have already confessed in private; but I sinned in secret, and I want to proclaim my fault from the housetops, that others may, perhaps, take warning. Ah, it was unbelief that let me drift on into the evil which I would give worlds to undo!"

He paused, and when he again spoke the voice trembled still more.

"Friends, I made counterfeit money, and when my crime was discovered fled from the law. My adopted grandson is in the penitentiary for it, though I knew it not until lately. Before you all, and before Heaven, I declare that I was the only one guilty. Wilhelm Steinhoff is innocent. My friends, I believed not in God. I walked my way, independent of his. Believe me, there is a God, and he abhors evil!"

The old man stopped. He tried to speak again, and his lips moved, but no sound came from them. He dropped his head on Gertrude's shoulder and fell in her arms. She gave a low cry. Dr. Lambert caught him and laid him on the floor of the veranda. The crowd below was swayed in agitation like the waves of the sea. Dr. Lambert knelt beside the old man for a moment, then he arose and said quietly:

"He is dead."

The slender cord was at last broken. The heart had given out suddenly and painlessly, and Hermann Steinhoff had passed from earthly scenes. He was carried into a building near and the crowd melted away.

No one within the Cameron mansion had seen this last occurrence. Octavia wondered what had happened, but could not see for the roof of the veranda. She learned it later from the lips of others. But she could not get that other scene, of which she had been a witness, out of her mind. It melted her cold heart as nothing had ever been able to do before. She thought of many words which Dr. Cameron had spoken to her. They seemed to appeal to her now with an almost heavenly force. At last she knelt and prayed as she had never prayed before. Then she went down and laid her head on her husband's arm.

"Husband," she said, "you and I have our lives still. Let us make a better use of them while they are left to us."

He did not understand her fully then.

A few days later Keith Cameron was laid away to his rest in a pure white mausoleum, sheltered by a spreading tree. But, though he was gone, his life lived after him. In the memory of it, Lady Cameron was even blessed in this terrible trial. Her proud spirit was at last softened. From that sad experience she arose, as gold refined by the fire, a sweeter and better woman.

Nor did the ragged multitude, with the memory of that last kiss treasured in their bosoms, ever forget Keith's last, mute sermon. His death appealed to them more strongly than his life had been able to do, and many began from that hour to lead more honest, sober and better lives. Truly, Keith was triumphant even in death, for those he had overcome in his death were more than those whom he had overcome during many years of his life.

CHAPTER XXI.

WILHELM TALKS WITH PIERRE BELLEAU.



AFTER the visit of Dr. Keith Cameron to the penitentiary, Wilhelm was allowed comparative freedom, such as is usually granted to those whose term of imprisonment has almost expired, and it so happened that to Pierre Belleau, whose term was almost at an end, these liberties were also given. Conversation between the two was therefore less restricted than before.

Entering the chapel early one morning, Wilhelm found the Frenchman kneeling before his own picture of Gethisemane. His hands were clasped and his eyes were uplifted toward the Face above. His whole attitude bespoke deep contrition and intense mental agony. Presently he bowed his head, then arose and walked feebly toward

the door with downcast eyes, glancing neither to the right nor to the left.

As he passed Wilhelm, the young man touched him on the shoulder. He started and raised his sunken, melancholy eyes to the other's face.

"My friend," said Wilhelm to him in French, "you are in trouble. You should be happy, when you are so soon to be given back to life again."

Pierre tried to speak, but his words were interrupted by a hacking cough, that racked his slight frame through and through.

"For you to go back to life," he said, answering in his beloved tongue, when he had recovered himself, "may be a pleasure, but for me none. There is no pleasure in life for me more. You—you shall meet kind looks. Men will say of you, 'He is innocent; he has suffered; we will take him to our hearts!' And the doors will fly open to you, and the chair by the hearth will be ready. But for me—what reception is for me? They will shut their doors in my face; they will say all that can be said of evil—'A convict!' And they will draw away from me in horror."

He sighed and coughed feebly again. "But then," he continued, in a low, quavering voice, "it will not be for long. I can sleep in the fields, in the barns, a poor tramp. I can eat with the little innocent squirrels, who will not despise me. I can drink from the forest streams. Then the chill winds will come to me as friends. They will soon, with cold fingers, make me ready for the grave!"

There was that in the low, pathetic voice which touched Wilhelm profoundly. "Alas!" he was thinking, "what he says may be only too true. There is no room among men for a convict!"

"Come," he said aloud, "let us go to the entrance and sit down by the pillars. I have something to tell you that may make you feel differently about all this."

They passed together through the long cor-

ridor, across the garden and out into the entrance, where guards were pacing to and fro. But they sat down together on a low bench and no one heard what they were saying.

"I want to ask you some questions," continued Wilhelm. "In fact, had not this opportunity presented itself, I should have sent them to you by the chaplain. In the first place, have you any children?"

Pierre turned upon him a look full of burning inquiry. "Why do you ask me this question?" he said.

"Because," answered Wilhelm, "a lad named Adolphe Belleau was the only friend I had during my trial. He, a little, strange boy, was the only person who ventured to speak one word for me at that fearful time. Since then he has not forgotten me. He has ever believed in my innocence, and it is perhaps due to his efforts in my behalf that I owe my present hope of a speedy liberation. Do you wonder, then, that the name of Belleau is one dear to me?"

Pierre was drinking in every word eagerly. "But the lad!—what of him? How old was he?" he whispered.

Wilhelm's mind went back to the flushed, indignant face, the shrill, boyish tones that had cried, "You all wicked! Heem innocent! Heem so innocent as you!"

"He was, I should say, then a lad perhaps fourteen years of age; a handsome lad, with a frank, honest face, and bright, dark eyes, somewhat like yours."

Pierre shook his head quickly. "We used to say," he replied, in an almost inaudible voice, "that our baby resembled his mother. But she had the dark eyes, too. Yes, her eyes were dark."

"Then you have a son?"

Pierre did not answer for a moment, then he whispered, "Yes, Wilhelm Steinhoff, I once had a wife, and a son, and a daughter; a home—it might have been a paradise!"

"And you will go back to it?" Wilhelm asked the question gently.

