

THE
CANADIAN
HOME BOY



S. A. FRANCIS

SECOND EDITION







THE MASTERPIECE

THE CANADIAN
HOME BOY

BY

S. A. FRANCIS

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INTRODUCTION

Of all literature, none is more valuable than that which gives the actual experiences of men. Fiction has its place, and we may be moved to tears by the imaginary sufferings of an imaginary hero, but nothing can compare with the story of a real man who has faced the real issues of life, who has fought the battle of the world, and can give us his testimony as to the worth of things and the value of principles and methods.

We have in this volume the simple, unvarnished tale of a man who from an unpretentious beginning has fought a worthy fight—often against terrific obstacles—and has conquered. In the course of his career he has had an unusual variety of experiences, and the story that he presents to us in the following pages has its elements of pathos and comedy; adventures he has seen, and in the narration of them the reader cannot but be attracted by the man's personality, and gripped by the interest of the story, but let us repeat that the value of this book is just that it is a real life-history of a man, a contribution to the study of humanity.

The Canadian reader will need no explanation of the title "Home Boy," but to the British

reader this term will convey little meaning. Let it be said then, that in Canada—as for that matter in most other civilised countries—there are various institutions founded for the purpose of taking children who have lost their parents, or who in some way become destitute. English readers will understand the stigma that would attach to a boy who has been reared in a workhouse, or a charity school. “He is only a workhouse boy” would be the contemptuous estimation of his position and chances in life. Something of the same meaning is attached to the term “home boy” in Canada. It denotes a boy who has been brought up in some charitable “Home,” and from whom little that is good is expected.

The author of this interesting human document explains how he came to be a “home boy,” how the term of contempt followed and handicapped him in his career; yet how, in spite of it, and in spite of the very real disadvantages of a meagre education and self-training, he was yet able to succeed, and to turn that term of reproach into a name of which he could be justly proud.

Here is one “home boy” who has “made good,” but it does not follow that all are able to succeed. The author knows from bitter experience how hard it is for a boy reared as he has been to retain his probity, and achieve his

character; to succeed materially, and that without the sacrifice of what is highest and best. He has had a roving life, and, as he tells, knows just the insidious temptations that beset the man without home and friends. These temptations are increased a hundredfold from the knowledge that a "home boy" is almost expected to go wrong. "Give a dog a bad name"—and you do not expect that he will come out a pattern of virtue, to say the least.

The author has a simple yet ambitious purpose in writing this book. A man of essential modesty, he had no desire to put his own inner life-story before the world. But he is possessed with the consuming passion to benefit just that class of boy to which he was attached. There are to-day in Canada thousands of boys who, from one cause or another find themselves unable to get that help and training that shall fit them for success. Numbers of these are sent to "Homes" similar to that described in these pages; others simply drift to the waste places of the earth. Yet here is material out of which splendid manhood can be made. Now that he has achieved a moderate degree of substance and a good position, our author feels strongly that it should be his life work to establish some kind of Institution in Canada that shall take the needy and deserving boy and thoroughly equip him for life.

The author's idea is that this shall be a place with which the stigma of "Charity" will not be associated, where the boys will be taught not only "the three R's," but also useful arts and crafts.

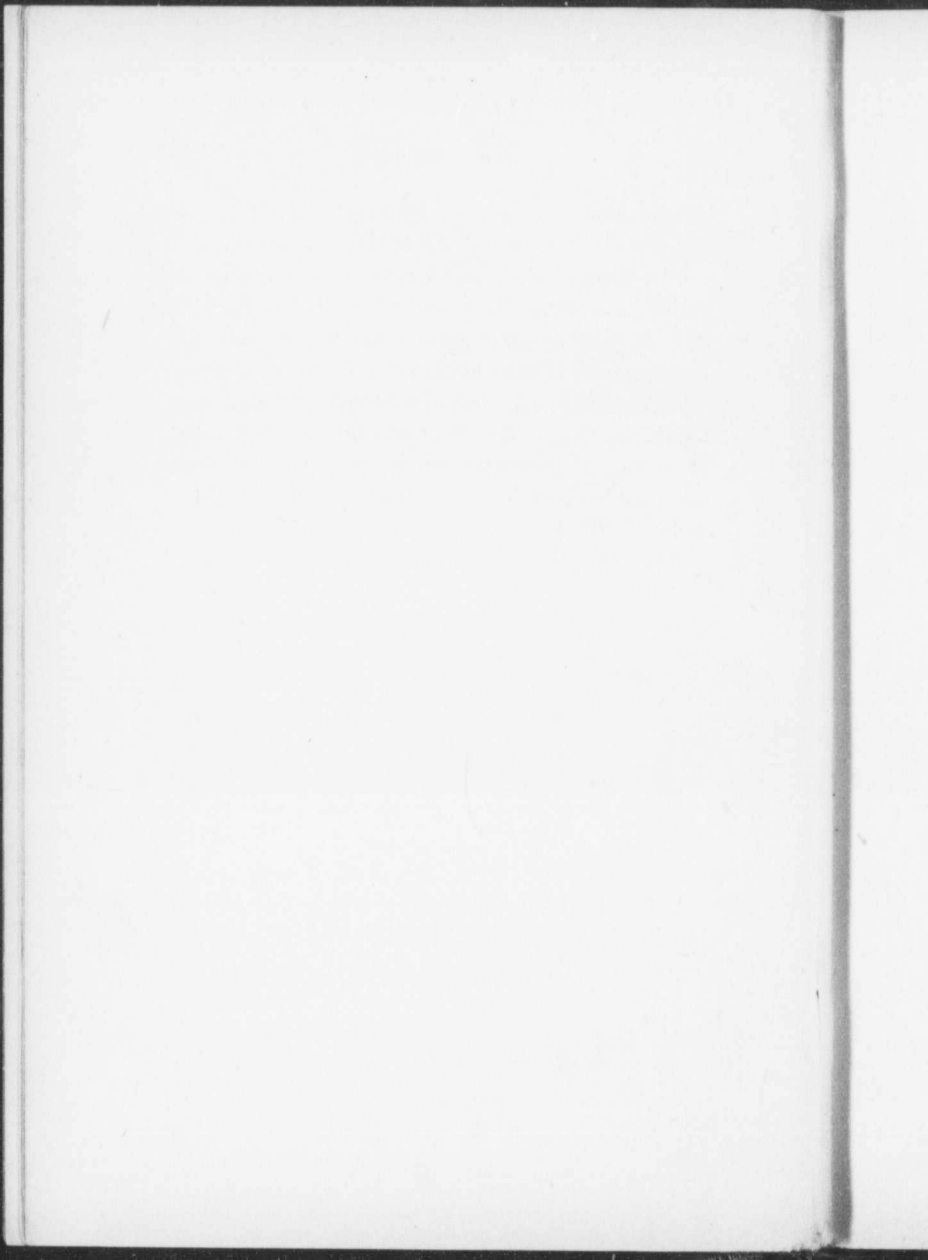
In fact, he proposes to abolish the word "Home" altogether, in connection with the institution, for people use it too frequently, often thoughtlessly, in such a way as to cast a slur on the boy raised and educated therein. He proposes to call such an Institution "The Boys' College," so that in after life the boy will speak and refer, not to the "Home" of his adoption, but to the "College" of his adoption. Some may think this change of name a little fastidious, but let those speak who have gone through the experience. All such favor, enthusiastically, the change.

It is estimated that £100,000 (\$500,000) at least will be required to establish this "Home College." The author is contributing all his wealth towards this end, and the balance of his life will be devoted to this object. The institution will be Canadian in every sense of the word, national and open to destitute boys from all over Canada and Great and Greater Britain.

The scheme will be further explained elsewhere, but it is only right to mention here that this is the motive of the book, and that it is in-

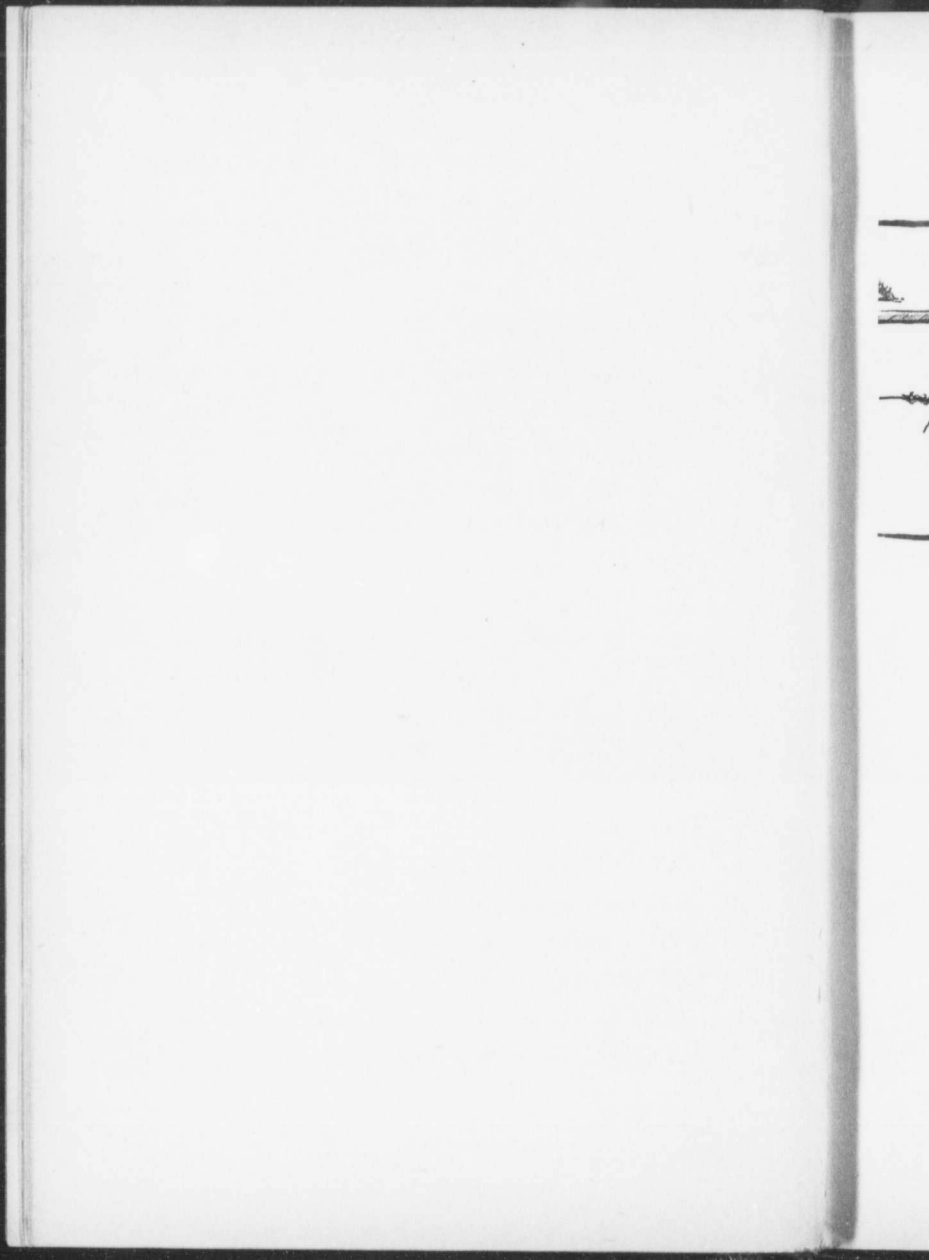
tended that the profits from its sale shall be devoted to this worthy object.

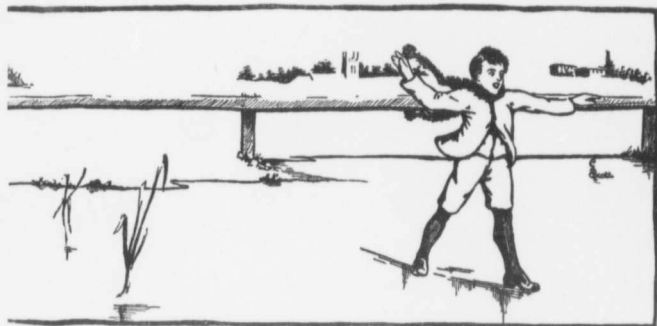
The reader may not be able to give greatly in material substance to this scheme, but at least he will be able to get others to share the interest and enjoyment that must come from the perusal of such a story as this; in recommending "The Canadian Home Boy" to friends, and inducing them to take copies he will not only be furthering knowledge of the scheme, but actually contributing to its realisation.



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THE CANADIAN HOME BOY

CHAPTER I

THE HOME

ALTHOUGH my earliest recollections only go back to Canada, I was born in England, my family coming from a little town in Devonshire. They belonged to the middle class and were in good circumstances.

My mother was a woman of refinement and well educated. My father came of good stock, and lived on his income. It is true that the income was not large, but it was sufficient to keep the family in comfort.

My father was ambitious to provide a nice little fortune not only for himself and his wife but for his children, and the thought of emigrating to Canada, a country which was beginning to loom large in the public eye, took possession of him. After discussing the matter fully with his wife, it was decided that they would sell all their possessions and go to the new country.

They made their new home in Toronto, and here the family lived in comfort for several

months. My father, however, was disappointed with his new home and the new condition of things. He made several investments, but each investment proved a failure. His last venture cost him five hundred pounds (\$2,500), every cent of which was lost in less than four months. His misfortunes so discouraged him that he took to drinking heavily in order to forget his misery. This brought the family to want and poverty.

Eight little children began to clamor for food and clothes which became scarce and shabby. Henry, the eldest boy, tried to keep the wolf from the door by selling papers and running messages. There were eight children in all, but they were most of them too young to help in making the home. Mother opened a little school to teach boys and girls reading, writing, and music. By this means she managed to keep the family together for a short while. But the burden was too heavy. She collapsed and became very ill. A Christian lady, whose baby my mother had helped to rescue from the jaws of death, became very interested in the family, and she used her influence to get three of the youngest boys taken to the Boys' Home of Toronto.

I was one of the three, and as I was only about four years old at the time, I never knew my father, and have but a faint recollection of my mother.

I was a stout, curly headed, blue-eyed little chap, and could not be quiet unless I was asleep. Full of life and energy I soon became known as a little mischief maker. Did anything go wrong, I was blamed, and it was useless for me to plead "Not Guilty."

Learning was not one of my strong points. It was with difficulty that I could learn writing. My stubby little hand could not be taught how to wield the pen or to shape letters. Many a "licking" I had for not being able to write. In the sight of the instructors my inability amounted to stupidity, and I remember that I became so discouraged that I hired my brother Sid to do my writing for me! But if I was slow at penmanship, I was quick at music, and possessing what was said to be rather a good voice was repeatedly asked to sing to the Matron and her assistants. I remember that my songs used to bring tears to the eyes of the listeners. Singing, then, was my redeeming feature. "Well," it was frequently remarked, "if he is full of mischief, and if he is slow in learning, he can sing." When visitors came to the home, I was often called out to sing to the "kind ladies and gentlemen."

For a moment let us look over this Home and see some of the habits of its inmates.

At the time about which I am writing there were some ninety boys in the Institution. The

officers consisted of a matron, a teacher, a cook, and two or three general helps. The boys were taught to assist in every department, the cooking, cleaning, sewing, gardening, etc. Three meals a day were given the children. The breakfast consisted of porridge, bread and milk; dinner was soup, potatoes, sometimes meat; the supper usually bread and butter and fruit.

I have nothing but praise for the "Home." Even to-day I thank God for it. It gave me shelter, food and clothing, and introduced me to the Christian gentleman who adopted me. The Home implanted in me Christian principles of sobriety and chastity. I never found comfort in the narcotic weed, though as the reader will find later on, I tried the "high life" in some of its alluring aspects.

