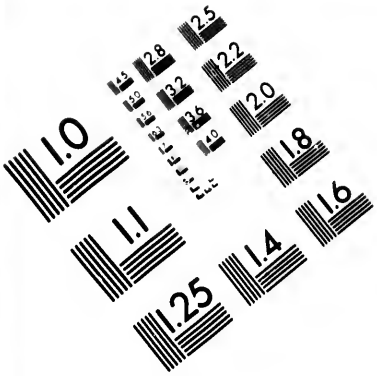

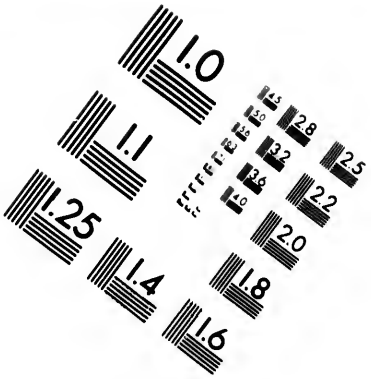

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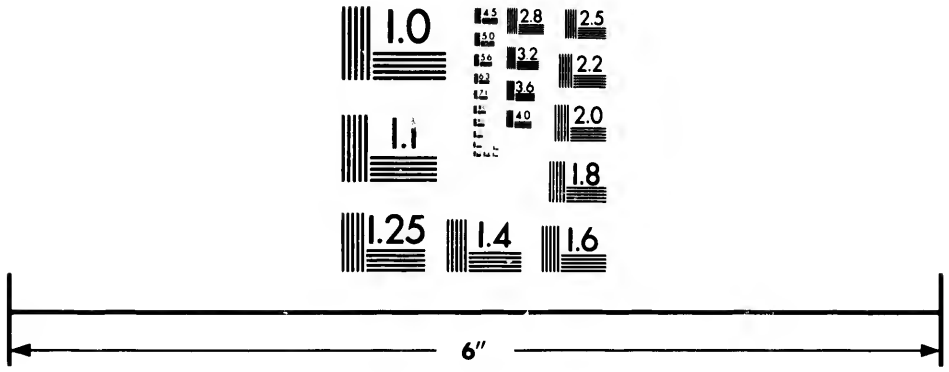

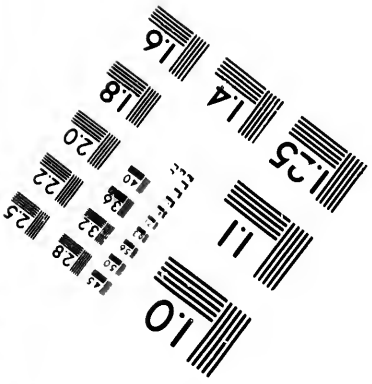

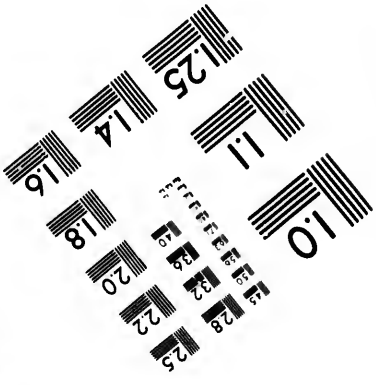

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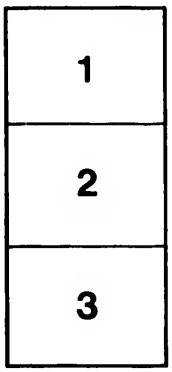

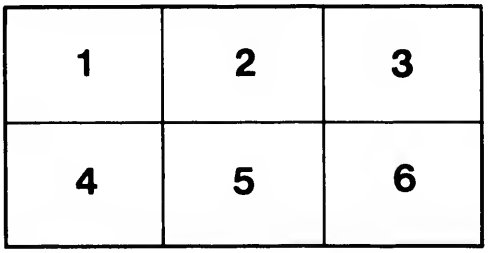

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THE CAREER OF THE

STOLEN BOY,

BY

MRS. CAROLINE OAKLEY
AND
WILLIE FERN.

CHARLIE.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-Seven, by WILLIAM H. REID, in the Office of the Minister of Agriculture, at Ottawa.

DEDICATION.

TO MINNIE, THE WIFE OF OUR HERO, THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY ITS AUTHORS,

MRS. CAROLINE OAKLEY

AND

WILLIE FERN.

PREFACE.

THE within adventures are drawn from real life, and the scenes and incidents described are pictured from the memories of its hero. We do not expect the reader will find our story perfect, but we hope it will prove interesting. If this result be obtained, our full desire will be gratified.

With its facts and adventures, the CAREER OF THE STOLEN BOY is respectfully offered to the reading world by its authors,

MRS. CAROLINE OAKLEY

AND

WILLIE FERN.

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Career of the Stolen Boy, Charlie.

CHAPTER I.

"I've seen the colors fading
From all that I could prize,
Like day's departing glories
From out the sunset skies.
And full roughly I have ridden
The stormy tide of life,
And long years have passed in struggling
In bitterness and strife."

—T. B. THAYER.

"CHARLIE ROSS IS GONE! *Somebody has stolen Charlie Ross!*" This was the exclamation of Willie Crawford as, with hoop and ball in hand, he rushed into his mother's sitting-room from his play on the street, closely followed by Mrs. Ross.

"Oh, Mrs. Crawford! What shall I do? Some-

body has carried off my Charlie! *What shall I do! What shall I do?*" This Mrs. Ross said while wringing her hands and pacing the room in an excited manner.

Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Ross were near neighbors, and warm friends; although neither knew anything about the other, except what they had seen, since that day, six months ago, when Mrs. Ross, a widow with a blue-eyed boy of five years, had rented the cottage in the rear, and settled down as straw sewer for the firm of "Braid and Shepard."

She was very ladylike in her manners and very reticent in regard to her past life; and although her neighbors interviewed the boy, all they could learn from him was, that "his father was dead," and that "he had a big brother John who lived in Troy with Grandmama." So they accepted Mrs. Ross as "one who had seen better days;" and the widow and her little boy soon became great favorites.

When Mrs. Ross first sent her little boy to school, she had requested Willie Crawford to take

him under his care; and had sewed for both the boys, hats of much finer quality than those worn by the other boys in the neighborhood. She also possessed a large collection of books, well filled with engravings, over which the boys had spent many happy hours. Charlie and Willie were very firm friends, and could almost always be found together.

When Mrs. Crawford had succeeded in calming the distracted mother, she learned from her and Willie, that a well-dressed man, with a buggy, had offered to bring Charlie home from school, and after Charlie had got into the carriage, the man had said, "It was such a pleasant day, he would drive around the square first." Willie said, "Charlie seemed to know the man, and I thought it was all right, until Mrs. Ross asked me if I knew where he was."