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Pierre's eyes grew dark with that melancholy, wistful look which was seen in them so often. "Ah," he said, "you would not ask me to do that. I could help them little now. A convict father would be a disgrace to them. They are better, far better, without me!"

"But you want to see them, do you not?" asked Wilhelm.

"To see them!" exclaimed Pierre, with flushed cheeks and burning eyes. "Would I not give the rest of my shattered life to see them just once! Have I not dreamed the scene over and over again! My wife would say, 'Pierre, I forgive you!' My children would say, 'Poor father!' Ah, it would be heaven—heaven! Then I could die!"

His words ended in a fit of coughing, and Wilhelm's eyes grew dim. How little it would take to satisfy this almost dying man! Oh, it must surely be brought about soon, or not at all! Poor Pierre!

"I suppose your wife has written to you here?" ventured Wilhelm presently.

"But no," returned the other, quickly. "They know not where I am." He gazed out over the hill-top, where some children were gayly playing, and the far-away look was still in his eyes. "I have sometimes hoped a little," he continued, "that they would find out. I have watched for a letter until my heart grew sore, but the letter never came. Then I would think they did not know of my disgrace, and sometimes I would be glad."

He stopped, then laid his hand eagerly on Wilhelm's arm. "Will you do me a favor?" he asked. "When you are free you will sometime meet this lad, this little Adolphe Belleau of whom you have spoken. Find out if he is Pierre Belleau's son. I think he is. Then you will learn from him of his mother, of his sister, the lovely little Agnes. You will tell him nothing of his old father, with his cropped head and his prison raiment. He will not know that he has such a bad father. But you will write me and tell me

of them all, will you not? Then I will die. Promise me, will you?"

"I will promise you," returned Wilhelm.

"Thank you."

Pierre gave a sigh and dropped his head. Presently he said, "Ah, Wilhelm Steinhoff, but there is one vulture that picks men's brains and fixes its talons in their hearts, and is never satisfied. Yet it will not kill. The pain, the torment, must last long! Its name is Remorse! Young man, how often have I looked upon your guiltless face and envied it! Thank heaven, oh, thank heaven every day of your life for a clear conscience! But after all," he continued, with a deep sigh, "what else could one expect? What he has sown, that he must also reap!"

He turned his face full of agonizing sorrow, awful anguish, towards Wilhelm. And Wilhelm said gently, "But the past is dead; one can still live for the future. 'Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled,' no matter what the past may have been. When God enters the heart even remorse must make way for better, happier things. A man sins in giving himself up to despair."

"But how can there be forgiveness for me?" returned Pierre; "for me, the wretched sinner, whose best years have been given up to the devil!" The tones were low and passionate. He waited as though his life depended upon Wilhelm's answer.

"Jesus said, 'Whosoever will may take of the water of life freely,'" quoted Wilhelm softly. "He made no limitations."

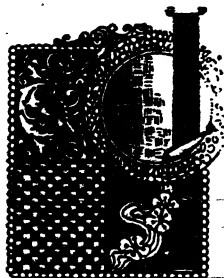
He could say no more, for the men were marching out to work.

It was not until long afterwards that Wilhelm learned the whole story of Pierre Belleau's life; of how, born of parents belonging to a good French family in the north of France, he grew up surrounded by every care and comfort; of how temptation came and was yielded to. After that, it had been the old story of a reckless, restless career downward. He plunged into dissi-

patation, ran away across the sea, fell in love with a pretty French girl of Quebec and married at the age of nineteen. Then the struggle for life began. Pierre really loved his wife and the two children who came to them, but he could make but little money by his painting, and Hunger often came in at the door. At last he had become desperate, and had taken to drink to drown his trouble. Financial difficulties thickened. He fled from his family, hoping to find some way of earning money to give them food. Then temptation came again. Excited by drink, he had robbed a bank, had been arrested under the name of Dupont, and been put in the penitentiary, where remorse, repentance, and the rude friction of prison life upon a nature delicately sensitive in many ways, moulded him into the patient, saddened, broken-hearted man whom Wilhelm Steinhoff had first beheld. It was the story of many a blasted life, and yet in prison Pierre Belleau had learned the first real lessons of his life. He was wrecked, but not wholly lost, since his heart was not yet dead.

CHAPTER XXII

WILHELM RECEIVES A GLAD MESSAGE.



T was Saturday morning. Wilhelm had occasion to go into the office for something, and while waiting, his glance wandered over a newspaper lying on the table. A name in the death column struck his eye: "Cameron, Keith. Died at Stonehenge, — Elgin Street, on the —th inst.. Keith Cameron, M. D., son of the late Sir Allan Cameron, M. D., of Ottawa, Canada."

Wilhelm read and re-read the passage, vaguely trying to realize what it meant. Keith Cameron, the handsome, strong man, whose hearty hand had pressed his, whose deep musical voice had fallen upon his ears in that self-same chamber but a short time ago, dead! Surely it could not be!

He turned over the paper and searched for a fuller account. Here it was: "A Fatal Accident." Slowly he read the paragraph, which gave a full account of the terrible termination of the polo game. Yes, it was but too true! Keith Cameron, the benevolent, the useful physician, was no more. This, then, was the end of that brilliant career—and yet not the end, for Keith Cameron's life had been one that could never die.

Wilhelm read on. A paragraph below gave a full account of the strange scene which had accompanied the gathering of the poor at the Cameron mansion before Keith's death, and of Hermann Steinhoff's confession. Wilhelm's heart seemed to stand still for a moment. He sat down in a chair and tried to think. Hermann, too, dead! Hermann had confessed! Gradually an understanding of the matter dawned upon him. He wondered what had induced the old man to make this strange, public statement of his guilt. Poor old Hermann! Had he become at last changed? Had his conscience so worked upon him as to urge him to this step, after all the years of silence? But Wilhelm's questions were unanswered.

Slowly and sadly he turned away, and went back to some light task upon which he had been engaged in the prison yard. And then the instinct of self-preservation arose in him. What effect would Keith's untimely death have upon his, Wilhelm's, own fate? This Keith Cameron was the man who had been working for his release. Was this the cause of the long delay? He had been waiting anxiously for weeks. Surely the matter would not now be given up. After Hermann Steinhoff's confession some one would

surely see that justice was done. It could not be possible that the cup had thus been placed to his lips only to be withdrawn ere he had tasted one drop of its sweetness.