The boys were taken to Church once every Sunday and I never objected to this. Later on I became familiar with the Church, the Prayer Meeting and Sunday School, and was afterwards elected an Elder in the Church. But I must not anticipate, except to say that all this resulted from an early training for which I am ever deeply grateful.

The Home had a nice garden in connection with it, and I was often found with the gardeners among the flowers. Gardening became my hobby and singing my chief recreation. My first

occupation in the Home was sewing and darning stockings, and I used to receive the munificent reward of 2 cents for every four pair of stockings I would darn.

The boys learned "the three R's" and singing, and how to perform useful services. They were also taught good manners and cleanliness; how to address a lady or a gentleman; how to sit at the table at meal time, how to conduct themselves in society. These little arts and graces which the boys were taught fitted them for their future lives. Every morning each boy had to take a cold bath, followed by a good rubbing. Their hair was always cut close to the skin, and they were dressed alike.

I never had trouble with anyone in the Home, excepting the teacher. The teacher and I could not get along very well. She called me names and taunted me for being slow, and wicked. This treatment roused my temper one day and I refused to obey her. She became angry and expelled me from the class.

Nothing could have pleased me better. The utility of learning had not dawned on my young mind. It was winter time when this incident occurred, and when the teacher expelled me to the cold yard I made a leap for the floating ice on the pond and there alone I played the sailor.

When the authorities saw me they became

frantic with fright. I was certainly in a precarious situation. A false move and I would be in the water. The teacher commanded me to come from my lonely island of ice back to the class. This I eventually did, though reluctantly.

This "dare-devil adventure" put an end to my expulsions from the class. It was useless treating me with harshness, and the teacher found out that while I could not be driven to learn I could be won by kindness to do my best. Yes, that was the result of temperament and it is my firm conviction that if there were less of the punitive system in the world and more of the persuasive and educative, there would be fewer criminals and vagrants and more decent citizens.



HANDLAND ISLAND, TORONTO, BEFORE LEAVING FOR NEW
HOME IN THE COUNTRY.



CHAPTER II

LEAVING THE HOME

I SPENT four happy years at the Boys' Home.

I was fatherless, and, as far as my little experience went, motherless. I remember seeing my mother but once, and that was when I was eight years of age. That was a few days before leaving the Home. She had been told that I would have to leave the Institution to be apprenticed to a tailor in a country town ninety miles from Toronto.

Upon hearing this she went to the home with a little present for me.

Somehow, however, as I had been in the Home since I was four years of age, I had no filial feeling and the "little something" mother had brought, did not appeal to me. This apparent ingratitude and lack of appreciation on the part of her little boy vexed my poor mother exceedingly, and she departed in tears. I never saw her again—that was to be the last time my eyes would ever gaze on her who bore the name "MOTHER."

My leaving the Home reminds me of the little Bible story where we are told how the prophet

The Canadian Home Boy

Samuel chose King David. The old prophet went one day to Jesse's home asking him to bring forth his sons for him to see. The old father brought forth his elder sons first, but the prophet would have none of them. The case seemed hopeless, when the father thought of his youngest lad David who was in the fields minding the flock. David had to be called in, and the moment the prophet fixed his eyes on the ruddy, courageous-looking, blue-eyed and innocent lad, he exclaimed: "This is the choice of the Lord."

In similar fashion, but with a different object, a middle-aged man came to the Boys' Home at Toronto one day, and said that he wanted a "boy" to adopt as his own and to teach him a trade. The kindly Matron desired to accommodate the old gentleman. She called all her many boys before him. Boy after boy was passed in review. But none of them appealed to him.

"Are these boys all you have available?" enquired the old man.

Almost despairing to find one to suit him, and one that appealed to him as what he wanted—

"No," said the matron, "We have a few younger boys here."

So the younger boys were brought out.

I was among these—a pale-faced plump little fellow with sharp blue eyes, and every muscle quivering with emotion.

"I'll take this little fat fellow," said the gentleman, whose name, for the purpose of this story will be Andrew Hardy. He was a Scotchman and typical of his race.

Papers were drawn up and signed, and a day was named for me to leave for my new home.

Before leaving I was requested to go and select a new suit for myself—the suit I was to travel in and wear in my new home. I chose a knicker-bocker suit, and buckled shoes. In my new clothes I thought myself very smart indeed!

I was allowed a day off before leaving. This day I spent with two of my brothers, Henry and Sid, at Handland Island. Henry had already at that time shown the bent of his mind, for he loved drawing, and to-day is a famous artist. He made a little sketch of myself and duly presented this to me as a token of affection. Sid gave me a little story book.

This story book, and the Bible which was presented to me by the Home authorities were the only books in my possession in those days, and they are the books which I most value now, for I have kept them all these years.

On the fly-leaf of the little Bible the following verses are inscribed:—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

The day for departure came. The matron

took my hand, for she was a palmist, or thought she was one, and she read my lines.

"Yes," she said, "Francis, you are sure to succeed, you are bound to become a great man some day : work hard and be good."

Then came the parting.

There was another lad leaving the Home at the same time, and going to the same town as myself, but to a different man and to a different destiny. There would be no more Christmas puddings on Christmas Day, the big luxury on the big days at the Home. There would be no more escapades, and going around saloons and fire Halls begging for pennies for the Home boys, and to candy stores, begging for candies for the little "Orphans."

At eight years of age I bade good-bye to the little romance of the Boys' Home ; and faced the stern, hard, and sometimes cruel world, little dreaming or caring what was in store for me.

Johnny, my little companion, was slighter built. He had light hair and brown eyes, and was a very intelligent boy. Full of fun and happiness we were taken to the depôt and put in charge of the conductor. We had a 90 miles' run to Dunstown, which was to be our future home for the next ten years.

I was filled with excitement when I saw the train and heard the whistle of the big locomotive

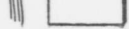
before starting on its journey. Everything was so new to me that I thought myself in a new world. I had never seen a train before, and felt as if I were going to Paradise!

After leaving the city the train whizzed its way through the fields and the tall timber of Ontario, and the objects I beheld for the first time I thought very wonderful. The cows and sheep and Indians were creatures I had no name for, and my fellow-passengers were amused at my flow of questions as to what this, that and the other thing was.

From window to window, on each side of the car, I hopped, keeping the passengers awake with my lively remarks, which must have been quaint and curious. Once the joy of my little heart was so full that I burst into song and everybody listened attentively to the melody.

The conductor was kind to the two orphan boys and treated us with candies more than once. At last he cried out "Dunstown!"

And I caught my little bag, containing all my belongings in this world—two little books, a tie, a coat, and a cap—and made for the door as happy as a millionaire, for was I not going to friends and to learn a trade, and become a man?





LANDING AT STATION IN COUNTRY HOME.

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CHAPTER III

IN MY NEW HOME

[T was May, in the year of our Lord, 1881, when I and my friend Johnny arrived at Dunstown. The flowers were beginning to bloom and the foliage on the trees made Dunstown look fresh and encouraging to the two little pilgrims. Dunstown nestles among the hills, and the country all round looked beautiful. It was a farming community, and the majority of the residents were "well fixed" as they say in Canada—that is, comfortably off.

Andrew Hardy, the gentleman who adopted me, was a tailor by trade, in good circumstances, honest and reliable, and well liked in the neighbourhood. His credit was exceedingly good, he was an elder in the Presbyterian Church, and a man of good moral character. He stood 5 feet 7 inches in height and weighed about 200 lbs. His eyes were as keen as the hawk's, but perhaps he lacked force and determination. He was also irascible in temperament and would growl frequently and unnecessarily.

His wife was a good Christian woman, a kind mother, and much respected.

The old gentleman and lady had children of their own, some of them my own age, but the old man wanted an apprentice on cheap terms, so he decided to adopt me.

The Articles of Agreement between Andrew Hardy and the Boys' Home, called for him to protect the boy, treat him kindly, teach him the trade of tailor and to be responsible for him until he was 18 years of age. He was also to pay into the Home \$15.00 per annum as a deposit, which was kept in the Home's Treasury until the boy would become 18 years old, when this money would be paid over to him, and form the little capital with which he should start in life.

At the depôt of Dunstow, I and my friend were met by Mr. Hardy and a crowd of the village boys.

I had only seen the old gentleman once, but upon alighting from the train, I immediately recognised him and rushed into the old man's arms. On our way up to the house, I saw a cow which had a bell hung to its neck, and not having seen such an object before, I was highly amused and interested at such a curiosity.

Andrew Hardy's house was full of visitors by the time we arrived. The neighbours were curious to see Andrew's new boy, and as there were two of us, they were curious to know which was "Andrew's Boy."

When the "little fat fellow with the blue eyes" was pointed out to them, all kinds of opinions were passed. Some thought him "cute," others thought he was "a bright looking fellow," and others decided that he would do.

After partaking of a frugal meal, we were told to go and play in the yard, but as it was late our explorations of the grounds amounted to very little that evening.

At nine we were told to retire to bed. Here everything was so new and strange that a terrible reaction from the joy and mirth of the day set in. We had to go to sleep in blankets, while we had been accustomed to sheets. This was a new experience, and I broke down, tears began to flow over my cheeks, and I felt as if my heart was breaking: remember, I was only eight years of age, and a stranger in a strange land.

About an hour was spent in silent sobbing, for I dared not cry aloud—I had been trained in the Home to keep my little troubles to myself. But after a while slumber came.

Our sweet sleep was disturbed seven hours later by the early crowing of Hardy's prize rooster, which had been taking his repose in the hen house attached to the bedroom. I had never heard such a noise before, and thinking that it was a new way for calling boys out of bed, I

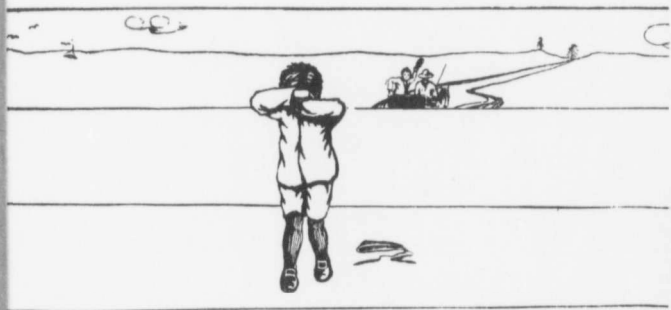
jumped to my feet, and went to the window to find out the meaning of the noise.

Johnny had never heard a rooster sing before, so we two little men held a consultation, Johnny acting the part of the wise one who knew all about it. It was useless, however, trying to sleep any more, so we dressed and went out to the well to bathe our faces in water, and then roamed about the premises.

Discovery after discovery was made.

In the first place we saw pigs, then we saw cows, then a big crowd of chickens, then pigeons; flowers, too, were plentiful, trees in foliage were many and then came "Reel," the dog, wagging his tail and asking for permission to be on friendly terms. I made a big friend of Reel, and the friendship commenced that day lasted between us for over twelve years.

Other friends I made that morning, and they will appear now and again in our story. One big friend in particular I met for the first time—a lady tailoress, Miss H. Johanna. She was a maiden lady of about thirty, of medium height, plump, with dark hair and hazel eyes. She decided to be a kind of second mother to me, and to-day I want to acknowledge that I owe much of the good that is in me to the kindness and Christian sympathy of this lady.



THE PARTING OF THE WAYS—LONELINESS REALISED.



CHAPTER IV

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

AFTER breakfast I had to part with my chum Johnny. It was the first great parting agony I had ever experienced. Johnny was to go seven miles into the country to become a farmer. It was one of those unsuitable arrangements which are far too common in life. Johnny would have made a first-class mechanical engineer, or anything requiring constructive ability, but a farmer, never. So later we will find him a wanderer, and a vagrant, and fast becoming a wastrel.

When Johnny was taken into the stage, I wanted to go along too. Finding my tears were useless, I ran for a stick, placed it between the spokes of the wheels while the vehicle was in motion. Not having experience enough of such things to let the stick go after throwing it between the spokes, I was thrown headlong to the ground, and had such a shaking that I have never forgotten it. Notwithstanding my fall, the driver drove on, and I stood crying alone on the highway.

For the first time I began to realise that I was alone in a big and strange world.

The paradise of yesterday's dreams had been turned into a wilderness of thorns and briars and stones and pitfalls: a world where I was to have many a hard throw down, many a hard bump, and many to laugh and jeer at my misfortunes.

This was an occasion when Miss Johanna, the maiden lady, befriended me. While others found occasion to laugh at my fall, she ran out of the shop, took me in her arms and comforted me. Little, however, she thought then that she was doing anything which would be remembered. It was an illustration of the saying, that a cup of cold water given in a deserving case, shall not go unrewarded.

The following day I had to go to school, but I soon found that I was not treated like the other children. Even the boys and girls pointed to me as "the boy from the Home."

The children did not want to play with me, the teacher thought that I deserved less attention than others, and by this time I had begun to realise that I was in a class altogether different from everybody else. This feeling became stronger and stronger, until I found it almost impossible to associate with others. I grew to love loneliness and isolation. My companions were men and women thirty years my senior.

Another thing that made school unsavoury to me was the home duties. The work of the Hardy home was piled on to my little shoulders. I had a dozen or more things to do every morning before going to school. The consequence was that it became too late for me to get to school punctually about every three out of four days. This kept me back with my lessons, and gradually I grew to hate going to school, although I was ambitious to get on.

So I might frequently be found in the corner of the garden, or in the barn all alone, with a little reading book in my hand and plodding away at the big words. I soon mastered the first reader, and was greedy of reader Number Two. Old Hardy thought me "real smart," and felt proud of me—just as an owner feels proud of a good prize!

It was galling, however, the way I was discriminated against at home. Hardy's boys used to go to Church in nice Sunday clothes, but I had to go to Church in my everyday smock and rough pants. This pierced my heart, and it is not surprising that one Sunday found me peevish and sour, and ready to fight with Hardy's own boys, who treated me slightly and in a surly way.

It was Tammas who provoked the quarrel.

Tammas was a little bigger than I and a spoilt child. He was never asked to do anything

around the houses, and on Sunday he used to dress up for Church and Sunday School.

After coming home from Church, Tammas came to me and ordered me to fetch a pail of water from the well.

"Why don't you do it yourself?" I asked, "You are stronger than I am."

"Who are you talking to?" replied Tammas angrily, "Don't you know that you are nobody, you are our slave and I'll make you go," and suiting the deed to the word, he pushed me along.

For the moment I forgot my obligations, and struck Tammas with all my might; the vicious blow on Tammas' nose brought the blood streaming down over his nice Sunday suit.

The noise brought Hardy to the scene, and seeing his own boy's nose bleeding, without enquiring as to the merits or de-merits of the occasion, I was censured and given a good shaking, and as a further punishment, I had to go without my dinner that day.

It was useless for me to try to explain. It was of no avail to try and justify myself. I had no case, from Hardy's point of view. I was there on charity and all I could demand was existence. To be given nice clothes and placed on an equality with Hardy's own boys with respect to the household duties was not to be expected.



BECOMING MORE USEFUL.



CHAPTER V

BECOMING MORE USEFUL

I BECAME stronger by hard work. As month after month I became bigger, fresh duties were piled on me. I became the errand boy, the wood boy, the chores boy, and the gardener. So it is not surprising to find that I developed a good, healthy and strong body. I was able to do a man's work before I was sixteen years of age.

Among my favorite occupations was gardening. I have mentioned how, when a little lad at the Home, gardening fascinated me; now hours were spent in digging the soil and planting fruit trees, and they were hours of joy to me.

Next to gardening I liked best attending to pet animals—the doves on the premises were all my pets. It was a common scene to see them fly around my head and coo to me in an affectionate manner. Even the calves and sheep on the premises used to run to me and rub around my legs.

One day, it was Sunday, the mother dove—old Dewey as she was called—followed me to church,

and not being able to go through the door, she hovered around the windows for a while and then flew round the steeple.