Mrs. Ross had been busy trying to finish her last dozen of hats, so that she might take them to the store after supper and obtain the money, to buy Charlie a pair of shoes, which she thought he needed, for she liked to have her little boy look as well as any of his mates.

Her tempting supper was waiting, and the last hat finished, when she noticed for the first time, the lateness of the hour. Charlie had often stopped to play with Willie Crawford on the street before the house, and there she now sought him, only to learn of his abduction; and then followed the scene with which our story opens.

Mr. Crawford came home from his work in the rolling-mill, before any one had thought what was the best thing to be done. He at once notified the Chief of Police, who promised that all should be done that was possible, to restore the "Lost Boy;" and sent one of the "force" that evening to question Willie, and obtain a description of the man and his buggy. Mrs. Ross was also questioned, but she could not think of any one who could have any object in stealing her boy.

The Crawfords took the afflicted mother into their own family, and did all they could to comfort her.

When a week had passed without bringing any tidings of the "Lost Charlie," the whole city seemed to awake with sympathy, and the humble

home of the Crawfords was daily besieged with visitors, who came to offer comfort and aid to the bereaved mother. A skillful detective was employed, and posters offering a large reward for information concerning the "Stolen Boy," were to be seen on all the street corners of the city.

The detective had several interviews with the widow, and on one of these occasions, he drew from her the admission, that her true name was not Ross, but Burton; and that her married life had not been pleasant, and wishing her child to forget all about his father, she had called herself by an assumed name, and hid herself in a city, where no one knew anything about her. He also learned from her the fact, that her relatives were wealthy, and pride had induced her to conceal her whereabouts and circumstances from them. By his advice, coupled with the hope that they might aid her in discovering her boy, she was induced to write to her friends and acquaint them with her situation. Her letters brought an immediate response, in the person of a wealthy aunt, who

placed every means at work, that wealth could procure, to find the "missing Charlie."

Six months passed away, during which, several traces were discovered that seemed to promise well, but which only ended in disappointment. Once an answer came to the offer of reward, saying, that "if the money should be sent to a certain place the boy would be found there." But although the money was sent by a suitable agent, no trace of the child appeared.

The bereaved mother grew thin and pale; the trouble and suspense was fast wearing out her life: and the doctors declared that unless she had a change of air, and something to take up her mind, she must soon die. It was at last decided to take her to San Francisco, where her brother, the wealthy Dr. Rossimere, had offered her a home. The voyage by sea, the changing scenery, and the new life which opened before her, restored her health, and as the years flew by, she became widely known, as the friend of the poor, and comforter of the distressed.

CHAPTER II.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

"At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

—Prov. 23: 31, 32.

DEAR Reader, turn back with us about four years, and visit a city on the eastern coast of Massachusetts, where we will look upon a bright picture of thirty years ago.

The time is a winter evening in the year 1849. The glowing fire in the open grate throws a cheerful light around the cosy sitting room, and brings out in bold relief the "marine view" on the wall; the work of an artist now famous for his Fruit Pieces.

On the mantle-piece above the grate, a vase of red and white chrysanthemums adds to the cheerfulness of the room, and gratifies the taste of its lovely mistress, who sits in a low rocker beside the

fire, tenderly caressing her fair-haired, blue-eyed baby, Charlie Rossimere Burton, the hero of our story, and the pet and idol of both Father and Mother.

A centre-table is drawn up near the fire, and covered with a red and black cloth, which, together with the bright-hued English carpet on the floor, gives to the room an air of comfort and even elegance, not often found in the home of a "Mechanic," thirty years ago. An astral lamp on the centre-table is burning brightly, and by its light Maurice Burton, in his easy chair, looks over the evening paper, pausing now and then to read aloud some interesting paragraph to his blue-eyed wife.

A brown-eyed, sun-browned lad of thirteen summers completes the family circle, and occupies the centre of the group, that he may the more readily attend the popping, bursting grains of corn, which he has been shaking over the fire, and now rises to pour into a white bowl, waiting to receive it, and then presents it to his aunt and uncle; for he is a foster-son of the Burton home; the orphan child of Mr. Burton's eldest brother.

The rosy-cheeked baby has been snugly tucked in his little crib, the papers read and the pop-corn discussed; John Burton, the foster-son, had rubbed his sleepy eyes, and candle in hand, mounted the stairs to the chamber above; Mary Burton, the fair-haired wife, has mended the last garment in her work basket and carefully put away her thread, thimble and needles; when Maurice rises with a yawn, and going to the corner cupboard, he produces a decanter and glass, with the remark, "I believe that pop-corn has made me thirsty." He places the half filled glass to his lips and drains it, saying, "That is splendid 'Cherry,' Wife! I believe you improve every year on your wines and fancy rums." Ah! you see the serpent coiled amid the flowers of this Eden home.

Maurice Burton was one of Nature's noblemen. He possessed manly beauty, bright intellect, vigorous health, and a kind heart. He was known among his neighbors as a model husband, and would have indignantly denied the idea that he could ever become a drunkard. And his wife (it was the custom thirty years ago) put up the cur-

rant, elderberry, and blackberry wines, and prepared boxberry rum and cherry rum, without a thought that she was spreading a snare for her husband and furnishing the means to wreck her whole life.

Three years have passed away, bringing many sad changes; and the happy home life of the Burtons has become a thing of the past. In a small tenement containing two rooms, neatly, but plainly furnished, we find Mary Burton and her Charlie, now a bright-eyed boy of four summers.

The serpent which she nursed in her home has grown to a "hydra-headed" monster, destroying her happiness, and nearly crushing out her own life. Yes, Maurice Burton, the man she had once so proudly called "my husband," is now a lost, degraded drunkard, working only to gratify his insane thirst for the maddening drink, finding a shelter where he may.

Slowly and imperceptibly, the dreadful appetite had been formed, and neither husband or wife was aware of the danger until too late to crush it.

When the dreadful fact became apparent to Mary Burton that her husband was really a drunkard, she was at first angry at the disgrace, and by her coldness and angry words, drove him more and more from his home, until at last he was discharged from work, and the whole burden of the family fell upon the delicate woman all unused to such a position. Naturally proud-spirited, she felt the disgrace of her situation keenly; her disposition that had been sunny, grew sour; and the home which had been so happy, soon became one of entire misery, to all but the child too young to know its bitterness.

At last the disappointed and despairing wife sued for, and obtained a divorce, the Judge giving her the custody of the boy.

The divided home no longer furnished a pleasant abiding-place for the "foster-son," John Burton, and he found a home with his father's sister; which was also the home of Maurice Burton's mother; and they, the mother and sister, sympathized with the ruined husband, and were inclined to blame

the divorced wife for not clinging to her husband in his degraded condition. This home furnished shelter to Maurice Burton, when at rare intervals he was sober; and sometimes he would stagger to this refuge, when the shops which furnished him poison, and sometimes food in return for labor performed, could use him no longer.