Nevertheless he felt unusually depressed, and the dull gloom of the November day added to his depression, for the sadness of approaching winter filters even through prison walls. Above, the sky was heavy and gray; about, the walls were dreary and discolored, the more so because a light snow had fallen during the night and still lay, pure and white, on the roofs above, in glaring contrast to the dinginess about it.

How very long it seemed—ages and ages almost—since Wilhelm had wandered about at will, sunshine above and boyish gladness in his heart! For he always thought of the capital as it had been in summer. The old canal arose before him, as he bent over his task, glinting along between its green, wooded banks; and his eye followed it, down past the great trees of the southern park, through between the crowded buildings of the city, under the bridges, and down the last locks near the river, where, with a glimpse of the low, forest-covered Laurentians, it empties into the noble Ottawa, and is lost in its multitudinous waters. Alas! every day it seemed more like a dream, more like a sweet memory of some fairy scene of a previous stage of existence, in which friends flitted like spectres and a golden-haired maiden was queen. Wilhelm sighed deeply. What was Gertrude doing? It was strange that she had not written to him.

When the men formed in line to go in for the night, Wilhelm mechanically stepped into his place. The happy presentiment that he was doing so for the last time never entered his mind. As he passed through the great hall beneath the dome, a keeper touched him on the arm.

"You are wanted in the office, Mr. Steinhoff."

Wilhelm stepped out of line obediently. Then it dawned upon him that the action, the tone, the words of the keeper at this time, could have but one meaning. Impatiently he stood waiting, yet he dared not build his hopes too high. He watched the men running up the narrow, winding stairways, and caught many a stealthy, curious glance from the shaven multitude swarming about the dizzy curves. He saw the long line—that line of which he had for so many years been a member—stand before the barred doors, silently waiting. He saw the doors open together and the men enter with military precision. He heard the locks click. Then the keeper said "Come," and led the way out of the great, bare, dreary chamber.

He entered the office, that office with its cheery fire leaping up in the grate, just as it had upon that other day so long ago. Yet how merrily now did the flames leap and dance towards the roaring chimney!

The warden arose to meet him and shook hands with him cordially.

"Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Steinhoff," said he. "I have a pleasant duty to perform to-day. The order for your liberation has come at last. I am very sorry it has been delayed so long. Mr. Steinhoff, this is an event unprecedented in our institution. You are discharged with honor. Not a stain will go with you, for your innocence has been conclusively proved."

The warden laid his hand upon the young man's shoulder kindly. "Heaven knows," he continued, "I wish you had been out of this long ago. You have borne the injustice well."

Wilhelm had not spoken. Although he had been expecting this he could scarcely realize that it had come at last. He sat down upon a chair and for a moment trembled. He could grasp nothing except that he was free, free, free! Tears of thankfulness and joy ran down his cheeks. The clerk pretended to write, while the warden

walked to the window and rubbed his eyes suspiciously.

Then the necessary entries were made in the prison book, and, after a few more preliminaries, the clerk handed to Wilhelm two letters. One bore Gertrude's fine, peculiar handwriting. In his haste to open it, he scarcely noticed that the seal had not been broken by the prison officials.

"Dear Wilhelm!" Yes, Gertrude's own fingers had traced the words. He read on. Every word of the letter seemed like an echo of her voice, her old, gentle voice. So engrossed was he that he did not notice that the clerk and the warden had both, with delicate consideration, left the room.

"How heartless you must have thought me, Wilhelm!" it ran. "But oh, Wilhelm, we never knew until lately what had happened to you. Had I known you were in that dreadful penitentiary, I do not think the earth itself would have been sufficient to keep me from you! We never heard a word of news away up on that little island, and I murmured over the loneliness of it!—the beautiful, free island, while you—oh, Wilhelm, I cannot bear to think of it! Poor old grandfather! How I wish you could have seen him before he died! But now, not a word more until you are with us. Dorothy and I are planning to weary you with talk when we get you here."

In the second envelope was a polite little note from Dorothy Cameron and her mother, requesting Mr. Steinhoff to make a visit to their home, where Gertrude was staying, at as early a date as possible.

So absorbed was Wilhelm in his letters that he did not notice someone had entered. A tall man, dressed in a long, black, clergyman's coat, was standing silently near. Two gentle eyes were looking down upon Wilhelm, filled with rejoicing for his deliverance, and the glowing fire shone upon a saint-like face framed in with long gray hair, now falling in waves about the face, until it seemed like a rare old pic-

ture suddenly endowed with life. It was the chaplain.

Wilhelm looked up.

"My boy, my boy, thank God for this!" said the chaplain, fervently.

That was all. Then hand clasped hand in that close, warm grasp which denotes the friendship stronger than death.

"You will leave to-night?" asked the chaplain at length.

Upon the impulse of the moment Wilhelm would have answered "Yes," but he thought of the poor, loveless creatures he had known so long. He could not leave without seeing them again. If he could but speak to them once and bid them farewell!

"This is Saturday evening," he said slowly. "Do you think the warden will permit me to see the men in the chapel in the morning, and to speak to them for a moment?"

"I am sure," the chaplain replied, quietly, "that the favor will not be refused to Mr. Steinhoff. I will take your request to the warden."

He did so, and received a ready assent. That night Wilhelm did not sleep in his cell. He was taken to the warden's house. No one could do enough for the man who had been wronged, and had suffered so bravely and patiently.

How very strange it seemed to tread once more upon soft, carpeted floors; to sit upon cushioned seats, and, above all, to take part in the free, unrestricted conversation of a family circle! At times he was almost afraid of the sound of his own voice, and, unconsciously, spoke almost in a whisper.

Then the dainty bed-room to which he was shown! The soft bed, with its fine, snowy linen—what a marvellous thing it seemed! He almost hated to get into it for fear of rumpling it. This was surely unusual luxury! Wilhelm looked at everything with an almost child-like interest, and, indeed, as yet he was but a child again to the things of the world.

In the night he awoke. The wind was howling about the house. What did that mean? He had never been able to hear the wind in his tomb-like prison cell. He stretched out his hand and it touched a velvet cushion. He was so startled that he sat up in bed. Then he remembered where he was, and lay down again with a sigh of contentment.