At last she found an opening in one of the windows. It was Sacrament Sunday and the minister had his head bowed in reverent prayer at the time, when old Dewey alighted on his head. A smile passed over the faces of the congregation; but some of the old folks thought it was a token from God of some wonderful event. The dove's visit to the church became the talk of the village for weeks, and ultimately the old folks became tired of waiting for the great event.

After the duties of the day had been performed I had to go into the tailor shop and learn to sew.

This task was very arduous at first.

The little tailor shop had no system or method. Things were done haphazardly, according to the notion or fancy or taste of the operator. One man would tell me to do a thing one way, and then another person would tell me to do it in another way. This puzzled me and brought me many a scowl and many a push.

Hardy would also frequently lose his temper with me and call me names. I was told on more than one occasion that I would never do any good. Of course this discouraged me, for I was ambitious and determined to become something some day.

The lady tailors on the premises, however, were kind to me. Johanna took special patience with me and slowly, but surely, I became able to make a pair of pants. The first pants I was allowed to finish were a pair left off by old Hardy. These pants I was allowed to make up for myself. The job was creditably finished, and my pride in my achievement was so great that I went and had my photo taken!

I was now becoming a young man and required a little money. This commodity, however, was very scarce. Hardy would never give me any cash to spend, so in order to earn a few dimes I hired myself for a few hours at a stretch to a neighbour, who would hand me a little money for small services rendered.

With this money I would buy little necessities for myself, such as handkerchiefs, and buy tickets for Church concerts and lectures, etc. Besides this I would hire myself out to neighbouring farmers, and earn sufficient to secure enough help to mow the master's land, and gather in the crops, for by this time I had full charge of Hardy's acres, which he ploughed, harrowed and sowed with wheat, oats and barley, doing most of the work himself. Besides this, he would also plant about half an acre in potatoes, and get boys from the neighbourhood to help him do the bug picking.

It was on one of these occasions that I was most scandalously slandered.

The boys were rude, rough and foul. Cursing and using obscene language was their delight, and when a crowd of boys like this get together there is sure to be some fighting.

Expectations were not disappointed this time. A quarrel arose over some trifling thing and then a fight followed. The boys were in the height of excitement, cursing and urging their favourite on, when a neighbour passed by. The boys at once put the entire blame on to me. They accused me of starting the fight, and starting the cursing. The accusation was readily believed and the neighbour went direct to Hardy and accused him of bringing evil influences into the town by adopting unknown boys from the Home.

"This boy," said the neighbour in wrath, "is contaminating the youths of the district. Such boys never amount to anything and it is a mistake to treat them kindly."

A more grave and more erroneous charge was never brought against the orphan and destitute boy, and I have lived to give that neighbourhood, and those who think likewise, the lie. I was not to blame for the conduct of those boys, and besides it was untrue to accuse me of cursing. Profane language never passed my lips, but I was defenceless, and the charge stuck to me.

Hardy was grieved at the supposed conduct of his adopted boy, and he gave me one of those home treatments that a boy never forgets.

On another occasion I nearly got myself into serious trouble.

I was peeling and stringing apples in the little summer house when a crowd of boys and girls from the village came into the little workshop and began to upset and undo all my work. It was a noisy and unruly crowd, and my temper got the better of my judgment and I began to thrash the boys with my fists. Finding that the boys were too many and too strong for me, I caught up a wooden pail that was handy and swung it round and round striking everybody in the vicinity very fiercely. One of the boys happened to receive a serious blow. He was Hardy's eldest son Tammás, and the blow nearly meant the boy's death. He was carried home unconscious, while I was taken to the police office.

After a few hours, however, I was released, but the occasion gave me a big lesson, a lesson that has shaped my life to this day. The lesson was to control my temper, and to think twice, yea thrice, before acting under temptation. Tammás was soon round again, but he was always shy of me after receiving that cut, and I became known as "The little dare-devil of Dunstown."





A FATEFUL MEETING.







THE WHIPPING

CHAPTER VI

TWO COWS AND A LITTLE GIRL

OLD Hardy, besides being a tailor, was also quite a cattle dealer. He was always buying and selling cows and sheep, hogs, chickens or geese.

Two of these deals became memorable. Hardy had sold a cow to one of his neighbours. It was winter time and there was quite a storm raging. The snow in some parts was about nine feet deep, and the wind was high and cold. The owner threw his whip to me and told me to lead the cow along, that he would follow after me a little later. So off I started for the nine-mile tramp through the bitter cold. The cow was by no means any too willing to do the journey, so she pulled and tugged and tried her best to get away. When a little distance out of town a neighbour, viewing the hard task I was having to get the cow to travel, came to the door and asked me what was my destination.

I gave him the necessary information, and upon hearing how far I had to go he advised me

to go back to the village and wait until the owner was ready to go along with me.

I went back to the village and found the owner of the cow drunk and searching for his whip. I returned the whip to him but the man, in his drunkenness, had forgotten that he had handed it to me an hour or so earlier; so he commenced to lay the whip on my cold flesh unmercifully, reminding me withal of my low origin.

As soon as I could get away I went to Hardy and appealed to him, with tears streaming down my cheeks, not to send me with the cow.

But Hardy would not listen, and once more the journey was commenced.

It was a fierce night, but my struggles with the cow kept me warm. After travelling a few miles, the man began to sober up, and realising my arduous task, he pulled his horses and sleigh alongside of the cow, took the rope into his own hands, and got me to sit in the sleigh with him.

The man then became talkative and asked me all sorts of questions, and before we arrived home the old farmer had rather a good opinion of my qualities.

The night was spent in a cosy bed, and rest was never more welcome.

In the morning, the old farmer wanted to know my name and was anxious to know if I had a brother of similar quality to myself. He re-

gretted beating me the previous night and gave me a silver coin.

The cow, however, soon died. The old farmer met with several misfortunes, and when next I met him he was a poor man.

By this time I was advancing rapidly in my trade, and taking quite an interest in Church matters.

I was fond of Sunday School, attended the prayer meetings, and often the preacher would ask me to lead the singing. My singing seemed to be a pleasure to the congregation, and certainly I was pleased to do what I could. I grew in favour with a number of friends, who treated me kindly. One in particular, my Sunday School teacher, was a great friend, as was also his wife.

These helped me to forget that I was a Home Boy, though others, even when trying to be kind, reminded me of my origin. This made me so sensitive that I preferred being alone to mixing with friends. My sacred places were a little corner in the garden and a corner in the barn. Here I would frequently give way to my grief and sob my heart out. Frequently was I tempted to run away to a town where no one would call me the "Home Boy." But better thoughts prevailed.

Not far from Dunstow there lived another farmer who traded quite a good deal with Hardy.

This old man had bought a suit of clothes from Hardy, and not having the cash to pay for them, he offered him one of his cows in exchange. As the farmer was retiring from business, Hardy decided to take the cow.

So one morning, Hardy took me to Wilson's home, about seven miles distant, to get the cow. The old men were great friends, and upon Hardy's arrival at the Wilson farm, he was given a good welcome. Both men wended their way through the barns and stables arm-in-arm chatting freely on the stock and their quality.

I was left at the gate, practically unnoticed. While standing there alone and unheeded, the door of the farm house was opened, and my eyes fell upon a little girl with light hair, and large bright eyes, standing by a group of ladies who were petting her.

The scene has never vanished from my mind. How I would like to have friends like that little girl! How I would like it if some one petted me. My heart for the first time longed for the companionship of love!

Little did the lonely lad think that day that he would see that fair little girl again. Little did he dream that Cupid would throw darts into both their hearts in years to come. If anyone had whispered to me then that the little girl in white

would some day become my sweetheart I would not have believed it.

To the poor, unrecognised lad, that little fair-haired girl was as far away as an angel.

If the thought of love was far from my mind, it was farther from Hardy and the little girl's uncle. The uncle was a popular man in the town. He was well liked. He was a man of substance. If anyone had suggested to him that morning that the little despised recognised orphan at his gate, would some day be his protector, and that he would eat at the same table and sleep under the same roof, the old man Wilson would have scorned the idea. But if you follow this story through, you will find that the little unrecognised lad at the Wilson gate did later on become lord and master of the little Wilson Estate.

How it all happened, is for succeeding chapters to unfold.

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GOING TO MEET MY BROTHER.



CHAPTER VII

OUT OF THE PAST

THERE were only nine miles between me and my friend Johnny. Though the distance was short we had not seen each other since we had parted five years previously. Neither had I seen or heard from my brothers Henry and Sid.

A desire arose in my heart to see some of my old friends, and nearest to me was my old pal, Johnny.

It was a pleasant day in summer when I decided to make the journey. The stage which five years separated us was once more to unite us for a short while. The drive through the country was enjoyed immensely. Nature was a second paradise, with flowers blooming and the birds singing songs of freedom and delight.

Johnny was waiting at the terminus, he was no longer the bright, joyful little boy of five years ago. He had grown sour and insipid. Life was no longer a joy to him, but a serious burden. He had lost all ambition, and had grown coarse and vulgar. He had not received worse treat-

ment, probably, than I had, but the obstacles and jeers and hardships, instead of inspiring, had discouraged him, and extinguished every spark of hope and joy and faith and ambition that was in him.

Jack—as “Johnny” must henceforth be called—grew coarser as the years rolled by, and to the superficial observer he became a proof of the saying, “Out of Nazareth cometh no good thing.”

But we must not blame Jack altogether. His environment was against him. The sentiment regarding the “Home Boy” was against him. The work he was compelled to do was distasteful to him, so he cut loose the anchor of his life, and allowed the winds and the tide carry him along wheresoever they would.

To me that was by no means a joyful day after all. I was disappointed in the course my friend's development had taken. I had a big ambition—an ambition to succeed, an ambition to make a name in the world, an ambition to do good—and I could not understand Jack's coarseness and vulgarity.

Soon after this visit to the country I received a letter from one of my brothers. This brother had worked his way up to the responsible position of a manager of a big store in Morrisberg. He had grown to be a very clever young man, full of life and activity and ambition.

Sid had written to me, asking me to meet him at one of the wharfs on the Georgian Bay near Dunstow. I had some some difficulty in getting away. Old Hardy did not like the idea of relatives writing to his adopted son and coming round to see him. This kind of thing the old man thought would spoil my usefulness, and would ultimately alienate me from him. After considerable cogitation, permission was granted, and in high glee I made for the lake. The excursion boat had, however, arrived, and the little band of excursionists had wended their way to the town. I was disappointed. I did not know whether to think that my brother had arrived or not. So I returned leisurely to the village, looking keenly into every man's face I met, to see if perchance I should recognise my brother. Finally, I saw someone who resembled the family. Ten years had passed over our lives since we had met, but there was something in his countenance that revealed the family mark. Going up to him, I asked if he were not Sid. "Sure," replied my brother, and we clasped each other in the most affectionate manner.

It was a cup of joy placed to my parched lips and brimful of happiness; and the memory has lasted many a long year.

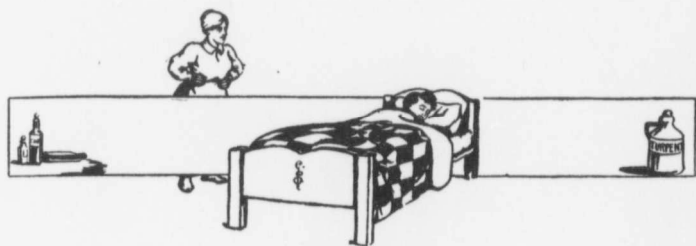
The day was a great contrast to that I had spent with Jack. My brother was well dressed,

looked refined, and his eyes sparkled with the joy of success. He seemed to have lots of money also, for he treated me liberally in every possible manner. The day came to an end too quickly, and we parted.

At this time I also learned of another brother's good fortune.

Henry had been exceedingly successful in his profession, and had had several important commissions.





FALLING ILL.

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CHAPTER VIII

FALLING ILL

THE bigger I grew the harder were the tasks imposed on me. Many tasks, however, I voluntarily imposed on myself in order to earn a little money for every-day use.

Hardy would not allow me any loose money at all. It was enough for him to pay into the Home's Treasury the \$15.00 per annum which the contract called for, and he thought that he was performing his obligations exceptionally well by so doing, and by giving me room and board.

By working hard, however, during spare hours and the few holidays granted me in the summertime, I was able to hire myself out to advantage to the neighbours; but some of these neighbours were by no means any too generous in their payments, and one especially had the conscience to give me a bogus \$5.00 bill.

I had worked hard for that farmer, pitching and stocking. At the rate wages were paid I had earned \$20.00, but the old "hayseed" and miser handed me a fraudulent piece of money!

In high glee I took the bill to a friend to buy some necessities, and one can imagine my consternation when I was told that I was handling bogus money. To crown the event, the old farmer denied ever giving me the bad bill, and consequently refused to change it.

It is such men as these who give Christianity such a bad recommendation, and who are no credit to the human race. Some of them think themselves "smart," and pride themselves on doing a fellow creature out of his dues. I had no means to retaliate, but I took good care not to work for that fellow again.

Over-anxiety to get on, in spite of discouragements, brought on a severe sickness. It was in the month of May, and I had been working in the garden all day in spite of a big downpour of rain. I was consequently wet to the skin, but instead of retiring to bed or changing my clothes at evening, I went into the tailor shop and began working there just as I was in my wet things. No one protested, no one warned me of the danger.

I felt a dizziness come over me, then a sick feeling. I was forced to leave the workshop and go to bed.

But nobody attended to my wants. In fact, no one thought that there was anything seriously

wrong. No one ever does, unless it is a mother or a father or a wife or a particular friend. Even a brother or a sister may not notice that there is anything wrong until you complain seriously or until you fail to work.

The following morning I was in the grip of pleurisy. It was my first sickness. I sent for a doctor, but the doctor did not come. So my kind friend, Miss Johanna, bought me a little bottle of turpentine, and I rubbed it into my flesh until I actually jumped with pain.

All day and all night I was allowed to pine in agony.

I began more strongly than ever before to feel the need of a sympathetic heart and some kind hands to minister to me. The word "mother" had no particular meaning, the word "sister" had no meaning at all, but the word "wife" had an instinctive attraction.

Where was that fairy I had met a few years ago? She was not far away, but had she known of my misery she could not have come to help me. The tailoress was the only one who visited me. She came three times to see her patient. The turpentine had done its work; it had removed the pain.

The last time she came to see me I was able to smile. "I'll be all right and back at work

in the morning, Johanna," was my cheerful assurance.

Johanna was pleased with her treatment, and proud of herself as a doctor. Whenever anyone had pain after that it was—"Use turpentine." Turpentine was the universal remedy.

The next day I was better, and the doctor came. It was like the visit of the rainbow after the storm. He examined me; there was no need to do that, for I was out of bed, and a blind man could see that I was all right. After examining the pulse and putting a two-foot horn to my heart, the doctor declared me out of danger. But Johanna had declared me cured twenty-four hours previously, and she was no M.D., and did not charge \$5.00 for her services!

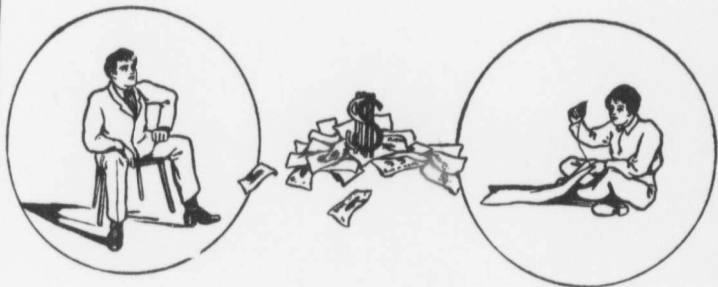
After the examination was over the doctor gave me a prescription. The prescription was never used, but the doctor had to do something to earn his fee. A few days later his bill for medical attendance came in for \$5.00.

This raises a very interesting question. If you are ill to-day and you send for the doctor, and if you get better of your own accord before the doctor arrives, is the doctor entitled to his fee?