At such times, when the madness had passed away, the mother and sister would plead with him to mend his ways, and he would promise to reform; and sometimes kept the promise nearly three months; but the appetite that had been so long indulged would always gain the victory.

It was on one of these occasions, that Maurice Burton left his sister's home, to search for employment. He had kept sober for two months, and that morning in response to the earnest counsel of his mother and sister, had promised that he would never touch another drop. He had announced his intention of seeking work among the neighboring farmers, promising his sister that when he obtained work, he would send her word.

His mother was very sure that he would keep

his promise to reform this time. It could never be that her boy would die a drunkard.

"His father, 'the Doctor,' was such a nice man; and then Maurice was always such a nice, smart boy. If he had only had a different wife, he would have made a better man."

When a week had passed, without hearing from him, his mother and sister began to grow uneasy. Inquiries only traced him to the village, where he had purchased some bread and cheese, and left, saying he was going into the country to obtain work.

A week later a body was washed ashore near the village tavern, and claimed and buried by his mother and sister, as the last remains of Maurice Burton.

Mary Burton did not attend the funeral, nor let her boy do so. "I do not wish him to remember the father who has disgraced him," she said to John Burton, when he asked her to let him take Charlie.

Soon after the funeral, Mary Burton removed to the city in which we find her at the opening of our story, and assumed the name of Ross, which was part of her maiden name.

CHAPTER III.

"I fain would tell, but mothers know
What joy, and love, and bliss,
Lies in a darling's dimpled arms,
And in a baby's kiss,
And what a world of grief and woe
Lies in an empty crib,
With little garments hung away,
And trinkets locked and hid.
For Oh! my boy is lost, is lost."

—Mrs. C. A. Phillips.

BUT what of *the lost Charlie?* When Maurice Burton left his sister's home to look for employment, he firmly resolved to be a better man; and as he walked along the highway, towards the farming districts, he kept turning this resolution over in his mind, and began to dream of a future in which he saw himself once more a respected member of society. And as this pleasant vision passed before his mind's eye, everything in nature seemed to harmonize with it. The birds sang their sweetest songs; and the summer air

seemed laden with the perfume of sweet-brier and clover, bringing memories of his boyhood days, when his mother used to be so proud of him.

He rested at the village tavern, and found strength to refuse "the treat of a glass of gin," which the bartender urged upon him.

When again on the road, the thought occurred to him, "If I obtain work with any of the farmers of W——, I am so well known that I shall be constantly asked to drink, and then"—. He had reached a point where two roads met, and as he paused, there came to him this resolve, "I will strike out for a place where I am not known; and if I cannot make a man of myself, I will not let the folks at home know what has become of me; for I'm nothing but a burthen and disgrace to them anyway."

With this decision in his mind, he turned his back on the familiar road, and hurried away in an opposite direction, as though fleeing from some phantom which pursued him.

He never knew how many miles he traveled that day; his mind was conscious of only one idea, that

was, to place as great a distance as possible between himself and his former associates.

When the golden sun was sinking behind the western hills, and the long summer day was drawing to its close, he found himself before the gate at a large farmhouse: this he entered, and passing to the rear of the house, asked for shelter and food from the man who answered his knock at the kitchen door.

"Who are you anyway? And where are you from?"

"My name is Worth; I belong in Dartmouth." Which was a part of the truth, for Maurice Worth Burton had been born in Dartmouth, and so had his father before him. "I am looking for work; do you want to hire a man?"

"What could you do? If you know anything about hay, I would like to hire you, for I am terribly short-handed in that line."

"I can mow, rake, or pitch; have spent all of my early life on a farm; and I could shoe your horse, or new tire your wheels, if you could furnish the proper tools."

"Well, you're just the man I want. Come in, Stranger, and if you can work half as well as you can talk, I will find you plenty to do in the morning."

Maurice was furnished with a good supper, and comfortable bed; he awoke quite refreshed, and before nightfall, he had convinced his employer that *he was just the man he wanted*, and was engaged at liberal wages for the rest of the season.

The first two weeks, he found himself too tired each night to write to his mother and sister; and then an event occurred which prevented their ever meeting again in this world.

The popular paper of the county came every week to the farmhouse; and Mr. Forrest (that was the farmer's name) usually read the news aloud, while his wife darned the stockings, the boys ate apples, and the farm hands dozed in their chairs, or stretched at full length on the kitchen floor.

The paper had been brought from the mail on Thursday evening of the second week since Maurice's appearance at the farmhouse, and the reading was progressing as usual: Maurice was seated

with his legs astride a flag-bottom chair, his arms resting on the back, and his head resting on his hands; not listening to the reading, but trying to determine how to shape his future life. Suddenly a name arrested his attention, and caused him to listen intently to the end of the paragraph.

"FOUND DROWNED.

"Monday morning a body was washed ashore near Union Tavern, on the Troy turnpike, and was identified by the clothes as the last remains of Maurice Burton, who disappeared from his home about a week ago. Burton was a drinking man, and was last seen near the tavern. It is supposed that he must have fallen into the river while drunk. The body was claimed and buried by his sister, Mrs. Vincent, of Troy."

The paragraph was finished, and commented upon by different members of the family, and the reader passed on to other subjects.

The current of Maurice's thoughts was changed. If he was already dead to his friends, then he would never undeceive them, until he could go back a man they would be proud to know. The "California gold fever" was at its height. Why not go to the "gold diggings?" He had good abilities, and could easily work his way there.

Then came the thought of his boy; down deep

in this man's heart was a tender love for the child who had once been his idol; and the bitterest hour of his life had been when the divorce obtained by his wife, had taken from him his little Charlie.

When under the influence of liquor, he had never been abusive to the child; and after the divorce, he had often sought the little boy at his play in the backyard, and given him cakes or candy. In his mind now, there was a vivid picture of the little boy as he had seen him about two months before; the little curly head leaning far over the well curb, looking vainly for the hat he had lost in the depths below. His father had fished out the lost hat, and sent him to his mother with it; and this was the last time they had met.

"If I only had the boy to take with me."

"Are you asleep, Maurice?" It was Tim Jones, his room-mate. Mr. Forrest had finished reading, and was locking up for the night; this was a well understood signal for all hands to go to bed. Maurice went to his room and to bed, but not to sleep; and when the morning dawned, his plans for the future were all formed.

When the farming season closed, Maurice had quite a sum of money in his pocket. Mr. Forrest would have kept him through the winter, for he was an excellent blacksmith, and there was a forge on the farm; but he declined to remain, saying he was anxious to return to his friends.

He had changed very much in appearance since he left his sister's home. The sun had browned his usually pale cheek, and he had allowed his beard and mustache to grow, so his mother believing him dead, would not have recognized him on the street.

The thriving city of B—— was only four miles distant from Mr. Forrest's farm; and thither Maurice bent his footsteps on leaving the farmhouse. So many men had left their homes for the "Land of Gold," that he found no difficulty in obtaining a chance to work his passage on the steamboat plying between B—— and Troy; and one of the deck hands falling sick, he was asked to take his place. Finding that the boat would remain over night in Troy, he immediately accepted the situation; and found that he had plenty of time to reconnoitre the scenes of his former life.