In the morning, accompanied by the genial warden, he passed once more under the great, white pillars, through the iron gate and down the gravelled walk to the penitentiary building. The guards saluted, as they advanced; the warden talked familiarly all the way. It was all very strange and unreal.

As they entered the corridor Pierre Belleau crossed the hall below. He, too, was dressed in civilian's clothes.

"Dupont—or Belleau, I believe his name is—has been discharged to-day," remarked the warden.

"Indeed!" Wilhelm stepped aside to offer congratulations to the Frenchman. But no smile entered the sad eyes.

"Where are you going, Pierre?" asked Wilhelm.

The other shook his head. "It not matter," he said, in his broken English; "dere is no room anyw'ere for a convict. Well," bitterly, "w'at a man sows he mus' reap, after all, so he mus' put up wit' it de bes' he can."

"Wait until to-morrow and come with me to the capital," urged Wilhelm; then, in a lower tone, "We may get trace of Adolphe there, you know."

The sallow face brightened. Pierre hesitated a moment, then said, "I will go, if—if you t'ink it no disgrace to travel wit' me."

"That's all right," said Wilhelm heartily, as he passed on.

A fit of coughing seized the Frenchman as they left him. The warden looked back at him anxiously. "I'm afraid the poor fellow is not very long for this world,"

he said. "If he goes with you to the city, I wish you'd sort of look after him for a while."

"I will," returned Wilhelm. He did not need this reminder.

They were now descending the narrow stair, and once more he entered the chapel. But under how different circumstances! This time he did not sit, with folded arms, on a bench below. He was given a seat upon the platform, near the desk, and beside him sat the warden. Every eye in the room was fixed upon him. The prisoners looked at him enviously yet thankfully. They rejoiced in the good fortune of this man, whom, in some strange way, they had learned to love, despite the restrictions of prison discipline. It was a pleasure to them to look at his magnificent physique, now shown to full advantage by the neat suit of black which had been substituted for his gray prison suit with its odious number; to look into his frank, handsome countenance, and to feel that this man, though innocent, cared for them and looked upon them as brothers.

Wilhelm looked over the shaven multitude, the gray-clad creatures whom he had known so long, with here and there one clothed in the hideous checked apparel that denoted the incorrigible. With what emotions did he gaze into those faces, feeling that he would give life itself, even at this moment of freedom, to be able to raise them, one and all, to a useful and happy manhood; those faces, some dull, with but half-awakened faculties or with the monotony of long, changeless years; some sharp, shrewd and intellectual; faces, some marked by lives of willful wickedness, others by the weakness of character that falls almost at the first provocation; faces, some patient with hopeless waiting, some sullen, bitter, hardened and resentful; yet all, this morning, brightened by a stir of interest, and with an expression of friendliness in the look which they bestowed upon Wilhelm. Little wonder was it that tears

came into the young man's eyes, not because of the weary penalty which these men had incurred and probably well deserved, but because of what they themselves were.

From the very beginning of the service there was an unusual impressiveness in the air. Every one felt it. Chaplain Hare was very unconventional in his order of worship. After the opening prayer, he said, "Would any one like to begin a hymn?"

There was a moment's silence, then a voice at the end of a seat began to sing. One by one the others joined in a low, plaintive, melancholy strain. The words were those written by a convict:

"Sowing the tares under cover of night,
Which might have been wheat all golden and bright.
Oh, heart, turn to God, with repentance and pray'r,
And plead for forgiveness for sowing the tares."

It was a sad, wild cry of remorse, and so it sounded from these cowering criminals. Wilhelm did not sing. When the hymn was over, his fine, deep voice arose:

"Far off thou hast wandered;
Wilt thou further roam?
Come, and all is pardoned,
My son! My son!"

"Thou art friendless, homeless,
Hopeless and undone;
Mine is love unchanging,
My son! My son!"

"Welcome, wand'rer, welcome!
Welcome back to home!
Thou hast wandered far-away,
Come home! Come home!"

The voices rang out, stronger and clearer, until the tone, in the chorus, was almost hopeful. The chaplain preached from the text, "There remaineth therefore a rest unto the people of God," and never had he spoken with more fervor, with more power, beckoning on, with earnest, loving words,

these poor restless ones towards the rest, the green pastures by the still waters, that are ever ready for those who will come close to God.

The men listened attentively, as they always did to this gentle, saint-like man, who never reproved, but ever, with the word and touch of love, walked side by side with them, leading them onward to hope and manhood.

Then Wilhelm arose. A perfect hush settled upon the room. Breathlessly the men listened to hear what he would say.

He laid his hand upon the desk and stood for a moment silently looking from face to face. Each man felt that he was about to speak to him personally.

"Dear friends," he said, with a break in his voice, "I want to bid you all good-by. I would like to grasp each one of you by the hand to bid you God-speed. Dear fellow-prisoners, let me leave with you a few words. Perhaps you may think of them when I have gone. Some of you are terribly discouraged. You feel that there is no hope for you, no use of your ever trying to be better." He paused and looked searchingly at them. "Friends," he continued, "in a way I know the most of you well. I know your faces, I have learned to read your minds. I believe there is much good in the heart of each one of you. God does not make man without putting in him a spark of the divine nature. Dear brothers, the best we can do is to keep that spark burning ever brighter and clearer. With God's help we can all do this. We may keep close to Jesus. A spirit-union with him is possible. If it were not so, he would not have said, 'Abide in me, and I in you.' Jesus always meant what he said. Even in this prison you may have Jesus with you. He will brighten it for you as"—he paused again, and added in a low voice—"as he has brightened it for me. In this prison I have come closer to him than ever before. His presence brought me joy—yes, even joy. And such

an experience waits for each one of you, if you will but come close enough to him. He is here in our midst, as loving, as real, as he ever was to the disciples of old. And now, dear friends, good-by. I may never see some of you again on this earth. God grant we may meet beyond."

He pointed upward as he spoke, and hard hearts were wondrously moved and shaven heads were bowed.