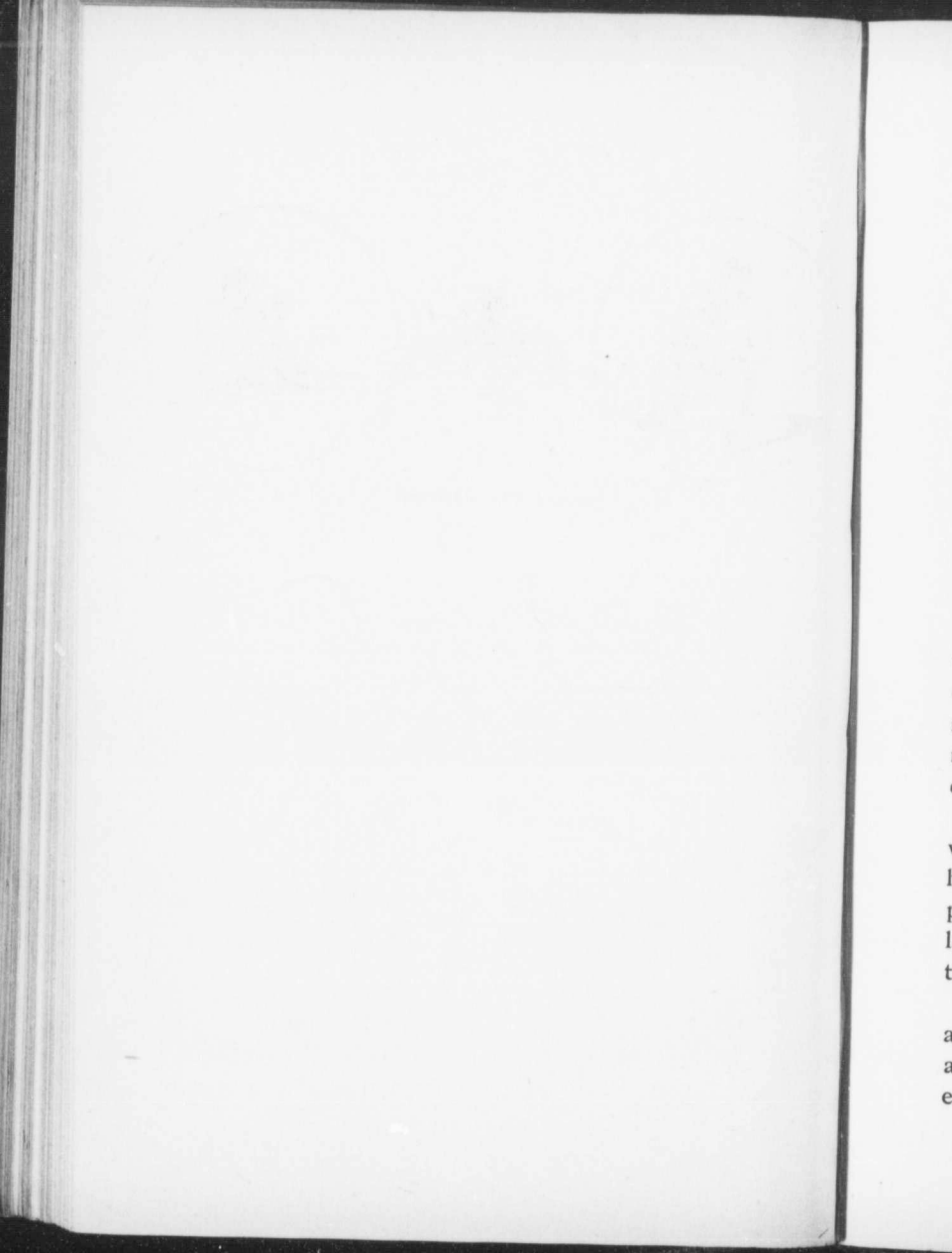
I made a mistake in not sending word to the doctor, to tell him not to trouble about coming. As I had by my own energy—with the aid of

Johanna's turpentine—cured myself, I should have told Doctor Sandy not to come. But I had forgotten this little bit of duty, so it was only right that I should pay the doctor for his visit, and pay him I did out of my own little treasury.





MONEY AND AMBITION.



CHAPTER IX

A BROADER VIEW OF LIFE

I WAS no longer a boy. I was seventeen years of age, and Hardy was more proud of his ward than ever. He looked at me from head to foot one morning, thinking "what a little gentleman I have made of him."

Big posters adorned several sections of Dunstowm announcing and displaying various features of the big Exhibition that year at Toronto. I had never seen a big show—or a little show, for that matter—in all my life. I had not even seen a circus.

Dunstowm was dead to all these things. It would not have paid enough to feed one camel had any circus visited little Dunstowm. The big posters announcing the Exhibition at Toronto had laid hold of my mind, and I begged for permission to go.

Hardy thought the matter over very seriously, and decided that, as I was seventeen years of age and the contract with the Home was about to expire, it would be a good thing to let me go to

Toronto with him. So he decided that we should make the trip to the Exhibition.

It was a very exciting time. Toronto was the world to me then. To see Toronto was to see everything. Everything good and everything great and marvellous could be seen at the big city. Many were the stories I had heard from the boys of the wonders of the Queen City. The big preachers, the big churches, the big actors, and the big theatres were at Toronto. The great singers, and the great orators, and the big stores, and the big tailors were all gathered together there, and so my heart beat with joy at the thought of visiting the town.

Part of my savings I used to buy cloth from Hardy to make myself a suit. I made this suit after working hours. When everybody was asleep my scissors could be heard clicking, and my needle and thread could be heard plowing through the cloth. The suit was completed days ahead of the great day, so every hour was reckoned with nervous excitement.

At last the day for departing arrived. I was up with the dawn. The garden and the pets were all attended to, so there was nothing left to be done but bid everybody good-bye.

The whole tailor shop stood at the door while we walked together to the depôt, I carrying the old man's valise.

Return tickets were purchased, I paying my own fare. Nine years, remember, had elapsed since I was on the train on that memorable occasion when I had arrived at Dunstow from Toronto. I had experienced many things since then.

In the exuberance of my joy, however, I forgot all my troubles that morning, and so the journey back to Toronto was a journey bestrewn with roses. It was like going on a trip to Paradise.

Toronto was reached in the afternoon. We registered in a temperance hotel at 50 cents a night for bed. Then we proceeded to see the big exhibition.

To my receptive and responsive mind this exhibition opened up a new world. There were more things in this world than my brains had ever dreamed of in little Dunstow.

Three things much impressed me at the exhibition: that the world was full of wonders, that these wonders were made by clever men, and that these clever men were successful men. The realisation of these facts had the natural effect on my mind; there was once more born within me the desire to be something, to become somebody, to make a name for myself. How nice it would be to have my name attached to these big and wonderful things.

So the soul of ambition, enlightened ambition, took possession of my mind. I had always been ambitious in a sense, but that visit to Toronto roused every faculty of my soul; I felt that nothing but death could prevent my success.

But what would I do first?

Well, I was a tailor. I knew more about tailoring than anything else, so I must first of all become a first-class tailor. I looked at the well-made suits in the tailoring department of the exhibition. There was style, quality, finish. I then reflected on my own suit and Hardy's suit, and while both were well made, they lacked style and finish.

Was my ambition wicked? I could not say, but I dared not tell Hardy my thoughts. I dared not tell him "I am going to leave you. I hear a voice calling me to a higher service than your shop." The old man might not be able to understand, so I said nothing.

A day was spent in visiting the Boys' Home. One or two of the officials remembered me, and felt proud of my success. The old man claimed all the merits for making a man of his charge.

To me the Home was the same old place. The boys were dressed the same, looked the same, and were treated just the same. There had been little, if any, change in external arrangements.

My heart was filled with sympathy for these boys. How I would have liked to hug each one and tell him to be good, and to determine to be something some day in spite of sad names and jeers.

Out of nothing comes nothing, but if you decide to become something then you must attain some worthy end.

Three days passed, and great places had been visited, Toronto's big stores, Toronto's big Exhibition, and Toronto's Boys' Home.

The hour for departing came.

I felt a big sigh come to my heart as the time for leaving drew nearer. In my heart was a secret longing to remain in the city and perfect my knowledge of tailoring. But how could I get away from Hardy?

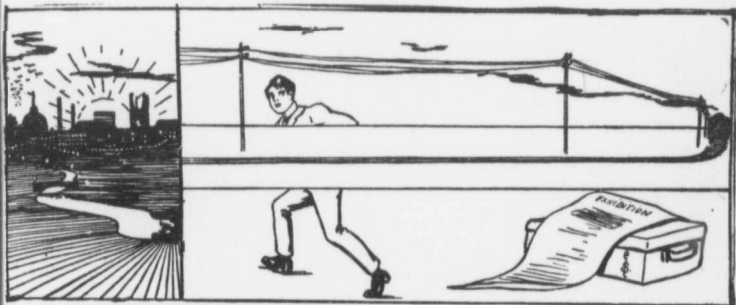
At last my chance came.

The train was crowded, crowded with sight-seers returning to their homes. In the excitement of the crowd Hardy lost sight of me. The engine began to pull out of the depôt and Hardy thought that his charge was by his side, but I had slipped away! The old man had travelled nearly half way home before he realised that I had left him.

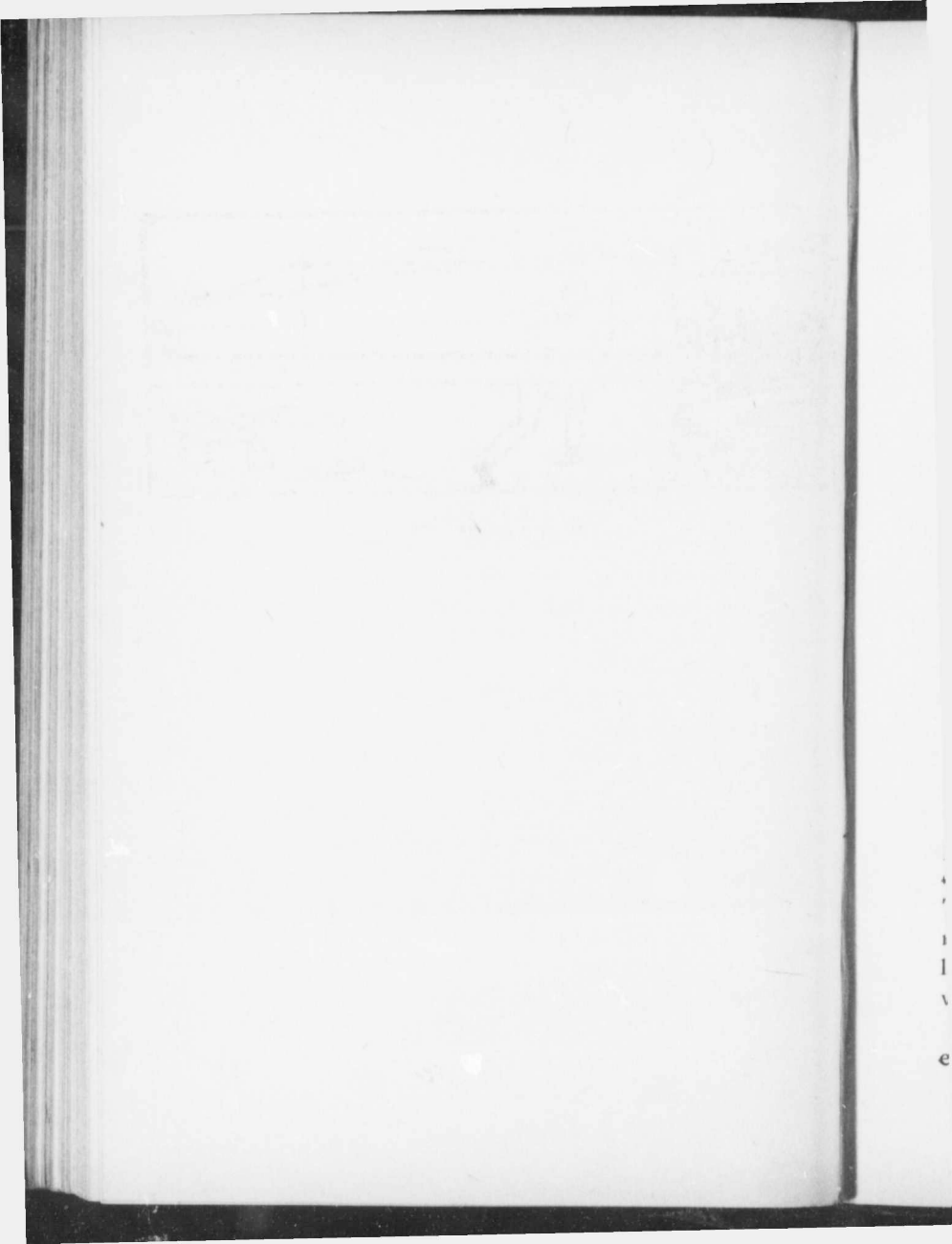
Then, as I learnt later, Hardy began to curse the thought that led him to bring me into that city. "I should have known better," he thought.

“What could I expect,” he mused with himself, “but desertion and ingratitude and waywardness and wickedness from a Home boy? The Home boys are all bad, and no Christian thought or care will make them otherwise!” Here was a proof under his own eyes. What more could he have done for the lad than he had done? Yet the wicked boy had left him. With these thoughts and feelings in his mind Hardy arrived at Duns-town, took his way home, and the following morning everybody agreed with him that the Home boy was “no good.” It was wasting charity to be kind to him. But was the Home boy “no good”? We shall see.





IN THE QUEEN CITY.



CHAPTER X

IN THE GREAT CITY

WHILE Hardy was doubtless thinking of me, and not too well of me, I was walking the streets of Toronto looking for a job in a tailor's shop, where I could learn more of the trade and become a better tailor. The job was soon found in an up-to-date establishment in Yonge Street.

I was first put to make vests ; but, while I was busy making vests, my eyes were also busy taking in the new ways of doing things, the new ideas of tailoring and the new style of cutting.

I made good money at this store, and worked hard.

The evenings I spent in visiting the leading places of amusement and some of the leading churches, and listening to the leading preachers. The Church had always had an attraction for me. While other boys were hankering for high life, I generally found myself in a church, or witnessing a good performance.

So the days passed quietly without any great events.

But before the end of the second week I began to realise the seriousness of my step. In the first place, I would lose the little money which had been deposited to my name at the "Home." In the second place, I would lose the old man's friendship and support; and in the third place, I would lose all my best friends' confidence. I had left Hardy in a mean way, left him on the train, and left him without giving him warning.

It was the height of meanness I thought, and it savored of a sneakish nature. Conscience began to call out, sleepless nights came on, the glamor of fame and success faded into the background, and so one morning I awoke determined to go back to Dunstowm.

If I were ever to wear the crown of success, it should be by way of Dunstowm and doing the right thing by old Hardy.

On Saturday I was paid my money in full, and as fast as my feet could carry me I wended my way to the depôt and waited for the next train.

When I arrived in Dunstowm the old man had got over his temper and disappointment, the old "hands" were glad to see me back among them again, and I was greeted on all sides with gladness. The Home Boy was not so bad after all, they thought, and this helped to remove the stigma.

I explained my waywardness as best I could. A new ambition, I said, had entered my soul. The old man Hardy listened. It was like hearing echoes from his own soul from boyhood days. I was, therefore, given more tailoring work to do, for I was becoming a smart hand. Instead of being told how to do things, I was able to give the other tailors a few points, for I had been some weeks—a long time!—in an up-to-date tailor shop in the leading city of all Canada. I became so efficient that my wages were increased.

This was kept up for six months. Then, as my time had expired, I decided to ask the old man for the money due to me.

There were a hundred and fifty dollars lying to my account in the Home bank. Quite a sum for a poor boy! One hundred and fifty dollars! The money was duly assigned over, and I became the owner and ruler of this great amount.