He soon learned that his wife and son had left the city, and that their whereabouts was unknown; but his knowledge of her character pointed out to him the place in which she would be the most likely to take refuge. When his job on the boat was finished, he sought and obtained work as a blacksmith in the city of P——.

When the maples were putting forth their leaves, Maurice Burton's plans had reached maturity. He had nursed the idea that he had as good a right to his boy as the child's mother had, until any means of obtaining him seemed right to his mind. He gave no thought to the anguish his loss would cause him, but dwelt only on the pleasure of having him constantly by his side, and teaching him to love him alone.

He had kept the last promise he ever made his mother faithfully; and had hoarded every cent of his wages, not necessary for food or clothes, with a miser's care; some of the time he had worked over hours enough to pay his board bill.

He gave his notice at the shop, saying that he was intending to start for California; and some of

his shop-mates even saw him aboard of the cars that connected with the "Sound Steamers," and bade him good bye, wishing him good luck. But none of them knew that he left the train at the first station, and took a room at a third-class hotel, where, with the aid of a pair of scissors and razor, he altered his appearance very much. Over-work had paled his sun-browned face; and when the barber had cut and combed his hair to suit him, he looked very much like the Maurice Burton of other days.

He paid his bill at the hotel, and hired a horse and buggy at a stable to take him back to the city. We have seen that he found no difficulty in inducing Charlie to ride home from school with him. The little boy had never seen a dead person, and never been to a funeral; and when he had been told that his father was dead, it conveyed no other impression to his mind than that he had gone away somewhere; so it did not seem at all strange to have the man who had given him candy and cakes the year before offer to bring him home from school.

The proposed ride around the square furnished a plea for driving out on the country road; and apples, candy, and talk about John and Grandma made the ride seem short; and the glasses of soda which Maurice purchased at a druggist's for himself and Charlie furnished the means of drugging the child, so that slumber closed his eyes before he had time to think of the mother, who was waiting for his coming.

Maurice reached the town where he had hired the carriage, left it at the stable, and wrapping the sleeping child in the blanket shawl which he had bought for that purpose, hurried on board the last train, just as it was leaving the depot. He had no baggage to bother him, for he had never kept any supply on hand, except an extra shirt; this he now had folded under his close buttoned coat.

When the stolen child awoke from his enforced slumber, he was lying in the berth of one of the staterooms of the Empire State, which made nightly trips through Long Island Sound. As soon as he realized his surroundings, he began to cry for "mama," and it was a long time before

his father could pacify him. The terrible fit of sea-sickness which soon came over the boy, helped the abductor's plans very much, for it confined him to the stateroom, and kept him so weak that he did not know when the boat reached the wharf. Maurice found himself obliged to remain three days at the third class hotel at which he stopped, before Charlie was able to travel again.

The next week, when everybody was talking about "the missing Charlie," no one who remembered the poor, Westward bound emigrant and his sick boy, thought of connecting him with the abduction of the missing child.

With his mind dulled by recent illness, Maurice found no difficulty in convincing Charlie that his mother was dead; and as he bestowed upon him the most tender care, he soon won him to love him as fondly as he could wish.

We have seen that the story of the "kidnapped boy" had been sent everywhere, with a description of his person, the color of his eyes and hair, and every particular that seemed necessary to lead to his recovery. The news-boys cried their papers

with all about the "Stolen Boy" in the very cars where Maurice traveled; but no one hearing the sound, suspected that the light-haired boy, sleeping so sweetly in his father's arms, was the "Kidnapped Charlie" of whom a whole city was at that moment thinking—conjecturing various theories for the cause of his abduction, but never guessing the truth. And his mother wetting her pillow with tears, and in her sleepless agony picturing her "lost boy" in all manner of painful situations; but never for a moment thinking of him as sleeping in the arms of love.

Two weeks after the abduction found Maurice and his child at the terminus of railway travel in the Northwest; and after three days by stage, he left the main road, to seek the abode of a man of whom he had heard in one of the stages by which he had traveled. It was told that this man, who was known as the "Squatter," lived all alone in a little cabin in the wilderness; and Maurice, finding his money nearly all gone, and himself and Charlie very much in need of rest, had resolved to ask this "lone hermit" for shelter for a few days.

He found the cabin, after nearly a day's journey on foot, during which he carried Charlie a great part of the way in his arms or on his shoulders.

The hermit, whose name was Arthur Weston, gave the tired man permission to remain with him for a few days; and Maurice and his little boy retired early to the bed of dried grass, which was the best his host had to offer.

After his night's rest he found himself too sick to leave his bed. He had told Weston the night before that his wife was dead, and that he intended to travel on, with his little boy, until he reached the "Land of Gold." With rest after the tiresome journey, came reaction and lassitude; from the loss of his whiskers a severe cold had been taken; this had been neglected, until a hacking cough had set in; congestion of the lungs followed; and for two weeks Maurice was unable to help himself in the least. But Weston, although a very rough and lawless man, cared for him as tenderly as a woman might; and quite won the heart of the blue-eyed Charlie, by the flowers and berries that he brought for his amusement; for the

child very rarely left the bedside of his father, except to eat his meals.

When the bright days of June appeared, Maurice was able to walk out a little, but his strength never came back. The hacking cough continued, and when September winds began to whistle around the cabin, a grave was dug under the big "cotton-wood," and there Arthur Weston buried the broken-hearted man whose early promise of a noble life had been quenched by "*the harmless glass of home-made wine.*"

"As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death."—PROV. 11: 19.

CHAPTER IV.

"And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems." —MILTON.

DURING the last illness of Maurice Burton, Arthur Weston had given him all the care and comfort that was in his power to bestow, and the dying man had confided to him the whole sad story of his wrecked life, and entreated him to restore the "Stolen Boy" to his mother, if it should ever be possible. This Weston readily promised to do, but mentally resolved that it should never be possible; for although Maurice had confided in him without reserve, he knew nothing about him except that he had been kind to him in his great extremity — yet these two men had met before.

Ten years before the opening of our story, the pretty Mary Rossimere had many suitors; for a long time her preference seemed to be equally divided between two; for her family preferred the son of the wholesale liquor dealer; and her heart chose Maurice Burton, the machinist. She at last decided the question by accepting Maurice Burton; and from that time very little notice was taken of her, by her family, until the abduction of her boy led her to appeal to them for help, which brought out their ready sympathy in her behalf.

Meanwhile her discarded suitor, who had always been known as a fast young man, grew more wild and reckless in his habits. The failure of his father in business, forced him to rely on his own labor for support. He had never been taught to work, and he now thought himself too old to learn a trade; and his past habits made him unable to obtain a clerkship; so the only place that seemed open to him was behind a bar. Here he sunk rapidly, and one year before our story opens, he fled from justice, carrying with him the proceeds of a successful burglary.