Upon that afternoon Wilhelm wandered out into the streets, up by the heavy, gray forts, down by the rolling water, with Wolfe's Island lying, a long, low line of dun-colored forest, upon the opposite side. He met men and women and little children, and looked curiously into their faces. Their slightest actions were to him invested with an intense interest. No one recognized him, though many glanced at him a second time, wondering who the handsome stranger might be. Everything was wonderful, wonderful!

In the evening he went to church. It seemed very strange to sit in such a place once more, looking into contented faces, listening to the deep tones of the organ and the singing of the choir. It seemed like being on the outskirts of heaven.

That night he slept at a hotel. Next morning, long before daybreak, he awoke. Ere night should again fall he would be in the capital. He wondered if people would receive him at all, or if he would be an outcast from society because he had worn the prison gray. He half dreaded to go back among those whom he had once known. Yet Gertrude was there. What mattered it if all the world looked coldly upon him, so long as she was his friend! Then what should he do? Would any one trust him now, all innocent though he had been proved, enough to give him a situation whereby he might make his living? or would the stigma of the penitentiary still cling to him in any way? Well, if all else failed, he would go out into the western

wilds of the great Dominion, where many, not more deserving than he, had already found homes. So he tossed and turned and pondered, and wondered when the day would come.

At last the gray light came creeping in. Then footsteps began to echo in the halls. He arose and went downstairs. He drew out his gold watch, which had been kept for him. It was just seven o'clock. In one hour he would be aboard the train. He sat down at the breakfast table, and looked admiringly at the white cloth and the center-piece of scarlet geraniums. This was surely unusual style for hotels. He was greatly surprised, at first, when one of the waiters came politely to wait upon him, — upon him, the convict, who had for so long eaten from a deep tin dish in a solitary cell!

Gradually the usages of civilized life came back to him and he ceased to marvel. He looked at his watch and saw that it was almost train time. Then he hurried to the station. Yes, there was the slight figure, in the long black coat. Early as it was, the chaplain had come down to say good-by. With him was Pierre Belleau.

"I have bought him a first-class ticket," whispered the chaplain, referring to Pierre; and Wilhelm smiled as he laid his hand upon the Frenchman's arm.

The engine puffed. "All aboard!" sounded along the platform.

"God bless you, lads! Write to me soon!" said the chaplain. And, with a hearty good-by, the two convicts stepped aboard the train and started off on their way to the capital.

For a time both were silent. Wilhelm was wondering what reception was ahead of him; if Gertrude would be very glad to see him; if she would be very much changed. Pierre was thinking of his family. At last he said, in the broken English which he sometimes used instead of his native language, and in a low, timid voice:

"I t'ink mebbe it not bes' for dem, my chil'ren, to meet a fader from de penitentiary. Dey do better wit'out me now, do you not t'ink so?"

"I think," returned Wilhelm, "that you should at least let them know of your existence. If Adolphe Belleau is the same lad that I remember, I imagine he will want to see his father."

Pierre shook his head. "But mebbe I mak' heem ashame'. Ah!" plaintively, "no wan want to tak' Pierre in now! Dere's not'ing lef' for heem but to die! Dere's no hope in freedom for heem more! Better heem die in de penitentiary!"

Wilhelm turned to him. "See here, Pierre," he said, "there's no use of giving up like this. You really want to see your children again, do you not?"

"See dem!" The Frenchman's eyes filled with an intense fire of longing, and a hectic flame burned on his cheek. "Heaven only know how I long to see dem—my baby, an' de wife, an' de leetle girl! How I have lie on my bed in de night, weeping because I was lef' dem, an' went down, down till I have shame to go back to dem more. An' den de penitentiary was come. I could not go back. I mak' in my min' nevere to write to tell dem de disgrace. But oh, de torture! De anguish of it! Now, I t'ink if I see dem jus' wan time more, hear dem say dey forgive, den I die!"

Wilhelm put his hand on the other's shoulder. "Belleau," he said, "to this lad, who may be your son. I owe a debt of gratitude which I can never repay. For my own sake I shall find him. I shall tell him of you. If I am not mistaken in the honest face I remember so well, he will then come to you of his own free will. In the meantime, keep me informed of all that you do. I want to be your friend, Pierre Belleau."

The Frenchman looked at him with the old wistful, envious expression in his sunken eyes.

"But you," he replied, "are too good to

be friend for wan so weecked. You nevere do de sin w'at mak' earth all black, evil—no, nevere!"

Then, dropping into his own language, he confessed. So the train sped on.

Meantime, in a comfortable flat of rooms, on one of the cheeriest streets of the capital, a cozy home was being fitted up, into which—though all unknown to Agnes and Adolphe as to Pierre Belleau—the poor convict was ere long to creep, broken, feeble, yet happier, in his children's love, than he had ever hoped to be in this world. For Adolphe Belleau was prospering, and he and Agnes were once more beginning housekeeping together.

The carpets were down, the simple furniture arranged, the white curtains looped back and the walls decorated with Agnes' paintings. Above the mantel was the sweet, sad face of the woman whom Agnes so often saw in her visions. Dorothy had dropped in to see how matters were progressing, and had pronounced everything perfect.

Moreover, this was a proud day for the brother and sister. Upon another wall, that of the National Art Gallery, at an exhibition then being held, hung a picture painted by Mademoiselle Agnes Belleau. Adolphe thought it a marvel. Others stopped to look admiringly at it, perhaps recognizing the mild, thoughtful face which it portrayed. For Agnes had realized her dream of long ago. She had painted "wan picture, very large, very beautiful." It represented "de Queen of Heaven," and the face was that of Mademoiselle Cameron.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT LAST UNITED.

IN one of the coziest rooms of the Cameron home, upon a heavy couch of crimson velvet, reclined a young woman, upon whose cheeks a faint flush was wavering,

and about whose sad, sweet lips a hovering smile occasionally settled. She was dressed all in black, but the firelight became, now and then, tangled in her hair, which formed a bright halo about her face.

She was gazing into the depths of the coals that kept falling from the crackling oak log above. What she saw in them she never has told, but the visions were surely pleasant. The end of it all was that she dropped asleep, with her head on the great cushion.

Presently a gentle touch fell upon her arm, and she arose. The night wind was blowing over a bleak plain that had neither tree nor boundary, but the dark, misty sky met the dark, misty earth upon all sides. The moon shone fitfully above, and the plain that her feet must tread was all ashes and yielding sand.