After receiving this money, I became increasingly restless, day after day. I wanted to give scope to my ambition; I realised that I could not learn much more at Hardy's. Accordingly, one day I had a talk with the old man about the whole affair, and it was mutually agreed that I should leave him to go off to improve myself; I was to learn all I could about the business, and become, if possible, a famous tailor;

a tailor of a new style who would have his name on every garment, and who would establish a new brand of clothing.

With this thought in mind, I returned to Toronto, and became an improver in one of the largest and most stylish shops in the city.

The head cutter was an Englishman. He was an assertive, cock-sure, and rather conceited person. He knew his business thoroughly, and "no one," he asserted, "could teach him anything."

I was placed under a coat maker, a fine fancy tailor, who made all the "swell" coats, frock coats, tail coats, caps, etc. I worked hard for several weeks, and was paid by the piecework. After two weeks hard work I had only earned 50c. per week. Out of this magnificent amount I had to pay for my room and board.

But though earning this small wage, I found money to go out with "the boys" and have a good time. The church was beginning to lose its grip on my affections. In my ambition to succeed I thought I had better make friends with "the boys." To be jolly with the fellows, it seemed to me, was the necessary road to success. By being jolly with the young men they would all like me the more, and let me into the wonderful secrets of successful tailoring. So I went out with the other tailors and took a few "drinks."

This was kept up for several days, until one day I took one drink too many. I felt shaky, my legs began to give way, and my eyes began to see sights. It was at the usual saloon where I used to take a few drinks with "the boys" on their way home to lunch. This day, however, they mixed my drinks for me, determined to have some fun at my expense. Every new hand undergoes this experience.

It was not long before I began to see everything moving. When I got to the lunch table and sat down, the table also took a fit and began to revolve. At last somebody suggested that the strangeness of things was purely a temporary affair, and that a few hours' sleep would effect a cure. I took the suggestion, and proceeded to bed, and there remained until things became normal again.

The next day the cigar took the place of the drink, the drink in the meantime being tabooed. The cigar was also new to me. Never had I had one in my mouth before, but I did not want to show my greenness, so I began pulling away like an old hand.

If the drinks were bad and had caused me to see visions, the cigar was a thousand times worse. It made my tongue swell and my eyes bulge like those of an owl. Another day in bed.

I was indeed learning my trade fast and

furiously at this time, and by the look of things I might get to the bottom of the ladder of fame rather than to the top of it!

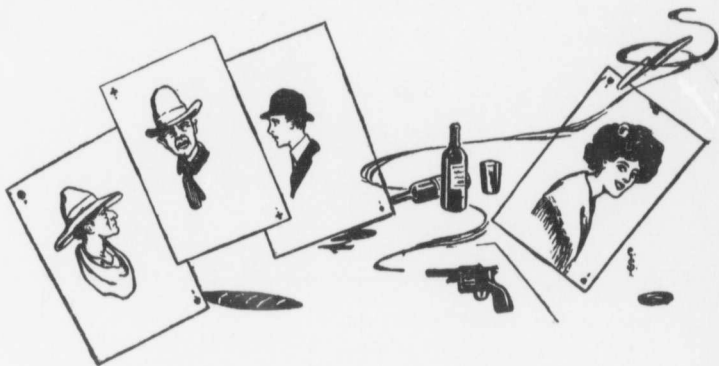
The sudden death of one of my friends put a stop to my rapid progress downward. I had been in the habit of chumming with a lad, the only son of a good Christian woman, with whom I had been boarding.

Jackson was a clever fellow and advancing rapidly in his trade. He was making a good deal of money, and making it easily, in fact too easily, for he spent it as he made it, and a great part of it was spent in high living. The speed, however, was too swift for the lad, and in a few months he was in his grave, having dissipated away his life.

When I saw him in his coffin, horror was struck into my very heart. The marks of sin were visible on his face, and I had learned enough of physiognomy to know the meaning, the terrible meaning of it all.

This was to me an effective check. The friendly "drinks" were cut out, and the cigars never called into requisition again.

After a few months I grew tired of city life, and as I found it difficult to cut off the new habits I had contracted, I decided that my only salvation was to return to quiet Dunstowm once more. So after a few months sojourn in Toronto, I went back to the monotony of Dunstowm.



THROUGH THE STATES—ITS ATTRACTIONS.



CHAPTER XI

IN THE STATES

I became almost the dictator of the little Dunstons shop on my return. I had an up-to-date knowledge of tailoring, and all the important work was piled on to my shoulders. But, owing to the big strain on my nerves, I began to fall off in weight and lose "vim." I contracted a bad cough and grew pale. People shook their heads and thought I was becoming consumptive. I kept up my church habits, and my work in the Sunday school was appreciated. But the thought of a change of climate and scenery entered my head. I had been back in Dunstons six months, doing nicely and gaining favor everywhere, when I met two men, old residents of Dunstons, who had decided to go west. One was a shoemaker and the other a blacksmith. Both were married men and had families.

I talked the matter over with them and then with Hardy, and it was finally arranged that I should go and try my luck in the United States. Mrs. Hardy gave me a few small presents, and

the boys of the workshop clubbed together and gave me a new suit of clothes. Mr. Hardy presented me with a book of interest.

I had two hundred dollars saved up.

The two men were more or less in debt, particularly the shoemaker; for, on the morning of his departure, one of the creditors, upon hearing of his intentions, followed him to the depôt and gave him a good thrashing and made him give up his money. This left the shoemaker moneyless to start a long journey.

Of course, I had to come to the man's rescue. I shared everything with him, even lending him money—which money I need hardly say I never saw again.

We three started out not knowing exactly where we would stop. Our tickets were good to Butte, Mont., some thousand miles, but we decided to try several towns before coming to the capital of Montana. Our first stay off was at Glasgow, about five hundred miles from Butte, Mont., a small town consisting of about a hundred wooden shacks. There was no particular industry in Glasgow, if we except card playing and drinking.

After strolling around we decided to mount the next train west.

Then we arrived at Great Falls. Great Falls looked good to us. It was a city of from eight to ten thousand people, silver smelting forming the staple industry. The town was an open town in every sense of the word. High life and fast life had a free hand in Great Falls. The "red light" district and halls were the chief features of the town's entertainments. Those beer halls were drinking, gambling, and sporting palaces. There were little tables with four chairs squatted all over the thickly bestrewn sawdust floors. The chief gambling game was one called "Faro." The "red light" halls were sporting palaces or music halls where pretty girls would entertain the people and then accompany any of the males so desiring to private boxes. Here they enjoyed the drink to its fullest; this being a striking feature, as there were six men to one woman in those Western Towns.

After going round the city and noticing well its progress and advantages, we decided to stay.

The blacksmith found a job immediately, and so did I. But the shoemaker looked around for two weeks before he struck luck. I commenced work at 15 dollars a week. My employer was a man of about forty and a good tailor. He seemed very successful, for he employed as many as twelve hands and paid some of them as much as 40 dollars a week for piece work.

After the first week my wages were increased, and I was also given a room in the shop to sleep in free of charge. There was a peculiar reason for this. A few weeks previous to my arrival there had been a robbery in the store, and as a precaution the proprietor had decided to sleep in the store armed with a revolver. After doing this for a week he grew tired of the job, and asked me if I would not mind undertaking the task. I took it up gladly, for it saved me five dollars a week in room rent.

Great Falls, with its numerous halls and drinking palaces and houses of ill-fame, was a big temptation to a young man of nineteen whose blood was healthy and whose spirits were bright.

The two married men who had accompanied me from Dunstow were no help to me morally; rather they gave me my first lessons in sin.

The struggle with myself was a tremendous one. I am convinced that only the grace of God saved me from a terrible fall then. But I prevailed.

My next slip was on a Sunday when I went out with my two companions. We retired to a saloon to drink. They shook dice for the drinks, and I lost twice and had to pay. In this way several rounds of beer were called for, and I got

flushed in the face. The men laughed at my red face, and I decided to retire to my room to sleep off the effects of the liquor.

Conscience again began to torment me, and I wrote home to Hardy. The old man was glad to receive the letter, and said so when he replied, giving me some good advice, which I am glad to say I heeded.

But my evenings were spent playing "Faro" in the beer halls. Some nights I would lose, and some nights I would gain. I played the game in the spirit of a sportsman. I allowed myself so much money each night. If I won I was so much to the good; if I lost I was only a few dollars to the bad.

This kind of life I kept up for a year and a half.

During this period I kept myself free of the three vices—women, drink, and smoking. For a young man, free from all restraints, and with no one to care for him, no one in particular who loved him, and no one for whom he had any absorbing love, it was really surprising how temperately I kept myself.

My companions from Dunstow, especially the blacksmith, were very successful. He invested in lands, saved money and sent for his wife and

children, and so did the shoemaker a little later, though he ultimately deserted his family and went to live with a foreign woman.

But once more I grew dissatisfied with myself. I still found that there was much more to learn in the tailoring business. I was not yet earning as much as many others. At this time I came into contact with a Russian Jew who was a professor in cutting and designing, a man who, in Chicago and New York, had made as much as 80 dollars a week. But, like so many more clever men in his line, he was a drink fiend and cigarette fiend and had drifted west. I became acquainted with him at the Norwegian establishment, and, desiring to learn the cutting business thoroughly, I arranged to meet him every night and to pay him privately for lessons. This course took ten weeks, and cost me a big sum of money. And for once I got the "swelled head." I imagined that now I knew the tailoring business to perfection. I threw up my position, and perambulated the various tailor shops looking for a job as a cutter. I was only a little over twenty years of age, and the tailors laughed at me. What could I, a boy of twenty, know about cutting? So they sent me on a wild goose chase. One or two met me with sarcastic remarks, such as that the farmers wanted cutters in Dakota and that the miners wanted cutters in Butte.

Failing to secure a job in Great Falls, the Russian Jew professor persuaded me that it would be a fine thing for both of us to go on to Salt Lake City, and open an up-to-date Ladies' Tailoring Establishment in that city. The idea struck me as being exceedingly good. I entertained the notion, and so we threw in our lot together.

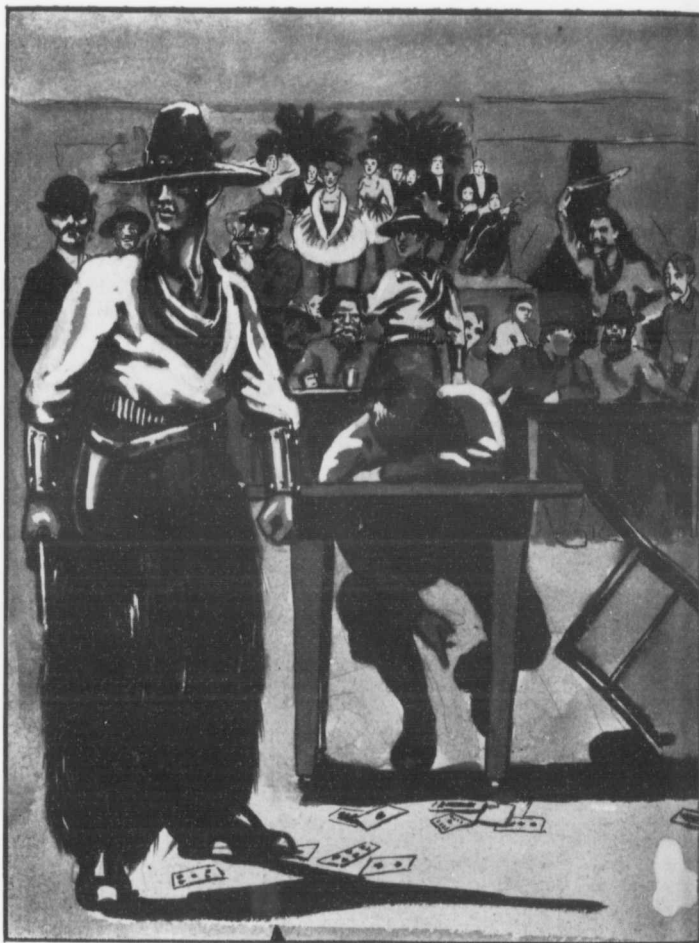




THE DANCING HALL ATTRACTION.







THE GAMBLING DEN

CHAPTER XII

LIFE IN THE GREAT WEST

BEFORE moving on to Salt Lake City a further glance at Great Falls will be interesting as the life here is typical of most western towns of any important signs.

I have spoken of the "red light" halls.

These halls are music halls where from fifteen to twenty girls are gathered together night and day to sing in choruses. Some of these girls are pretty, and some of them are good singers. They go out west for excitement and the big money they receive.

These halls are the beginning of the downfall of many young men.

Young men brought up in tender homes and well educated, upon their arrival in these western towns, feel the restraint of home taken away; the eyes of relatives and acquaintances no longer follow them, and so night after night they visit these halls and houses of ill-repute until, in six or twelve months, the very fast gait they take on begins to tell on them, as pale cheeks and sunken

and insipid eyes soon show. The freshness of life fast ebbs away; ambition dies and work becomes a burden.

The churches, I am glad to say, are doing a great deal to stem the tide of this evil. Lecturers and Evangelists are brought from far and near, and talks are arranged "for men only."

It was at one of these "Talks" that I received my first important lesson in the effects of vice. The information was a revelation to me. It shocked me into my senses. It opened my eyes to the dreadful consequences of evil indulgence. I saw the meaning of certain scars on the face and the marks on the body. Sin became to me a big fierce brute which I had to shun and flee from. It was no longer a toy for me to play with, or a hobby to indulge in. It was nothing more or less than a big terrible beast. And yet I saw my own comrades, young men I worked with, and young men I became acquainted with, marching into the jaws of this monster in Great Falls laughing and smiling and jeering unconscious of their terrible plight.

I saw married men, whose families were away back east, marching into the jaws of death. Preaching and lecturing did them no good; the enemy had captured them. Life became one big fierce struggle to me, and all classes of men and women seemed engaged in the war.

While in Great Falls I was also brought in touch with the financial aspect of life, and not living a dissipated life myself—excepting to the extent of two or three dollars' worth of gambling sport every evening—I was able to save money, and thus become a kind of banker to the other hands.

Everyone in the shop where I worked knew that I had money.

So the old German tailor, the leading hand in the Norwegian shop, used to borrow of me freely. This German was quite a character. He had a fierce temper and was a great worker; he would make as much as 20 dollars some days. No one could touch him for expeditious and clever work. But he was foolish; in other words, he lacked the balance of judgment and temperament.

Consequently, after saving up a large sum of money he would commence spending recklessly; drinking and going about with loose women until every cent was gone, his nerves shattered, and his hands too unsteady to hold a needle. But the boys in the shop, realising his genius, would have mercy on him, and used to help him back again. He soon died a drunkard's death.

I met another strange man at Great Falls. He was an American; a smart fellow of twenty-two, a good tailor, a man of taste, superior culture and well educated. He used to dress well; he would

not be seen on the street without his "Plug" hat and "Prince Albert" coat. But he, too, had his weak spots which the strong arrows of Western life pierced. Down east he could have pulled through, for there would be so many counter attractions. But out West there was little to satisfy his æsthetic tastes. So the music halls had him every night, and the pretty girls proved a snare to him. Drink did not bother him much, but pretty women and pretty songs were too much for him. So the big money he earned used to be spent before half the week was out, and I was his final resort. He got so deep into debt that he was forced to quit. When that happened he owed me something like 100 dollars, for which I held a suit of clothes and some other useless articles as security. That man, too, found an early grave.

I saw so much of this that I decided to leave the slippery path before it became too late.

It was late one evening, in a gambling resort, that I heard the voice of conscience telling me to leave the "Faro" table. I had been very successful that night, and my pockets were full of dollars. Conscience spoke loud, and told me to get out. I obeyed the call.

When leaving the table the proprietor approached me.