He had found no place safe from the "eye of the law," except the wilds of frontier life; here he found a "squatter" anxious to sell his cabin and stock at a low figure, that he might emigrate farther west. He had made the purchase, and since then dwelt in security, as far as the law was concerned, but leading a very lonely life.

The coming of Maurice and little Charlie to his home, had been a pleasant break in its monotony; and when the poor man grew confidential, the story that he told filled the heart of his listener with pleasure. The woman who had discarded him for another, had not found happiness with the husband of her choice; and now it was in his power to withhold her dearest earthly treasure. The joy he felt at this thought, may have added to the tenderness with which he nursed the dying man, for *he* had been the means of placing this revenge in his way.

Charlie felt the loss of his father bitterly, and every day he would beg to be taken to "Mama;" but his new guardian put him off with the plea, that he could not go until after the harvest. And

as he really tried to make the little cabin as pleasant as possible to the fatherless boy, the little fellow soon ceased to plead "to go to Mama," waiting with heroic patience for the harvest to end. And while Charlie was patiently waiting for the end of the harvest, his heart-broken mother and her friends were asking each other what should be done next; every means had been tried, but not a single clue had led to anything but disappointment.

We might drop a fish into the ocean, and the most diligent search might fail to find it again; so although it was well known that Charlie went away with a man in a buggy, all further trace of him seemed as effectually lost, as though the earth opened and swallowed him up.

Those readers of these pages, who have traveled over thinly settled districts, and through new and wild country, can easily judge how little prospect there was of Charlie ever being restored to his mother, except his guardian should so will it.

When the produce was all gathered, and Weston began to get ready for "market," Charlie was

nearly wild with delight, and could scarcely wait for the morning of the day on which they were to start. The load was to be carried in a lumber wagon, drawn by two yoke of oxen; and a "nest" was made for the little boy in one corner, and furnished with a buffalo robe and a blanket.

The first day passed very pleasantly to the eager child. The late autumn flowers, the singing birds, and squirrels which he sometimes left the team to chase, all ministered to the pleasure of his ride. His heart was light for he thought he was going home. He had traveled so fast away from his home, that he did not realize that it would take weeks to get back again.

The second day was more monotonous; he seemed to have lost his interest in the squirrels, and remained all day curled up in his buffalo robe. The third morning he awoke flushed and unrefreshed; and it soon became evident to Weston, that the child was sick, and that he would have to leave him at an Indian village, which was about four miles from the "trading post;" and with whose inhabitants he was somewhat acquainted.

He had been able to render some assistance to the tribe, and they seemed very friendly towards him. And they readily consented to take care of the boy, while he finished his journey.

Charlie was very unwilling to be left behind, but when Weston told him that "he would surely die, and never see his mother, if he did not remain," he yielded at once. One of the Indian women took the boy under especial care, and by her skillful nursing succeeded in breaking up the fever with which he seemed to be threatened.

It took Weston two days to transact his business at the "trading post," and it was not until the evening of the third, that he reached the Indian village, where they urged him to remain all night. He had brought them liberal gifts of ammunition and tobacco, and could tell them considerable news from the outside world. To Charlie he brought the intelligence that he had written to his mother; and he promised to ride over on the "pony" in a week to get his answer.

When the Indians found that their visitor intended to return in a week, they offered to keep

the child, who was really unfit to travel; and Charlie, feeling that he was so much nearer home, begged to remain. On finding that the child had not told anything about himself, and obtaining from him a promise that he would say nothing about his past life, he concluded to leave him.

In four days he was back again, with his ox team and supplies; stating, that "he had found his cabin a smoking ruin; and that his pony and all his farming tools had disappeared." The place had probably been plundered and burned by some roving band of Indians. The friendly Indians made room for him in one of their wigwams; and he gave them the load of supplies he had brought for his own use.

Charlie soon regained his strength; and his Indian nurse made for him a suit of buckskin, as a token of her love, which pleased the child very much; for his clothes were becoming very thin and worn.

After four days Weston again departed for the "trading post," telling Charlie he would bring him news from his mother, before the sun set.

Just at nightfall, he returned to the village in great haste, and informed his friends, the Indians, that he had received news that would compel him to go "West" at once. He had purchased a light wagon at his first visit to the "trading post," and obtaining a horse from the Indians in exchange for his oxen, he and Charlie left the same evening after his hasty return.

The setting sun had left only the gray twilight to mark its last ray, and the moon like a ball of fire appeared in the eastern sky, when they started on their all night journey. The air was mild, for although December had come, Winter seemed loth to put in an appearance; and the moon glistening through the groves of timber, reflected a landscape impossible to represent with pen or pencil. Leaves tinted with shades that art cannot produce, and varnished with dew, glistened on every side, and seemed to the child's imagination to be a scene in fairy land.

The boy had been very much disappointed at not hearing from "Mama," but he made no opposition to going with Weston, and as the horse flew

over the lonely road, he evinced considerable interest in the constellations, which the man took pains to point out to him. In a short time the child fell asleep; and cradled in his guardian's arms, passed the night on the road.

While Arthur Weston was at the "trading post," disposing of his farm produce, he chanced upon an old paper in which he read the offer of the large reward for the "missing Charlie." He knew, he had only to deliver up the boy and claim the reward; but then the officers of the law might want him also; and he did not like to part with the boy; he had grown fond of him, and he did not wish to restore him to the mother, whom he fancied had wronged him. He had grown tired of farming; with the promised reward, he might go to some western city and begin life anew. The result of his reasoning was, the letter which awoke hope in the heart of Mary Burton, only to end in the bitterest disappointment.

When he had found his cabin burned, the loss of it did not distress him much, for he had determined to claim the reward; and "if he could not

sell his 'tract,' he would give it to his Indian friends."

When he arrived at the "trading post" to look for an answer to his letter, he gave his horse to the stable-boy, at the only tavern the place afforded, and was proceeding towards the post office, when the sound of a name uttered by a familiar voice attracted his attention. Two men were seated under a shed that he was passing, conversing in low tones, and their subject was the "missing Charlie." It was this name which had arrested his attention, and the familiar voice was that of an old schoolmate, that had once been his warm friend; but now a wide chasm yawned between them—Weston was a fugitive from justice—his schoolmate, a well-known detective from the "States." Weston forgot that frontier life had changed his looks so much that his own mother would not have known him; or that the half Indian suit he wore might have formed a sufficient disguise. Here was danger for him, he thought, and hurrying back to the stable, he paid the boy for his horse's dinner, and rode away at a rapid gait,

never pausing to look behind, nor checking the speed of his horse until he reached the Indian village, where we have seen he only tarried long enough to procure a fresh horse, and equip Charlie and himself for their night ride, before he started again in his flight.