No word was spoken, but she followed her guide silently, and it seemed that she had known him before. He was old and bent, and the moonlight revealed faintly his black cap, his long black coat and the thin gray locks streaming over his shoulders. He went ever on and on. She could not hear his footsteps, and her own feet sank pitifully into the ashes, but she dared not stop.

"Whither goest thou?" she asked.

He would not answer, but glided on before her like a shade of the night. And the wind was chill.

They came to a river, broad and black and deep and silent.

"Carry me! Carry me!" she cried.

He answered, "Come," and went on over the black flood.

She must press forward alone. She plunged into the dark depths. Arms, strong as steel, bore her aloft. She raised her eyes and saw that the one who bore her wore the garb of a convict. Then a light shone from the clouds above, and, looking up, she saw Keith Cameron smiling upon her. Whenever he smiled the light shone more brightly.

Then a voice sounded about, above, below, filling the whole air: "It is well."

She awoke with a start, and Dorothy Cameron was there on her knees beside her.

"Gertrude, dear," she said, "your brother has come;" and she laid her brown curly head upon the soft cushion and wept. Poor Dorothy! The gates of death alone would restore to her her brother!

Gertrude threw her arms about the kneeling form and kissed her tear-stained cheek.

Then she went, with throbbing heart, down the broad stairway. At the doorway she hesitated a moment. A strange emotion, akin to dread, stayed her hand on the folds of the curtain. Then she drew it back and stood for a moment beneath the crimson drapery. Surely this could not be Wilhelm! This broad-shouldered man, with the deep, calm face, was not the Wilhelm she remembered—the youth with slight form and boyish face. Then he smiled and reached his hands to her, and she knew him.

But he, looking upon the slight, black-robed figure, the flushed face, the golden hair, saw again the same Gertrude of his dreams; Gertrude's old self, a little saddened, perhaps, a little ripened by long experience. The same blue eyes looked back into his; the same pretty gestures were not forgotten, for, in the old way, she sat down beside him, and with her tiny hands threw back her hair from her face, just as she used to do. Then she did something that he had very seldom, in the old days, seen her do—she burst into tears. But they were tears mingled with joy.

There was little need for words, for each understood the other now. Yet, after a time, all must be told, and ere the shades of evening gathered, Wilhelm had followed Gertrude through her exile, and Gertrude had suffered and rejoiced with Wilhelm in his imprisonment. So heart was at last bound to heart, and each knew that separation would never come more. Then night fell.

In honor of Wilhelm's return, the house is alight for the first time since Keith went away. The still, shut-up rooms are once more thrown open, and flowers, gay with pink bloom, are on mantel and shelf, driving out the remembrance of the lingering odor of white rose and lily and hyacinth burdened with perfume—those sad, sweet fragrances of death.

And is the noble young master himself absent from this scene of rejoicing? Can he nevermore revisit this dear spot which he has loved? Mayhap it is his spirit that enters by yon half-open door, that sways yon gently waving curtain. If so, there is surely a smile on his spirit-lips, for one of earth's "poor," a little, desolate boy, now grown into noble manhood, is sitting at his hearth. Misty fingers may point to this man, and shadowy lips may murmur as if on the breath of a south wind, "Ad astra per aspera," as, with clearer eyes, now gifted with super-mortal vision, the friend of the poor looks down upon thousands of earth's human atoms, crawling over the hills and brambles, all unseeing the stars that glimmer, faintly yet surely, at the end of the difficult way.

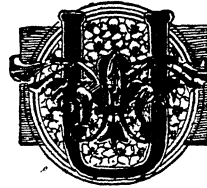
Courage, brothers! Courage, toiling ones! The knees are sore, and the feet are weary. The head droops, and the hands toil. The way may be red with drops of the heart's blood. But, at every inch mastered, the star grows brighter and shines more gloriously along the way and upon the face of the tired traveler. See it growing radiant and more radiant! The toiling one reaches it and is transfigured before it. Creeping painfully no longer, he enters it and he and the light become one. It is no longer a star, but a glorified human being, shining as the sun. The name of the star is "Perfected Character," and behind it is God.

Human beings, wist ye not that as ye toil upward ye shine? Know ye not that through struggle ye become strong? Why, then, do ye cry all for flower-strewn ways and balmy

airs and soft arbors wherein ye may indulge in the death-like sleep of indolence? If ye loiter, ye stagnate; if ye stand still, ye die.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A CHANGED PICTURE.



PON his arrival in the city, Pierre Belleau sought out the humblest, most obscure of boarding-houses.

"It is good enough for a convict," he said.

In the meantime Wilhelm obtained from Dorothy Cameron the number of the flat occupied by Adolphe and Agnes, and, at an early date, paid them a visit. He told Adolphe, who was overjoyed to see him, about the poor convict who bore the name of Pierre Belleau. The youth listened with keen and painful interest, and it was soon established, without a doubt, that this French convict was the long-lost father, who was now but little more than a name to Adolphe and his sister.

"He is now in this city. You will go to see him, will you not?" asked Wilhelm, anxiously.

Adolphe's face flushed hotly. "Monsieur Steinhoff," he said, at length, "it is not pleasant to me to meet a convict fader. Heem never true fader, or heem not leave us so. We cannot now have de right affection for heem."

"Adolphe," said Wilhelm earnestly, "can you not forgive him?"

The youth was silent.

"If you knew that he was alone, suffering, dying, longing for the sight of the children he has wronged, would you not go to him, no matter under what circumstances he might be placed?"

The lips of the French youth trembled.

"It is no pleasant task you bring to me, Monsieur Steinhoff," he said.

"I know it, Adolphe. But it is for his sake I have told you. He is weary with longing for the consciousness that even one on this great earth cares a little for him. He cannot live very long. Will you not, by your presence, bring to him one little ray of gladness ere he goes? He has sinned, but he has repented, with a repentance that has eaten his life out."

Adolphe sat for a moment gazing down at the floor. Then he looked up resolutely. "I will go," he said.