"You are leaving us early this evening," said the fox.

"Yes," I replied, "I think I have had enough of this game."

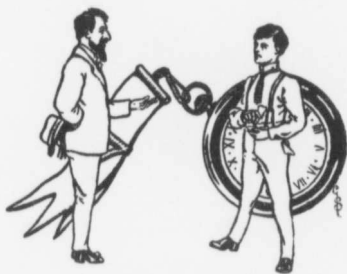
"Oh don't go yet," pleaded the gambler, "try one game more."

"Very well," I replied, "just to be sociable, I will."

I lost.

I lost again and again, then I drew forth my five dollar gold piece; I lost half that. But whether I won or lost, I did not lose my head. So I picked up my hat once more with 2 dollars 50 cents in my pocket. The proprietor let me go this time, but he little thought that he would never see me again.





PAWNING MY WATCH.



CHAPTER XIII

TO SALT LAKE CITY

AS I have explained, believing that I was now an expert cutter, I imagined Great Falls too small for me, and, throwing in my lot with the Russian Jew, we started together for Salt Lake City, I doing the entire financing, the Jew giving his experience and advice.

Both of us were to have an equal share in the business. But the Jew was too shrewd for me. I was to advance all necessary capital, but Russianovitch was to keep all accounts and collect all monies. I, being green, thought everything all right.

On our way to Salt Lake City we passed the little city of multi-millionaires, Helena. Here lived over thirty men who controlled over a million dollars each. It was a beautiful site, and we were both tempted to stay to make fine dresses for the millionaires' wives and daughters. But Russianovitch was too shrewd. "Dey will dink us cheap guys. First-class men von't stay in small places because de small place sends its

trade away to de big cities. Ve go to Salt Lake City."

The next stop was Butte.

Butte nestles among the mountains, like a crow's nest among big branches. The mines are in the centre of the city, and the smoke ascends and spreads all over the district. It is a healthy spot; people live on the sides of the hills, and the trolley cars, now cable cars, run to and fro with their freight of human beings and mineral ore.

Butte, we thought, was too small for our capital and brains, though Butte was a big city, and could stand some genius in the cutting line. But Russianovitch did not think it cultured enough for his 85 dollars per week skill, so we moved into Salt Lake City. The Russian exclaimed "Dis is our haven. Big beautiful city, fine ladies, fine dresses, good money."

The city was fine and well kept. Streams of water flowed down each side of the street. Salt Lake City people believe in plenty of water and plenty of soap. They keep everything spotlessly clean. The Tabernacle is a wonder of architecture, and I must admit that I found their conduct a marvel of Christian frugality.

I did not see the same dissipation and drunkenness in Salt Lake City that I saw in other American cities. I visited their Tabernacle, and found the place filled with intelligent people on

each occasion ; and it was at the Mormon Tabernacle that I heard for the first time in my life the charms of music in its higher forms.

Up till this time I thought myself a bit of a singer, but ever since I heard that Mormon choir I gave up the idea altogether. The Mormon Choir had just returned from a trip to Chicago, where they captured the second prize in the world's contest. This made them naturally and excusably proud. I am free to declare that I have never since heard such music as at the Mormon Tabernacle.

After spending a few days looking around the city, we found a couple of rooms which we could fit out for our workshop in the second storey of a down-town business block. A little advertisement was inserted in the local papers about the new, high-class ladies' tailoring being established under the auspices of Professor Russianovitch, expert cutter and designer.

Professor Russianovitch stayed at the most stylish hotel in the city as 'a business puller.' This item was given to the press.

Fashionable ladies came to Prof. Russianovitch to be measured, and as he was stylishly dressed with everything new and up to date, and a man of commanding appearance and good address, living at an expensive hotel, things went with a swing. I toiled on, advancing money week

after week to pay for stock and wages and Prof. Russianovitch's hotel bill.

Trade was decidedly good; there were some splendid orders on the books. Four weeks passed, and my exchequer was getting lower. I began to enquire about the receipts.

Mrs. So and So had received her dress, but where was her money? Prof. Russianovitch had been, however, doing more than living in an expensive hotel. He had been living an expensive life in accordance with his tastes. He had stinted himself nothing; he had played the part of a rich nobleman, and treated many ladies to luxurious suppers.

There was nothing mean or stingy about my partner; but, unfortunately, his generosity was at my expense.

I had innocently advanced all my money and failed to secure a cent in return. To crown it all, the Russian wanted more money. I pawned my 100 dollar watch to secure the wherewithal, but then I decided that I had gone far enough, and that the partnership had better be dissolved.

That was the end of the Ladies' establishment.

I had paid nearly 500 dollars into the business, and here I was thousands of miles away from my adopted home and a broken man! No, I was not altogether broken yet! I held a note from

the Norwegian at Great Falls to whom I had loaned money.

In my simplicity and inexperience I enclosed the note in a letter to my Great Falls debtor, and asked him to make the same good, less a big discount. The Norwegian replied immediately that he would discount the note "if I would be kind enough to send it on." But as I had sent it on already I saw the scoundrel's meaning. I threw up my hands in despair, and cried to the God of Mercy for help. Fooled by the Russian, tricked out of my note by the Norwegian, I was now helpless.

There was one resort. It was Hardy. Yes, the old Scotchman away back in Ontario, in little Dunstown. I had been away for two years. I had seen the world, the world with its vices and virtues. I had been up against good men and true and up against crooks and fakers. I had received the necessary experience to make me a man of the world.

There was little more to learn. So who would not return to Dunstown and to that little girl I had seen as a vision in my early youth?

She was still there. Fate had arranged that she should not leave. She was still waiting for the curly-headed and blue-eyed boy to come along and make her his wife. Of course, she did not

know, nor did I ever imagine, that my dream would become solid fact.

My heart turned to Dunstown and to Hardy, and when Hardy received my letter he was on his bed with a broken leg, having fallen from a tree. It seemed as if everything had been arranged. Hardy must have someone to look after his business, and who could be better than his adopted and ambitious boy? It took the old man just five minutes to pen an answer to me, and to enclose the requested 50 dollars. Fifty dollars was all I had asked for; I could have secured 100 dollars had I requested it. But I was proud, and thought to manage on the smaller sum.

It was not half enough, so I had to sell one of my trunks and all my unnecessary clothing. I realised enough by this means to buy a scalper's ticket from Salt Lake City to Toronto. And after buying a few necessities, I had seventy-five cents left. I travelled from Salt Lake City to Toronto on this seventy-five cents, boarding the train Tuesday, arriving Toronto Sunday, a distance of about 3000 miles.



STONE BROKE



CHAPTER XIV

A SAD RETURN

IT is the old story over again.

When I left Dunstown I had 200 dollars, over and above my fare to Montana, in my pocket. When I returned to Dunstown two years later, I had a scalper's ticket, paid out of other people's money, and 75 cents in my pocket. To crown all, the ticket I bought was a lady's ticket, which drew from the conductor the remark that his passenger was a very fine looking lady!

Before leaving Salt Lake City I felt a little uneasy about the move, and as I was walking down the street I noticed a palmist's sign on a window. I proceeded to the door, and was received by a woman of about 35 years of age, gorgeously dressed.

"My fee is one dollar," said the palmist in a very business-like fashion. I placed the dollar in her hand. It was like parting with one of my fingers, for it left me with only 75 cents.

First question, "Am I in my right business?"

Second question, "Shall I receive money?"

Third question, "Am I about to take a journey?"

"As to your business," said the palmist, "you are in a difficult trade, and it takes a lifetime to learn it. You have the theory pretty well, but you lack experience. You would do better as a hotel keeper."

"As to question No. 2, you will receive money but it is very far away."

Question No. 3. "Yes, you are going on a journey, it is back East, where you came from, but you will return here again."

There was truth and evasion in her remarks. She answered my questions, but left me like a hungry wolf, longing for something more definite.

There was a little fire in the bakery opposite to where I lodged, and my last glimpse of Salt Lake City was seeing that little bakery go up in blazes.

It was Tuesday evening when the train was boarded for Colorado. I had provided myself with a little lunch; but, fearing to eat it, I thought I would keep it until I was very hungry. When the hunger did come the little lunch was stale and uneatable.

Owing to my pecuniary position, the journey was very uninteresting. A pocket full of bills has a wonderful effect on the human mind, but an

empty pocket makes a man terribly susceptible to conditions. The miserable 75 cents in my pocket jingled in my mind every mile I travelled, so, by the time I arrived at Colorado, I was not only hungry, but very depressed.

I fell in with a good-natured Chinaman who had been in the country ten years, and who had been successful, and finally persuaded him to buy some fruit, which gave me new life and energy.

I also bought a little lunch which cost me 35 cents, and with this I had to be satisfied until I reached Chicago. Here things were very quiet. You could not buy a job, this being the year of the great fair.

Before arriving at the city I lost sight of my Oriental friend and picked up with another, a young man who was in the engineering line. I was well dressed and had a good appearance. At Chicago I made use of my new friend to pay the cab fare from one depôt to another, which was just 75 cents. "You pay this trip," I requested, and sure enough the engineer did pay, but I lost my friend. Then came the custom officer. "I cannot pass your books unless you pay duty." "I have no money to pay duty," I replied, but a gentleman standing near by offered to buy the books for a dollar. The books were fully worth 30 dollars; but, under the circumstances, I was glad to get even this.

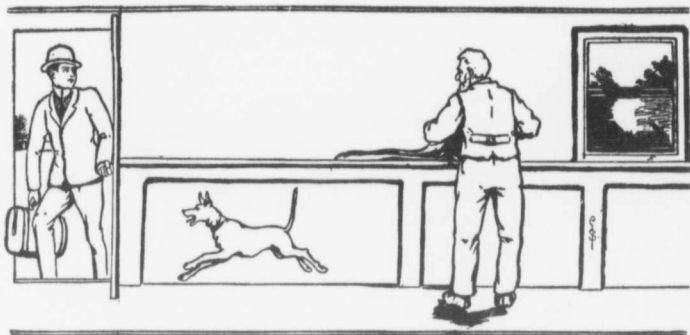
With this dollar I bought a lunch, and played the gentleman with the remaining 50 cents until I reached Toronto on Saturday. Toronto was within 90 miles of Dunstow. So near and yet so far. My ticket only took me to Toronto. How could I get from there to Dunstow? Here Providence again sent relief in the form of a young western farmer. The young man was going east after being out farming in the west. I took to him instinctively and told him my troubles.

He sized me up and gave me 3 dollars 50 cents.

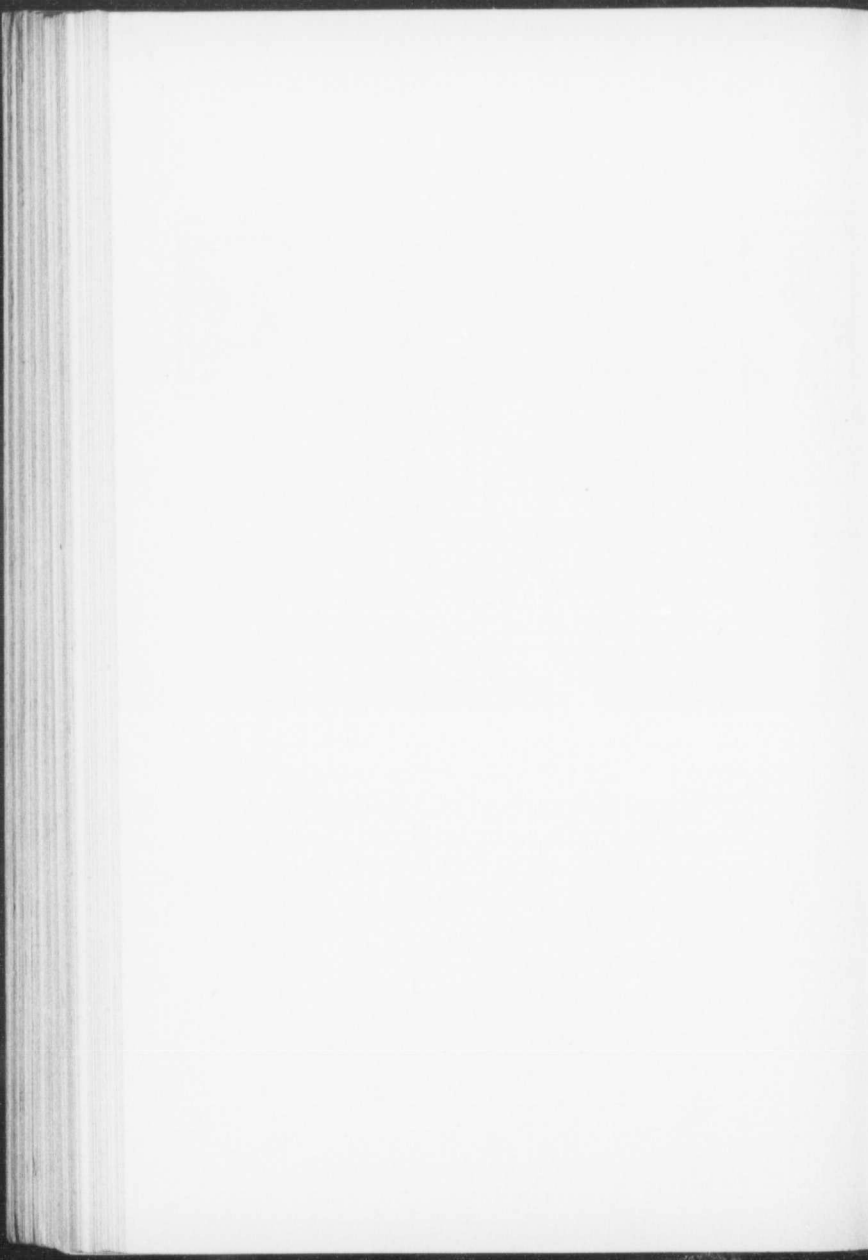
This was a Godsend, for with it I bought my ticket to Dunstow, and paid for lodgings until the morning.

It was Monday afternoon when I boarded the train for Dunstow. Seated in one corner of the car I was soon lost in deep thought. I was not going back home. I was not going to see a mother or a father or a sister or a brother. I was not going back well-to-do and prosperous. I was going back to a master to whom I owed 50 dollars, the money which had gone to pay my return fare. I was not going back a hero, but as one who had suffered defeat.

My spirits were almost broken, I was downcast and despondent. The journey had no inspiration for me; it seemed like going back to start all over again. After being defeated, here is where a man will rise or fall.



RETURNING TO OLD EMPLOYER.



CHAPTER XV

I BEGIN LIFE ALL OVER AGAIN

I WAS welcomed home right joyfully by everybody.

Even the old dog Reel came up to me with almost a grin, wagging his furry tail. He had not forgotten his old friend, and the moment he saw me he ran and jumped up in my lap with great enthusiasm.

Hardy, with his wife and the boys, were also very glad to welcome the wanderer home again.

I was the least joyful of them all.

The West seemed certainly to have spoiled me. I felt a broken man, and could not mix with the boys as had been my custom. There was a coolness and reservedness in my manner which brought forth the criticism that I was "stuck up" and "proud." But they were mistaken. I was not stuck up, but cast down; that was all.

My ambition, however, had not left me.

There was still the old spark burning in my bosom, and I still silently brooded over future

possibilities. I began to work harder than ever, economising in every way.

Every cent counted now, for I was a young man getting out of his teens, and I had no home of my own or the prospect of one.

During these months I picked up a new chum in the village. His name was Dave. He was the storekeeper's son, and a very bright lad. Dave and I formed a very close friendship, and exchanged many confidences with each other.

Among the various topics of conversation was that of marriage.

I felt the need of a home, a real home, one in which I should not be "an adopted," or feel like an orphan, a visitor or guest; but at that time we both made up our minds that we would not make such a home for ourselves until we had seen London, Paris, and Berlin! These ambitious resolutions, needless to say, were never carried out.