Their travels led them over mountains covered with tall trees, through forests filled with all kinds of game, and along the banks of streams of pure, clear water, from which, with hook and line, they often obtained their supper or breakfast.

We are apt to find our minds well occupied when visiting new scenes, and traveling over new and wild country; so Charlie soon became interested in the journey, and ceased to wonder when they would start for the "East."

They continued this mode of life for two weeks, sometimes finding shelter in a deserted hunter's cabin, tarrying one night with a wandering band of Gypsies, and resting at last at an Indian village, where he procured a "guide" to show him the most direct route to some frontier settlement.

The only object of this wild flight was to baffle

all search that might be made for him—a search that never was made—so truly, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth."

Their guide led them over a more public road, sometimes passing the cabin of some hardy settler, occasionally meeting bands of roving Indians, who suffered them to pass unmolested, for their guide was well-known, and his presence protected them. The further they traveled, the more savage they found the tribes, whose villages they passed; but Weston made the Chief of each a present of some trinket, which won his friendship. At one time, a curiously wrought powder flask, answered this purpose; at another, a money belt, which once contained a "thousand in gold;" and the third and last, was a small magnifying glass, which he had given to Charlie to amuse himself with, and which the child gave up, in return for their night's lodging at one Indian village.

The child seemed to win the love of all he met; and their guide grew fond of him, and taught him to use the bow and arrow, with which he soon became quite expert.

They now approached the banks of a river which they would have to descend to continue their journey, and here they parted from their Indian guide, who left them to return to his people, carrying with him one of Charlie's golden curls.

CHAPTER V.

"Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers."
—LONGFELLOW'S "EVANGELINE."

CHARLIE and Weston did not have long to wait at the "Indian agency," where they had parted with their guide, before the welcome sound of oars, told them that a boat was approaching. They had found no difficulty in disposing of the horse and carriage; and this gave them something to pay their traveling expenses with.

Weston had taught the child to call him "uncle," and by this name we shall henceforth know him.

It was necessary that Charlie and his uncle should seek a home for the winter without delay:

and among the "trappers" gathered at the agency, they found one who was quite willing to pilot them to a selected spot long known to him.

A store of provisions, ammunition, guns, traps, etc., was packed in the canoe—for a hunter and trapper always prepares for a six months' stay—and our three travelers embarked on their journey. It was nearly noon when they started from the agency; and the river glistened in the sunlight like a broad stream of silver; and as the canoe glides smoothly over the water, there seems nothing to mar the pleasure of their voyage.

Charlie amused himself for awhile with fishing, and watching the changing scenery as they glided by it; but when there was nothing but the river and the dull drab prairie to look upon, he became weary, and curling up on the pile of blankets, fell asleep.

The "trapper," being familiar with the stream, related anecdotes and adventures of his experience in former years, until Weston became deeply interested, and quite a friendship seemed to be established between the two men. Weston grew confi-

dential, and told the trapper of the burning of his cabin, adding that his sister, the boy's mother, had perished in the flames; and he had rescued the child from the murderous Indians, and escaped with him. This story the trapper was easily made to believe; and seeing Charlie dressed in a fine made buckskin suit, with beaded moccasins and feathered cap, and the bow and arrows which he used so expertly, all helped to make the story seem real. "They came from Tall Bull's Band," thought he; and his sympathy was gained, which was all that Weston wished.

The trapper had planned for a winter's hunt, and he had invited Charlie's uncle to share it with him, an offer which he readily accepted.

Our travelers did not find smooth sailing all of the time, and when the roughness of the journey awoke Charlie, he turned to fishing again for amusement, and before night, had taken some very fine trout.

That night they camped on the banks of the river, and feasted on jerked venison, corn-meal mush, and coffee, with hot slapjacks, as the trapper called his bread, baked in a frying pan Wild

honey abounds in these forests, and our trapper friend knew how to find it, so Charlie was supplied with plenty of honey for his supper.

When their evening meal was finished, our little party retired early to rest; and sunrise found them much refreshed, while the morning air, bracing and chilly, gave them good appetites for their breakfast. Breakfast over, the camp utensils stowed away in the canoe, and they are sailing down river again. Three days' journey brings their canoe ride to an end, for they have reached the hunting ground—the trapper's kingdom.

"Rough country this, but full of game," said the trapper.

"Yes, and quite secluded," replied Weston.

A log hut with a large fireplace, and mud chinked walls and chimney, was to be their shelter for the winter—their home—and it was very acceptable to the wandering refugee, who was to share its hospitality.

The new life had now fairly begun; and for a few days the romance of the situation was very pleasing to Charlie and his uncle; but soon grew

monotonous and wearisome to the child, who often had to share its solitude alone. Weston found both employment and pleasure in the excitement of hunting; and this business had for years taken the place of home and friends with the trapper.

Charlie soon learned to make traps for himself, which he set not far from the cabin, and caught squirrels, birds, rabbits, and other small game. This amusement, and his bow and arrows, gave him much pleasure, and served to while away the many hours in which he was left all alone.

The rapidly changing scenes in his forced journey had dulled the memory of his early home; and of his father's death, and the story he had heard then, lingered in his mind only as a dream.

We shudder at the very thought of being left alone in a hut, hundreds of miles away from any settlement, but Charlie seems to feel no fear, and spends part of his time under "the grand old live maple," where the trapper has built a rustic seat, making traps with a jack-knife which his uncle bought for him at the agency. As he whittles away at his "figure-four" traps, for pigeons, par-

tridges, quails, or other unlucky intruder that trusts his bait, he forgets the loneliness of his surroundings, and breaks forth in a happy song; and the little birds which still tarry in their northern home, alight on the leafless branches, and join his concert.

What a change has been wrought in the pale-faced boy, whom we have seen traveling with his father, now far away from the haunts of civilization; his golden curls have been shorn, and his fringed pants, beaded moccasins, and sun-browned face make him appear like a true Indian. From his journey and mode of living, he has gained robust health; and he has grown into this wild, lonely life so gradually, that it has now no terrors for him.

The old log hut or cabin contains one room, which serves all purposes; it has a clay floor and board windows, which slide back and forth to admit the light. A table made of split slabs, and solid in every respect, stands on a frame, set with posts in the ground. The stools and benches of rustic design and rough workmanship, are made

from the timber which is abundant in the neighborhood. Their beds are heaps of branches of the fir tree, and dried leaves covered with buffalo robes; and would not be readily exchanged by either of the occupants of the cabin, for those composed of feathers or springs. The large fireplace occupies one side of the cabin, the stone chimney being built on the outside. The stone "back-log" and the big "fore-stick," which takes all the strength of the sturdy trapper to lift, form the base of the big fire, which warms the cabin, and is kept burning day and night.

Sometimes roving bands of Indians pass near the trapper's "camp,"—this is what he calls his cabin"—and if hungry, he gives them meat and corn-bread, and smokes with them the "pipe of peace," and they never molest him; he has learned to speak their language, and won their friendship; and he dwells as securely in his wilderness home as though guarded by armed soldiers.