Ere another hour had gone two muffled forms passed out of the flat, and bent their steps toward the little boarding-house in which Pierre Belleau lay upon a dingy sofa, coughing feebly. He had caught cold on the train and was hot and feverish. He wondered if he would die soon, and, if not, how he should manage to keep the life in his frail body. Would any one give him work? Would he be able to do it if they did? It would be better if he could die soon. In all the great, dreary world there was not one to care very much.

He heard a knock at the little hall door. Then the boarding-house mistress went through and opened it. Some one said, "Is Monsieur Belleau here?" Then the door of the room in which he lay was thrown open. A handsome youth and a dark-eyed girl came in, and stopped hesitatingly before the worn figure on the sofa.

Pierre looked again. Could these be—yes, that was the very face of the pretty French girl he had wedded in the little church near Quebec—her face, and yet not hers. He sat up, and his face was transformed.

"My children!" he said, then bowed his head upon theirs, for with a sudden impulse they had dropped to their knees at his feet.

"I have now seen you. I can die," he said, in the quick, melodious language of his childhood. And now it seemed that he had

gone back to the innocence of his youth again, in these, his children.

"But no," said Adolphe, speaking in the same dialect, which fell like music on his father's ears, "you will come home to us, and be our father once more."

"But you do not know all?"

"Yes, we know all."

Pierre's eyes lighted up with unutterable joy. "Heaven, too, must forgive," he murmured, "since the wronged human children have forgiven."

Then Adolphe went out and brought back a hack to the door. And the convict, leaning upon his daughter's arm, entered it. At the flat he was taken into the best room and placed in the best chair. He sat before the grate, and above him was the sad, sweet face of the angel whom Agnes had painted. He looked at it, and an expression of pain passed over his face.

"Ah," he murmured to himself, "it is the little mother's face, as it might be in heaven, but too sad, too sad! If she had been able to see my wickedness she might have looked like that. No, no! the pain was spared her. It is too sad. My brushes, my brushes!"

The quick ear of his daughter heard his words. She had told him of the death of her mother, and he had wept. Quietly she slipped from the room and brought him her palette and her brushes.

Without seeming to notice her, he took them from her hand. He quickly mixed the paint on the board, then began to use the brushes on the face. Agnes watched him with intense interest. With a few delicate strokes he changed the mouth, the eyes. The sadness disappeared from the lips, a radiant smile came into the eyes. The mother seemed to beam with angel happiness upon the reunited family.

Pierre stepped back and regarded his work. "Aye, my children!" he said.

They stepped beside him, one on either side, and he placed his arms about them, and

they looked at the face, and the face smiled down upon them.

Upon the following day Adolphe went to see Wilhelm Steinhoff.

"Monsieur Steinhoff," he said, "you say you are to me indebted for help get you free. By me has de debt now to be paid. I t'ank you for being de friend to my poor fader, and because you give heem back to us. For ten t'ousan' dollar would I not have seen heem never!"

And Wilhelm smiled and was content.

CHAPTER XXV.

A SCENE OF PEACE.



IS five years later. Autumn has again fallen upon the capital. The birds, gathering in the trees, are plaintively whistling their last farewell. Upon the mountains across the river the haze lies sleepily, like a thin veil of blue, drawn

across the blushing beauties of the crimsoning forest, and down the broad valley of the Ottawa the drowsy breeze comes, tardily, like a belated guest. All nature is at rest.

And peaceful indeed seems the silent city on the hill, where a few late flowers still bloom at the marble doors, and the yellow leaves come fluttering slowly down upon palaces which never echo to the sound of careless laughter or the tread of irreverent feet.

The cemetery gate opens and two women enter, one bearing a bouquet of choicest flowers. The other, and the older, woman wears a long, loose garment of black, and a black veil thrown back from the face reveals a countenance still placid and

sweet. The women are Dorothy and Sister Dell.

Slowly they advance, pausing here and there to look down upon the mound which marks the resting-place of some friend of former days. Sister Dell has been faithfully laboring in a distant city for years, and, amid the silent streets of the cemetery, surprises meet her on every hand.

Presently Dorothy pauses before a pure, white marble shaft, whose glittering surface is unbroken by device or sculpture. It is the tomb of the gentle colporteur, the saint-like, loving chaplain, Francis Hare. Upon the stone is written the simple inscription:

"Traveling alone down the pathway of life,
he brightened the way for others."

Dorothy tells Sister Dell the story of his life and of his relationship to Wilhelm Steinhoff.

"By the way," she adds, "our Mr. Steinhoff has gone to take his place as chaplain. His wife has written to me that some of the men who were there when he served his terrible imprisonment are there still, and that they are overjoyed to meet him in his new capacity. I am sure he will do a great work among them, for his personal magnetism is something wonderful. And yet it is not wonderful, either, when one considers the great love and sympathy he has for every human being."

"And his wife — what of her?" Sister Dell is more interested in the welfare of the fair girl whom she once nursed back to life and health.

"Gertrude? Oh, she is very well. You should see how rosy her cheeks are! She is just as happy as can be, and she and her husband positively adore each other."

"We shall go together to pay them a visit some day, Dorrie."

Dorothy was arranging some pure white lilies about the glistening marble. She arose and drew her friend's arm within her own.

"Assuredly," she said. "We were with Gertrude in her trouble—we will rejoice with her in her joy. I think you will like her husband very much."

She paused, then added in a lower tone, "In some ways he reminds me very much of—of Keith. He never tries to be anything famous or great himself, though with his abilities he might be as famous as he chose. He just wants to be helpful, and he chooses to devote his life to those who are despised and neglected by others."