We did, however, manage to go as far as the city, and spend a happy week there. Upon my return to Dunstow, after this little holiday, I settled down to very hard work, doing everything as had been my custom when a lad. I attended to the garden and animals, and superintended the business of the shop. The work, however, this time jarred a little on me. It reminded me too forcibly of my origin. It galled my independent

spirit. Deep down in my heart there was bitter wormwood, though I tried to put on a cheerful expression, and went to church and Sunday school as of old.

The elements of discontent broke loose after about nine months of this servitude.

I had once more become the common servant of the family. Anything requiring attention I was summoned to see to. One Sunday morning after service, Hardy's hogs got into a neighbour's potato field, and were doing some damage. The neighbour complained to Mrs. Hardy, who called on me to get them out at once. At this particular moment I was already dressed in my Sunday best ready to attend a friend's funeral, in company with my chum. I had my Bible in my hand ready to start, when Mrs. Hardy's voice came ringing through the air. "Francis, get those hogs out of Mr. Brown's potato field." Whether it was the way it was said or Mrs. Hardy's commanding tone that so irritated me I cannot say, but the fact remains that my temper was up.

I was no longer a boy to be ordered about in this way.

Besides I had not come back there to be a common servant, but to take charge of Hardy's tailor shop. These thoughts rushed to my mind, and I refused to go.

"Tell your own boys to go and get the hogs out. I am going to a funeral," said I.

The old lady complained to Hardy, who immediately demanded an explanation, which I gave him. Then Hardy felt his dignity and authority touched. Who was this lad anyway but his own adopted? Who was he to refuse to obey him? So Hardy let loose his tongue, and this little instrument being filled with fire and forced on with injured pride, he vented on me all the names a Christian vocabulary could contain. I was a wretch, a vagabond, a good-for-nothing, a heap of dirt that never could or would amount to anything. I had been away West, and come back broke, a sign of a useless, good-for-nothing creature.

This abuse went home to my heart.

It was now my turn, for I, too, had a temper, and let Hardy know it for the last time.

"I am nothing to-day, that is true," I replied. "You are everything and everybody. I am a Home Boy, despised, rejected, scorned, trampled on. I have no friend, no credit, no home. I am broke; but, sir, my day will yet come. I will not always be down, and I want you to note my word—some day you and your boys, your wife and daughters, will respect me. Some day you will find your mistake."

"Don't give me your lip," replied Hardy angrily. "Go, leave my house, and don't write to me again for money, don't ask me to help you. I am through with you for ever, you useless wretch."

I could no longer think of attending the funeral. The Bible I held in my hand was thrown into one of my trunks. I got ready to depart. On the following day I requested a settlement of my financial affairs. I had not drawn a cent from Hardy since my return, so there was a good little account due. After some argument the amount was fixed, and I left the old man's roof. I had 150 dollars to start life again.





AN EVENTFUL MEETING.



CHAPTER XVI

AN EVENTFUL MEETING

THE neighbour into whose potato field Hardy's hogs had wandered, had heard the quarrel between Hardy and me, and as his tongue was a little loose at the roots, it wagged sometimes unceasingly and not any too correctly. In other words, the old man was a gossip of the dangerous kind, and not feeling any too kindly toward "Home Boys" he soon spread some dreadful yarns about me in the village. In a short while he had everybody talking about my "dreadful conduct"; how I had defied the old man Hardy, and called him names, and even threatened to lick him or any of his sons.

Of course, everybody knew that I had a hot temper, that I was unknown, and perhaps of worthless origin, and some good friends went so far as to suggest that a man with such a temper had, perhaps, a criminal origin.

How were the good folks of Dunstow to know?

They were all good and quiet people, their genealogies could be traced back to the Puritans and the Pilgrim Fathers. But this Home Boy? "Ach, well, his origin was a secret in the counsel of the Almichty."

And with this philosophy all blame was loaded on to my shoulders, while nothing but praise could be pinned to the old man Hardy's coat.

After gathering my belongings together and receiving my money from Hardy, I decided to stay a few days in Dunstowen. I could hardly make up my mind where to go or what to do. The question of making a little home for myself was beginning to trouble me, but my plans were not ripe yet.

A short distance from Dunstowen there was another tailor. A poor mechanic, it is true, but he was doing a quiet little business, and I thought that it would be a good place to settle for a short while.

Harris was glad to see me and to give me a job.

The accommodation was poor. I had to sleep in a garret, on a mattress, while my wash basin was placed on the floor. There were four feet between the loft floor and the ceiling, and when I forgot this fact, the bumping of my head against

one of the ceiling beams reminded me of it in a forcible manner.

It seemed to me that to remain here long would be waste of time; so, after staying with him for six weeks, I decided to leave. Harris was sorry to part with me, but I had quite determined that I ought not to remain longer.

My next proposition was to find a suitable locality to commence business for myself. My money was again dwindling down, as I had bought several pieces of cloth to make suits for my friends, for which they never paid.

In order to find a suitable place I one day hired a horse and gig and proceeded on a pilgrimage through a number of little towns in the country. The town which struck me as the most suitable required more capital than I commanded. So nothing came of that journey. It was so much thrown away.

A little discouraged with the prospects ahead of me I decided to have a change. One of my friends, a boy after my own stamp, was doing a little farming in the neighbourhood, and I decided to give him some help for my board. Here I remained for a while, but again grew uneasy. The future refused to unfold itself to me. Everything looked dark and uninviting. There was nothing in particular to live for.

One morning I again made an attempt to find a suitable place in which to open a tailoring business. I had six miles to drive to reach my destination, and I had hired a horse and gig to drive the distance. On my way I saw someone moving leisurely toward the town for which I was destined. As I drew nearer I found she was a young woman, and she had sufficient courage to ask for a ride.

I was only too glad to accommodate her.

She was a little woman, dark, with big brown eyes and a very intelligent face. We soon got into conversation, and to my astonishment I found she knew my brother, the printer, very intimately. Her brother was, in fact, Henry's companion; both worked on the same paper in the City.

To cut a long story short, this young lady was the young girl I had met years ago as narrated in the early part of this story. She was the little fairy I had seen being caressed by a number of elderly women.

She had been well educated by her uncle; her father was dead, and her brother, who had become a noted person, had also been educated with her, and owed a start in life to the same uncle. She had been taught music sufficiently to teach it to others, and to support herself by this means.

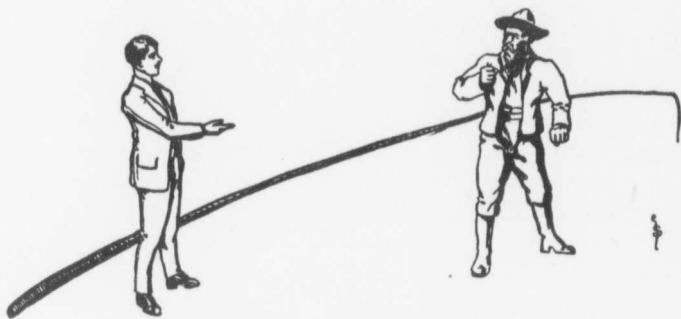
Her uncle was a generous old fellow who was fond of treating everybody. He was not too well off in this world's goods, his home was about the only thing he owned, but he was well liked and highly respected.

That journey came to an end too quickly to please me. But it was sufficiently long for me to come to a great decision. I made up my mind to start in business in that town. It was a small place, prettily situated, with a nice community all around.

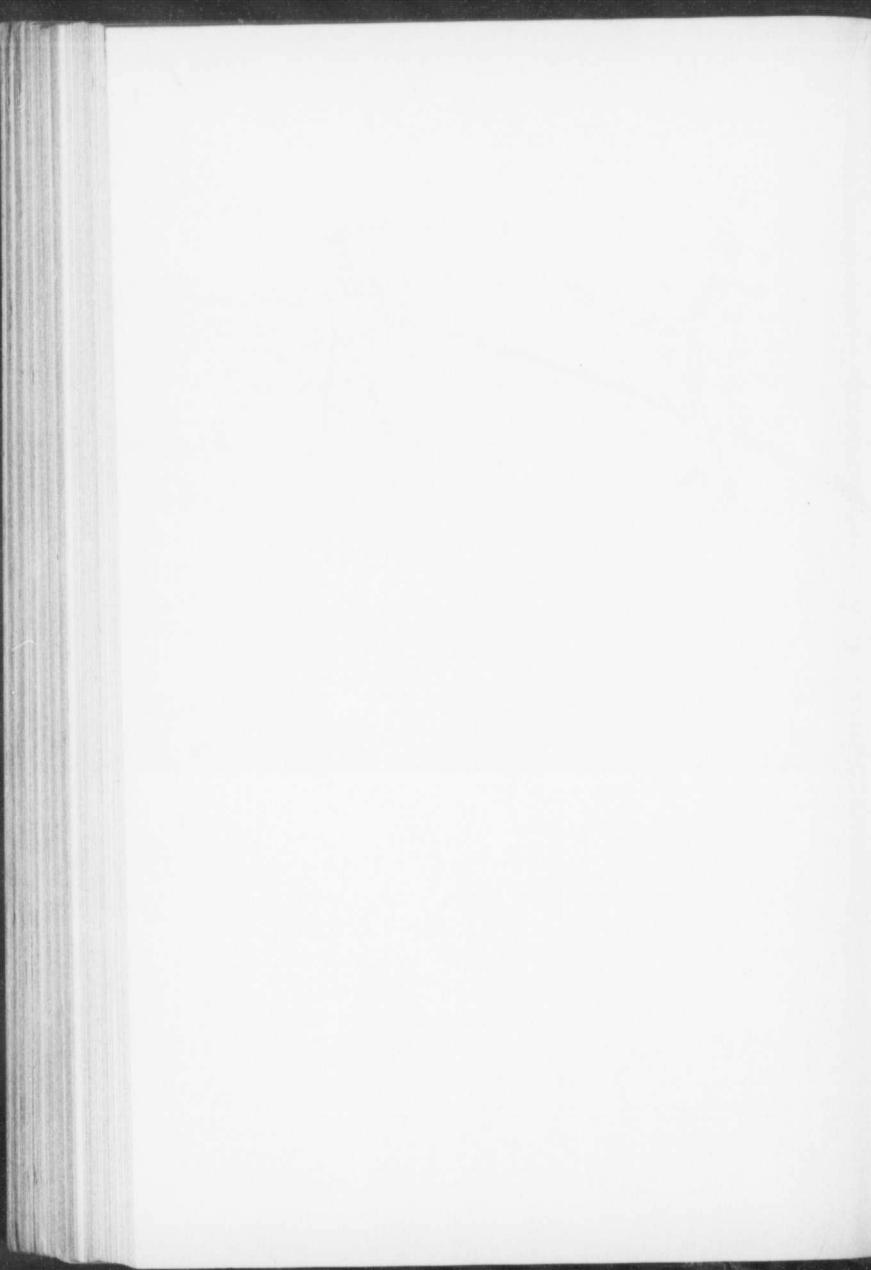
As I was returning from an inspection of the town, who should I meet again, standing on the doorstep of a store, but the same young lady. She had occupied a great deal of my mind during the last five hours, and I was hoping to see her again. When our eyes met on this third occasion she gave me such a smile that I could never forget; I felt that she loved me, and I knew that with all the strength of my young heart I loved her.

The town's name is registered on the map of Ontario as Hopeville. It has nice churches and good schools and flourishing stores. It is about the same in population to-day as thirty years ago; the people are the same sort, or the same people. Some of the older folks have passed to the great Realisation; that is all the difference.

I commenced business here with seven dollars as my entire capital. At least, that was all the capital I had in cash, but I had other assets—I had good knowledge of tailoring and some amount of business experience; I had one or two friends, and above all I had a new motive for living and struggling. I loved and was loved.



THE FARMER'S DOWNFALL.



CHAPTER XVII

STARTING IN BUSINESS

I STARTED in business with little capital, little experience, but a good deal of faith and a great amount of energy. I was determined to succeed, and to give the world the lie that "Out of Nazareth no good cometh." My farmer friend hauled the fixtures and the machine to my new store. The wholesale houses decided to give me credit.

In order to work up a little trade, I decided that the hotel would be a good place to stay at. This idea I owed to my Russian friend, the Professor, in Salt Lake City. The hotel of Hopeville was run on decent lines. The proprietor was an Englishman, abrupt in his manner, rather uncouth at times in his language, but very accommodating to his patrons. His wife was a refined lady, quiet and very attentive to the boarders. The only bad streak in the hotel was a number of private treating rooms in the rear, and here many a young man who would not be seen in the bar got his first step downwards.

It was at this time that I made a resolution that has always helped me in business. It was not to treat or to take a treat at a bar.

I stayed at this hotel for several months, and Halliday, the proprietor, did all he could to "boost" the new tailor.

Business became prosperous. I soon required more help and more room.

While business was prospering, I found time to visit three places. The first place was the home of the girl I had grown to love. I was often there under the pretext of visiting the old Sir, as the girl's uncle used to be called. This cognomen pleased the old man so highly that anyone calling him "Sir Captain" secured the old man's favor immediately.

So I kept going to the old uncle's home.

The girl was organist in the Presbyterian Church of Hopeville, and as I had been raised on Presbyterian diet and theology at Hardy's home, Presbyterianism was the only religion that I knew. Incidentally, this connection gave me a standing in the community.

Some of my friends suggested at this time that I should leave the hotel. This I did, becoming a boarder with Mr. Howell, a store-keeper, who has given to Presbyterianism four of its brightest ministers. Three are in the actual

ministry in leading churches, and one is a Professor of Languages in a Presbyterian College. While staying at this home, I caught the ministerial fever too. I bought books on Theology and read deeply into such subjects as "Predestination" and "Election," "Universal Salvation" and the "Perseverance of the Saints," etc.

But business was too pressing for me to go far into Theology. Making fine clothes kept me too busy to discuss fine theories. Besides, my early education had been so badly neglected, that to become a minister was out of the question.

My little business was growing and swelling in volume every week. I seldom heard the obnoxious name "Home Boy." The élite of Hopeville visited my store and gave me orders. Even the minister patronised my store.

As the little stream kept swelling and swelling, I decided to buy out the store next door to mine—a General Merchandise business. Instead of one window facing on the Main Street, I now had two windows and a nice little stock.

As I was standing by the doorway one day I noticed a man in a very shabby suit approaching. The man bore on his face and on his clothes the marks of failure. I thought that I had seen that man before, and after a little cogitation remembered where. He was the man who had given me a thrashing with a whip on that cold winter

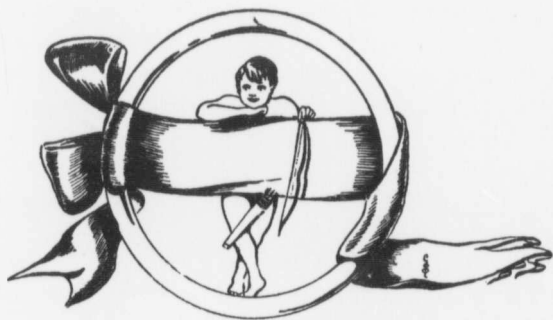
night when I had to lead the cow nine miles through the storm! That man had failed in his farming, and was now living and maintaining his family by doing odd jobs.

I greeted the man heartily, and shook him by the hand warmly.

"You have a big advantage over me," said the stranger.

"Don't you remember me?" I asked. "I am the little boy that led your cow through the storm about eight years ago—that little boy you gave a thrashing to."

"My word!" exclaimed the man. "I remember well. And you are Francis, eh? Good Heavens, you have changed, man! And you are the proprietor of this store, eh? Well, I knew you were a fine boy. I knew you would succeed some day."



CUPID.



CHAPTER XVIII

MAKING A HOME

MY love story is soon told. After beating about her home, or rather her uncle's home for several months, I one Sunday evening put my fortune to the test; I caught the girl's hand, pressed it, and looked into her eyes. Then I asked the inevitable question.