When Charlie is tired of his play under "the old live maple," he draws his little stool beside the fire, and regales himself with a bunch of

"johnny cake" and honey, which his trapper friend always has on hand; and as this feast usually leaves him sleepy, he generally curls up in the buffalo robes and sleeps for an hour or two, which causes him to have bright eyes and open ears, when the trapper repeats his tales of wild adventure to his companion, Charlie's uncle, beside the fire, in the evening.

The boy stands in the doorway or at the open window to watch his traps, and at one time he caught a pigeon, which he thought so very pretty, that he greatly desired to keep it alive; so he placed it in a basket, and tied one of his uncle's red handkerchiefs over it, until the return of the two men from their hunt, and that night the trapper built for him a little cage, in which he kept his bird until it became so tame that it would eat from his hand, and follow him around the cabin; and in his hours of loneliness, when his little heart seemed full of homesick longings, he would place the bird upon his shoulder, and tell it about "Mama, John, and Grandma;" and the pigeon would gently peck at his cheek with its bill, and "coo," as

if in loving sympathy with its little master's sorrows.

About half a mile from the cabin, the Red River-of-the-North gleams like patches of silver through the trees; and sometimes the child wanders down to its banks, and as he watches the flowing stream, he launches little rafts upon the waters, and tells himself that "when he grows big, he will build a canoe, and sail down the stream to find Mama."

The two hunters usually returned at night, well ladened with game, and highly pleased with their success; and in the course of an hour a smoking supper of fried birds or rabbits and corn-meal bread attested the trapper's skill as a cook; and was eaten by the two hungry men with a great relish.

The winter thus far had been unusually mild, but the second week of their sojourn in the wilderness, there came a light fall of snow, covering the ground with a pure white carpet, about three inches deep; and furnishing our hero with amusement for several days; for out of this material he built a tiny fort, and stormed it with white cannon balls. He also built a snow man, and finally rolled up a

very large ball of snow under the "live maple," where it remained all winter, and served as a target for his arrows, when other amusement failed.

To the trapper, also, the snow was welcome, for on it he could the more easily track deers.

Heavy frosts followed the fall of snow, and all things were soon in the grasp of "King Winter," while fierce storms and high winds often rocked the log cabin as though they would lift it from its foundations. And there came days so intensely cold, that the inmates of the cabin hovered over the blazing fire, and sought no other employment than that of keeping themselves warm.

On the days when the storms were too fierce for them to go out, the hunters passed their time in curing the skins and furs they had already obtained; and which the trapper expected to dispose of in the spring at the Indian agency, where we first met him. The evenings were often spent in teaching Charlie geography and arithmetic, the instruction being conveyed orally for want of books, and the stone hearth and a piece of charcoal being

used instead of a blackboard and chalk, for purpose of illustration.

When we live and mingle with a family or household, the steady contact begets a familiarity, that often causes us to reveal a history of ourselves, and our past lives; and sometimes we even confide to each other important secrets: thus the trapper, who was at peace with all the world, soon confided to his companion the whole history of his past life. Telling him without reserve of the "farm" near Des Moines, Iowa, where he had passed his boyhood; and where he had wooed the black-eyed Lilian, only to be jilted by her when the "city clerk" offered her "his hand and heart." He also told of the widowed mother who still lived at the farm, and to whom he seldom wrote — not because he did not love her — Oh no! but then writing never came easy to him. He sometimes met people at the agency who could tell him about her, and he always sent his compliments by them. His mother, he had been told, obtained a comfortable living by renting the farm, and laid by a snug little sum each year. In fact, it was hers to all in-

tents and purposes; for he should never go back to claim it, until he got too old to work.

The farm, which comprised a quarter section, and had a snug little frame house on it, which had been built expressly for the fair Lilian, was his property. He had left it in his mother's care; and had not seen it, nor his mother, in thirteen long years.

This was the trapper's story; and it never occurred to him to remember that his listening companion never spoke of his early life, nor had told him anything except the story of the burnt cabin, which he had accepted as the truth.

Seven years had passed since the trapper had heard from home, and Weston knew that within those years great changes had occurred in that section. A railroad had already been built which reached Des Moines, and another was talked of, which would pass near it.

Weston had never thought of restoring Charlie to his mother, except when the promise of the large reward had seemed to present means of making a start in life once more. We have seen that

the fear of detection had prevented him from obtaining the reward, and led him to the retired spot where he now was. The trapper's story had pointed out a plan by which he might enrich himself and Charlie, and still retain the boy in his possession. He had noticed the growing fondness of the trapper for the child; and when he thought the proper time had arrived to work out the plot he had formed, he said to the trapper one day, "I mean to make a farmer of Charlie, and as I would like to locate in Iowa, I will buy your farm, if you will sell it, and give it to Charlie when he becomes of age."

"But! I want my mother to enjoy it as long as she lives," said the trapper.

"Oh well, we will not claim it in her lifetime. Charlie is only seven now; and when he is old enough to work on a farm I will hire it of your mother. You can give me a deed of it, to take effect at her death, and that is all I will ask, and the old lady can live with us if she pleases."

"Well, if you want it for the boy, I'd as soon he had it as anybody, after mother. I shall never

live there again — my home is here. I love that boy as though he was my own, and when I go where they do such things, I will have the writings drawn up to place it in his possession after mother's death."

At the time when Weston was plotting to obtain possession of the trapper's farm, the city authorities were trying to buy the land of his mother for building lots. The owner could not be found; he had been advertised for, but he came not, and his mother was urged to believe him dead, and to sell the farm for a sum that would make her very wealthy, but she steadily refused. "Her son would return some day, and the property was not hers." So the farm remained undisturbed in the suburbs of a large and flourishing city.

Many hunting expeditions had been carried out since the trio came to the cabin, and a large number of mink, otter, sable, and martin skins had been obtained and cured, besides the hides of larger animals.

Charlie had caught foxes enough to obtain a suit of clothes from their skins; these the trapper had

helped him cure, and with the ready skill which comes from having to depend entirely on ourselves, had cut and made them into a warm and comfortable suit.

When the extreme cold confined the boy nearly all of the time to the house, the days were very long and wearisome. But his friend, the trapper, kept him supplied with some new curiosity in the shape of home-made toys. Wooden chairs, puzzles, and a miniature menagerie, following each other as fast as the child became tired of them; these were the work of the jack-knife, and were made while Weston was pacing the floor with his hands in his pockets, and wishing that spring would come. The man was becoming tired of his secluded life, and was laying plans to get away from it.

One morning the two men, accompanied by the dog, and armed with their trusty rifles, started out for a day's hunt. The air was cool and bracing, and they wended their way into the depths of the forest, breaking a path through the snow, the trapper leading the way with his usual sturdy stride.