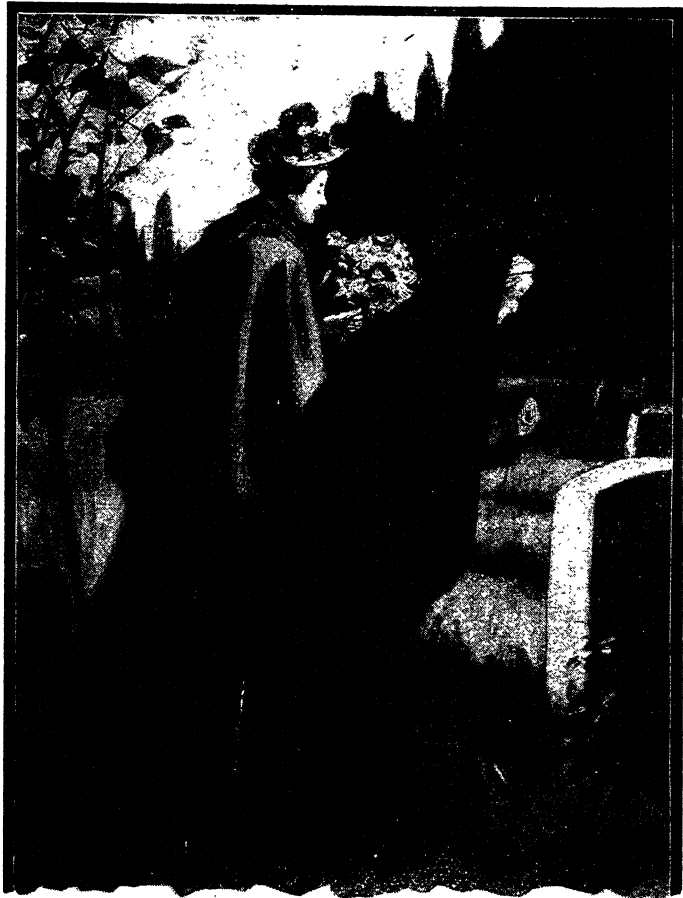
She walked on, drawing her friend with her, and instinctively Sister Dell knew whither they were now going.

They stopped before a stately, pillared tomb, the tomb of Keith Cameron. Dorothy knelt, as though upon sacred ground, and her face was very grave, while in the deep eyes shone that look which seemed to reach into the very portals of heaven. The red sunset light shone up in the western sky and rested upon her earnest face. Her lips moved. She arose and began to

twine, with loving fingers, the delicate blossoms about the cold, white pillars. The silence was that of a great cathedral, and to these two women it seemed that they were indeed within the cloisters of a mighty temple, wherein the earth was the footstool

of the Lord, and the clouds above the curtains of his chamber.

Leaning upon the railing of the tomb, Sister Dell read the words placed there in recognition of the loving life, ever followed



Slowly they advanced, pausing here and there.—See page 92.

in the footsteps of Him who was, and always is, Love.

"Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

A STAR IN A PRISON.

"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon,

son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

THE END.



A SWISS HERO.

BY ANNA MAY WILSON.



At the town of Stanz, in Switzerland, stands a fine monument. Its chief figure represents a prostrate warrior, whose arms are clasped about a bunch of lances. Over his body is rushing another warrior, with mace uplifted, and eager glance bent on before.

The legend attached to this voices a sentiment which could receive birth only amid a liberty-loving people, and which illustrates well the fact that almost every forward movement, every stroke for freedom, has been made over the sacrificed body or strength of some brave one who gave himself that the oppressed might arise.

The legend is as follows: During the early days of Switzerland, while the greater part of it was still under the rule and rod of Austria, the peasantry of the mountain-land was grievously-burdened by the nobles, who thought themselves very powerful because they were upheld in their wicked deeds by the Duke of Austria. Taxation became heavier and heavier, until at last grievous tolls were imposed on every person leaving or entering the district of Lucerne. The people bore it as long as they could, then, one day, a troop of Lucerners galloped to the castle of Rothenberg, at which toll was established, and razed it to the ground.

News of the affair reached Duke Leopold of Austria. He at once determined to punish the mountaineers, and to force them to bow to his will. With a great army of cuirassed and helmeted men, finely mounted

on trained war-horses, he set out for Lucerne. At Sempach, he perceived his way blocked by the peasantry, who were drawn up, in a wedge-shaped body, at the top of a hill.

He at once called a halt. It was decided that the horses would be of little use in this hill-fighting, so the men were ordered to dismount, and leave their chargers in care of the servants. Then, forming in solid lines at the foot of the hill, they pressed upward like a moving wall of steel. The day was hot. The sun was high in the heavens, and the light flashed on lance, and helmet, and fluttering pennon. The men above, looking upon the beautiful yet terrible sight, fell upon their knees and prayed.

They, poor peasants, wore, instead of linked coats of mail, but homespun jackets of wool. Many were bareheaded. Moreover they were armed but with short clubs, maces and battle-axes, weapons which might prove almost utterly useless when opposed to the long lances, now leveled in close, moving lines, almost at the brow of the hill.

As the Austrians came near, they burst into a laugh of derision. But their laughter only acted as a fresh incentive to the spirits of the peasantry. The opposing forces closed. Sixty of the hill-men fell, ere yet a single Austrian had been killed. The short weapons were utterly incapable of reaching the foe across the barrier of lances. The Swiss began to waver. They were on the verge of falling back before the enemy.

"I will open a way for you," exclaimed brave Arnold von Winkelried in thunder tones. "Ye men of the hills, take care of my wife and child!"

Forward rushed the brave soldier, and, gathering in his mighty arms as many of the lances as he could reach, he threw himself upon them, and bore them to the ground.

Across his body rushed the brave mountaineers. A path had been opened, and, ere the Austrians could recover from their surprise, the short maces and battle-axes were among them. The conflict was short and decisive. The enemy, seized by a panic, fled down the hill, intending to mount their horses and ride away. But no horse was to be seen; for the servants, becoming alarmed, had already gone with them, deeming their own lives of more value than their masters'!

The Austrians, whose heavy armor now hindered them in their flight, became scattered amid the fastnesses of the mountains. A few of them wandered to the castles of

friendly noblemen living in the vicinity. As night fell, and the last pink flush of the setting sun stole up the western heavens, these weary men, looking from the turret windows, saw fires gleaming along the dark mountain-sides, and from the tops of accessible peaks. Fiercely they scowled, but little recked the brave mountaineers, who had returned to their humble homes and were now thus signaling the joyful news of victory to the more remote valleys of the Schwesch. Their independence was not yet wholly won, but they were well pleased that they had dealt such a blow to their oppressors as would cause their rights to be respected more in future, and their free and hardy spirits looked forth to a day when Switzerland might be, what she is now, a brave little land, renowned, among all the empires of Europe, for her thrift, her industry, and the freedom of her people.

REI C. AGHORN



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