She thought, bowed her head, and blushed and whispered something.

As the old people and the brother were by no means any too favourable to the match, we, the young couple, decided to run over to Dunstow to the minister there to tie the knot. She was twenty-one and I twenty-two. A few friends were present, and my Sunday School teacher's boy stood up as my best man. The day was spent round Dunstow, and I was highly commended for my excellent choice, for her good name and character were well known among the neighbours.

The making of the home was the next thing—"home of my own," a home where I would be

lord and master and king, and where my little love would be queen! It did not take long, neither did it take much money, for both of us desired simplicity and comfort rather than luxury.

This home we enjoyed together for several years. Providence smiled on us, business was successful, I grew in favour in the town and in the church. So much so in the latter that I was elected an Elder and Superintendent of the Sunday School. The family altar was raised in the home, and happiness reigned in our two hearts.

The old aunt, however, became ill and departed to her reward, leaving the home to her niece. Then the old uncle one day as he was rocking the cradle, in which was placed the little boy who bore his name, had a seizure and soon afterwards died at a ripe age.

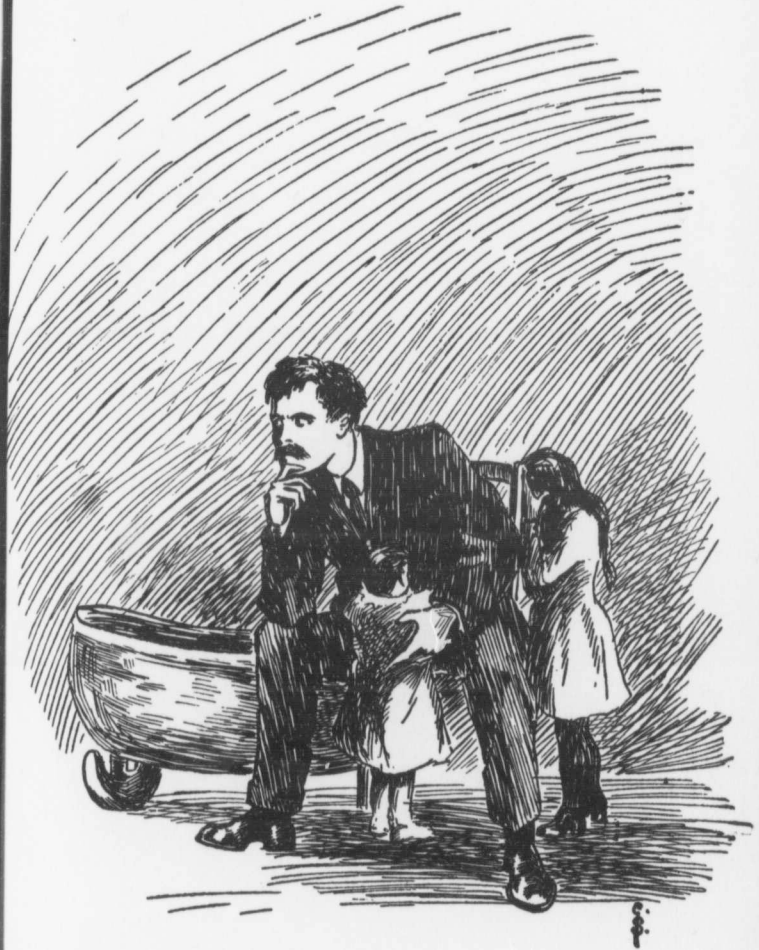
Three children were born us, and then came the great calamity that was once again to send me friendless into the wilderness. My wife was weak and one Sunday morning three days after the birth of her third child, she called me to her bedside. Her face was like that of an angel, but oh! so frail! Grasping my hand in hers she whispered—"Don't cry, it's all for the best. 'God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.'"

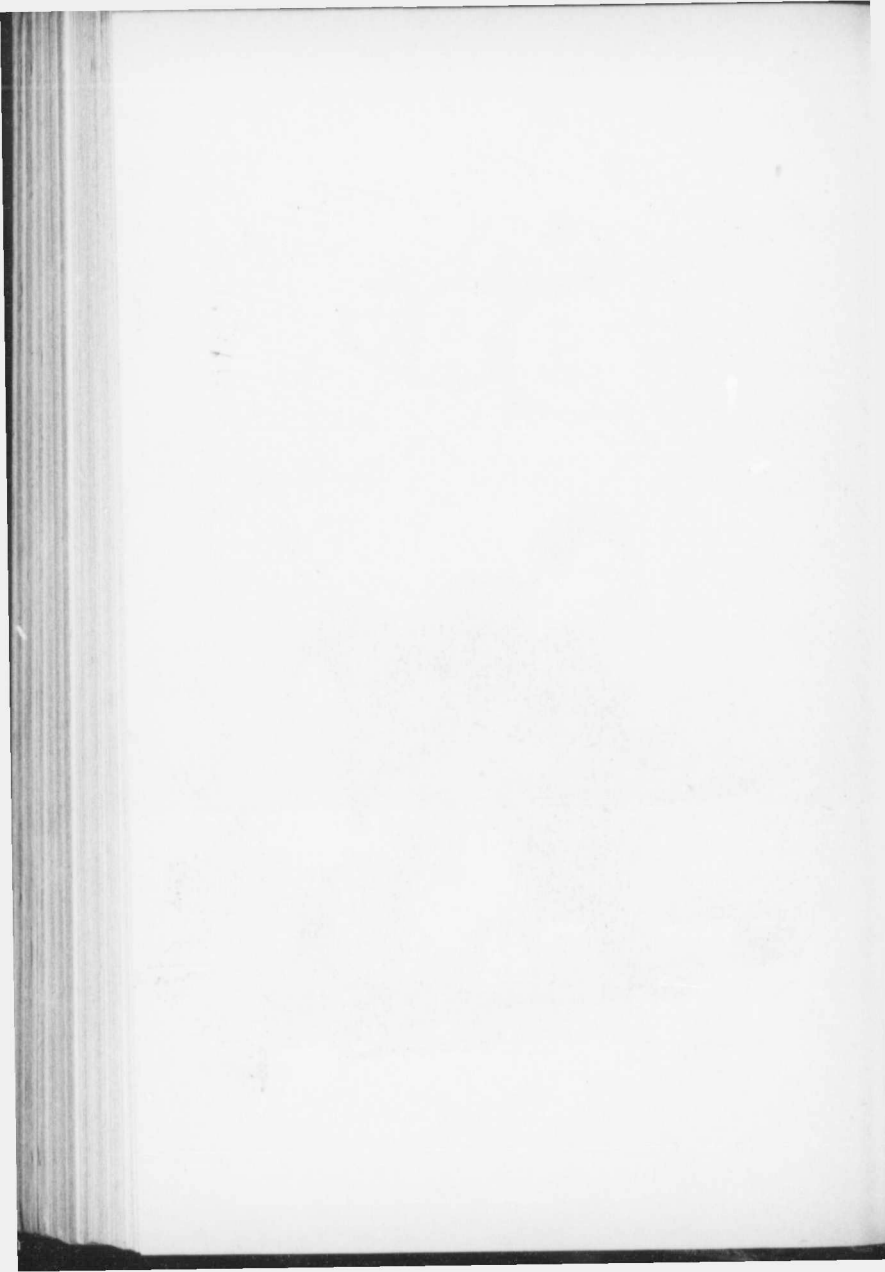
She then closed her eyes, to open them in the World of Spirits and among the happy ones.

With her death, light departed from my life. What the blow meant to me I could never explain. I was thereafter a different man.

For four years the old people had lived with us—under the roof of the little boy who had stood outside their gate for hours several years before. I had certainly treated the uncle and aunt well. These years were years of prosperity and success. The sun shone on the little home and on the business all the time. My relatives found my home a common rendezvous. My sister whom I had never seen before came to visit me. My youngest brother, whom also I had never met before, came to make his home with me. The successful brother visited me, and Sid was also often there. Now it was all over, and sorrow numbed my heart.









SUCCESS—AFTER YEARS OF FAILURE.



CHAPTER XIX

SUCCESS AT LAST

AS the reader who has followed this narrative can see, I have known something of the ups and downs of life, yet never did my fortunes look blacker than the year my wife died.

I have said how my great sorrow numbed my heart, and left me not feeling fit for business. But other troubles were to follow. The expenses attending my wife's illness had been heavy, making a considerable drain on my none-too-large capital. I had three little children on my hands—one a babe of only a few weeks. The neighbours were kind, but their kindness was expensive. Some wished me to part with my children, but this I refused to do. At last a housekeeper was found, a lady of fifty-three, motherly in every way and kind to the children.

But business kept dropping off whilst the expenses increased, until a big deficit faced me.

What was to be done?

I inspected several fresh localities, and thought of various plans, but without success.

My thoughts now began to turn with increasing persistence to the New West—the “last” West, the Canadian West. A great deal has been written and said about the marvellous development that is taking place out there beyond the prairies. In England, or in the more settled East, it is difficult to realise just what this wonderful expansion means. Here are towns growing up almost in a day, railways springing up into a vast network almost like a spider's web weaved overnight.

I heard that fortunes were to be made out in the New West. True, as I found out for myself afterwards, the fortunes only come to those who are able to take advantage of the opportunity when it occurs, and have the clearness of mind, the soundness of judgment to discern between the merely attractive and the really promising thing. Many a man may lose his head out there and return a failure; but, still, fortunes were to be made in the New West.

I finally decided I would try my fortunes in the new lands.

But it took me some considerable time before reaching this decision, and more time before I was able to carry it out. Three lonely years were spent with my failing business at Hopeville, and it was not till after my marriage to my pre-

sent wife that I was able to take that step which meant so much to my fortunes and myself.

I must not linger on the scenes of parting from the old home and friends, nor on the long journey to the far West. But at last we arrived in British Columbia, on the Pacific Coast. My little capital, I found, amounted to only 63 dollars, and after settling the family in three small rooms, and purchasing the barest necessities, but little remained.

However, with plenty of hope and determination I looked about, and finally secured a position as manager of a business concern in the heart of the city of Vancouver. We lived as economically as we possibly could, and saved all that it was possible to save.

It was during the next four years that I was able to turn from poverty and struggle to a position of comparative affluence—a fortune in four years! How it was done would take too long to tell, but I can outline some of the secrets of my success.

I have told of the marvellous development in the far West; perhaps, even in that land of lightning growth, few cities have had so splendid a forward march as Vancouver City. From careful observation at the time I could foresee some of the marvellous growth in store for the city. I kept my eyes open, took every opportunity

of talking with those likely to know, picked up every bit of information I could, and then carefully and laboriously set about my plan of campaign.

In the quiet of the night—mostly between ten in the evening and midnight—when the work of the day was finished, I used to get out my plans, go over facts and figures, and do the business that was to make my fortune.

My first venture was in some lots outside the city. The Real Estate man with whom I had become acquainted took me to inspect the property. He wanted to sell me one lot, 33 by 122 feet. It looked good to me. His price and terms were high, but I said that if he would sell me six lots I would purchase on my terms. The bargain was struck.

How I managed to keep up the payment of the instalments agreed upon, I scarcely know. The piano had to be sacrificed, and living kept down to the barest essentials.

Still I went on.

My next investment was a double corner, the next a single lot 30 feet by 22 feet, the next two 50 feet lots, then a business lot, followed by a triple corner, then a half-acre. I followed these up by a fine large double-corner lot, ten lots in a block, a half-share in fifteen lots in a block, a business lot, and so on. I also did considerable

contracting—getting the labour and material myself, thus avoiding middle-man's profits. I always managed to buy right, and, of course, this was essential.

At times I would be held up for money. One thing I tried to do was to keep my credit good, so that when money ran short I could always go to my banker and get a few hundred dollars on my own note, at one time borrowing as much as 5,000 dollars at 17 per cent., giving security of about 22,000 dollars of agreement of sale. From this transaction I made over 100 per cent.

Keeping this up for four years, working at the same time at my regular occupation, at 30 dollars to 35 dollars a week, I was able to make a start along the way to success, of which I think every man in his day has a chance if he will apply his time and talent.

To-day may seem dark, to-morrow may be bright, but if possible live to-day and not to-morrow, and He who watches the poorest Home Boy's life will give you happiness and success, and crown every effort made in the right line. "The world is His and the fullness thereof," so may we apply time, talent and money to His rights.

I have travelled across the continent of America and Canada twelve times, and to the grand old land of England where I was born,

through its various scenes of life and seeming masses of humanity: experiences such as these make us think of how little we know and of how little consequence we are.

If we should be one of the fortunate and can value some pleasure in our day, and can help to make the burden a little lighter for those who will come after, we cannot tell what good we can do to-day even to the destitute boy.



VINDICATED.



CHAPTER XX

THE HOME BOY VINDICATED

SO we shall now bring our story to an end. Before I close, I want to tell you how the little "Home Boy," the little mischief maker, the little good-for-nothing, vindicated himself a short while ago to some of his old friends in the East.

Having made my money out West, I felt a desire to go back to Dunstown and to Hopeville, the scenes of my boyhood's days and defeats.

Hardy was still alive, and so was the minister who married me and received me as an elder. So was the old neighbour who had said that "Home Boys never amount to anything anyway," so was Johanna, the tailoress, and my Sunday School teacher, and Wilson my brother-in-law.

In a word all those who had taken part in the life drama of the Home Boy were alive and going about their business in the same hum-drum way as usual. Hundreds of other people had gathered to Hopeville to the sports, when I walked around

the grounds as a gentleman dressed in an up-to-date style. I had three little children with me, one a girl of fifteen, another a boy of twelve, and yet another girl of ten years. Strangers asked, "Who is that gentleman? He is attracting more attention than the President of the Sports, more attention than our own M.P. Everybody wants to shake him by the hand. Who is he?"

"Don't you know?" the neighbours would reply. "That is Francis, the Home Boy. After losing his wife he seemed to break his heart and then he went West. He made good. He is not ashamed to own his origin. In fact they say he is going to found a college for boys who are in such a condition as he was, homeless and fatherless. Go and shake his hand, he'll be only too pleased to make your acquaintance."

Hardy was among the many who shook my hand.

"I didna think it was in you my lad," said Hardy, "I'm sorry for many a harsh word I spoke to you and many a harsh name I called you, but you've shown your quality, man. I didna make a mistake when I selected the little Fat Boy."

The last to come along was the old tailoress, Johanna. "I am mighty glad to see you Mr. Francis, but I am mighty sorry I refused to send you that money to redeem your \$100 watch.

Maybe that you would pay it back to-day with compound interest. Ah well, it was my mistake." There was only that one cloud on the day's enjoyment.

The Home Boy had proved his quality.

He had shown the sceptical world that the Home Boy had the element of success in him, if given half a chance.

There was one person that I missed from the celebrations of the day—the one who had more faith in me than anyone, the one who in spite of opposition had loved me, and whose image was in the faces of the three bright children by my side. That one was missing.

I was not too proud to spend the evening with old Hardy, and Johanna and my Sunday School teacher were invited to keep us company.

And how do you think we spent the evening?

Other people might have called for a fine and luxurious supper and several bottles of port or champagne, but I suggested that the evening be spent as it used to be spent when I was a lad.

Everyone looked astonished, but silently and reverently we all gathered around the family table and I read from a big old book. I then knelt on my knees and prayed; I prayed as I had never prayed before, and Johanna and old Hardy and his wife were heard sobbing aloud.

The closing words of my prayer were :—

“To Thee, Almighty and Gracious God, we give all the praise. The praise for putting it into Hardy’s heart to adopt me, the praise for the many valuable scripture lessons I received, and the motherly admonitions of the people here. Praise for the failures endured, and the lessons learned thereby. Praise for the success I have had out West, and for the money Thou hast entrusted me with. May Thy grace now help us to use it aright and to glorify Thy name for ever.”

AMEN.