They had wandered nearly four miles from the cabin without seeing any tracks, or starting any game, when suddenly the dog gave a snuff at the air, and a short quick bark, and the next moment they came in sight of a panther, who was crunching the bones of a deer beside a fallen tree.

The trapper immediately took aim at the beast with his rifle, and Weston's gun was leveled ready to fire also. Bang went the trapper's gun, and with a cry like that of a wounded child, the panther sprang several feet in the air; but the shot had not taken effect in any vital part, and as the enraged animal reached the ground he made a savage spring at his assailants. At this moment Weston fired, but his shot went wide of its mark, and lodged in the fallen tree. The dog had sprung upon the panther, but the animal had shaken him off, and as the trapper was in the act of firing the second time, he sprang upon his left shoulder and hip, knocking the gun from his hands, and dragging him down to the snow. Weston had reloaded, but he dared not fire, lest he should shoot his companion. The trapper had drawn his knife,

and was cutting his enemy vigorously, but he seemed unable to reach his heart.

"Shoot, he will kill me," he cried, and this time Weston's rifle did good service, for the bullet passed through the panther's heart, and the animal fell dead at their feet. The trapper was badly wounded, and the blood flowed freely from the deep wounds made by the panther's sharp claws and teeth. Four miles was a long distance for a wounded man to travel; but there was no shelter any nearer, and after his companion had bound up his wounds with handkerchiefs, the trapper, leaning upon Weston's arm, made all haste to reach the cabin; but after two miles had been passed over, he grew too weak to walk, and Weston was obliged to throw aside the guns, and carry him part of the time upon his back. The weary miles were passed at last, and the trapper reached the cabin in a fainting condition. Here Weston gave him a drink of liquor, and then proceeded to dress his wounds, in which he was greatly assisted by Charlie.

The trapper's wounds proved very serious, and

the fever, which his long journey home created, kept him confined to his cabin several weeks, so that when he was able to be out again, spring had come, and they began to make preparations for visiting the agency. They built a large canoe, for they had a double lot of skins to dispose of, and when all their arrangements were made, Charlie and the two men went up the river with their load of skins and furs; and the deed was executed, which gave the farm to Charlie, after the death of the trapper's mother. The instrument was duly signed and recorded and given to Weston, who was named as the guardian of the boy. The trapper then took leave of Charlie and his uncle; bidding the child good-bye with a fond embrace and rather moist eyes; for they had engaged passage in a boat bound for a station on the river, from which by stage they could reach the line of railway travel.

Weston had told the trapper that he wished to go where he could send Charlie to school, and that he would go to Des Moines and "look up the old lady," and send him word how she was. This

plan was very pleasing to the trapper and he did all he could to help the travelers on their journey. Charlie was loth to part with his pigeon, and sorry to leave his friend; but the thought of going to school soon blunted his grief.

Weston had intended to take the most direct route to Des Moines, but at the first town at which he stopped, a newspaper which he bought and consulted for news from the "East," informed him that a child supposed to be the "Missing Charlie" had been seen at the Red River settlement; this news alarmed him, for he had now a double reason for wishing to retain the boy. If the child was found in his possession, he might be charged with his abduction; and he might find it difficult to make any one believe his story of how the child came into his care. Then if the child became heir to the farm in Iowa, the law might see fit to appoint a new guardian, or at the least inquire too closely into his past life; he was afraid of the law anyway, and so concluded to wait until the search for Charlie was entirely over before he ventured to look up the "farm."

A party of emigrants bound for Utah passed through the town; and Weston soon found means to make himself and Charlie members of the party. His pitiful story of his burnt cabin, and his sister's death in its flames, served him as well here as with the trapper, and a kind-hearted woman took the child under her immediate care. The emigrants were Germans, speaking but very broken English, and Weston had no fear of their learning anything from the child that would endanger his safety, while he could converse with them quite readily, having been proficient in their language in his younger days.

CHAPTER VI.

"Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous summits,
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows, and the Walleway and Owyhee."

LONGFELLOW'S "EVANGELINE."

CHARLIE was very much disappointed at not being permitted to attend school; but he made no objection to going with the emigrant train; and it would not have made any difference if he had. A place was assigned him in one of the white-topped wagons, drawn by a yoke of oxen, and Weston found a place near him by driving the oxen.

Slow and tedious as this mode of traveling seems, there is a wild charm attending it that drives away the monotony; and the changing

scenery is to the lover of nature a constant source of delight.

Charlie had learned to cook by an open fire during his winter in the trapper's cabin; and was able to make himself quite useful to the family with whom he traveled. This family consisted of a Mormon with his wife and four children, one a babe of eighteen months; and the addition of a quiet, obedient boy, who was willing to amuse the baby, or bake the cakes for breakfast, was considered rather pleasant than otherwise.

Spring was far advanced, and the emigrants found water and food plenty, so they were able to travel twenty miles each day, and as they were seldom delayed, the whole train of twenty-five wagons moved steadily on.

Game was abundant; and the rifles of the men kept the train well supplied with buffalo and antelope steaks, and roasts, and these with prairie chickens, rabbits, etc., made their bill of fare quite varied.

At night the impudent coyotes would come around the camp and bark, and carry off the

bones, or anything else that was eatable, which they could steal; and sometimes did carry away a load of shot, fired into them by the night watchman; but they were hard to kill, except when shot through the heart.

The emigrant train was not without amusement for those who could not find enough in the scenes through which they were passing. Among the one hundred and sixty souls which were in the party, there were many who could draw sweet sounds from instruments of music; and the notes of the violin, accordeon and flute, mingled with the music of human voices, were often heard in the familiar tunes of the Fatherland; while around some of the camp-fires a few couples were seen to join in the moonlight dance.

The route along the Great Platte valley was a scene of great beauty and interest to our travelers. The fertile bottom lands, green with verdure, and the train daily receiving accessions from other routes, which all converge in the Platte valley. The scene at the crossing of the Platte was exciting in the extreme; the screaming of women and

children; the loud shouts, and sometimes curses of the men, mingled with the bustle of nearly a hundred white-topped wagons, all in sight of each other; some just arriving, others just trying the ford, and others disappearing over the hills beyond.

The Mormon children with whom Charlie traveled were nearly wild with fright, but our hero was naturally of a very calm temperament, and was accustomed to accept things as they were, and make the best of them; and then he had forded rivers before in a wagon; so he remained quiet amid all the bustle; and endeavored to console the little daughter of the Mormon, by telling her "there was no danger, for he had crossed streams before;" not realizing at that moment that she did not understand a word he was saying.

When the oxen attached to the wagon which preceded them, reared and plunged on entering the ford, so that the curtain of the wagon burst from its fastenings, and one of the mounted guides disappeared for a moment, all but his head, beneath the water, the mother clasped her babe to

her bosom, and watched with pallid face until the stream was crossed, and they were safe on the other side.

For days and weeks the long train of white-topped wagons kept on its way undisturbed; passing herds of buffalo and wild horses, which scampered away snorting as they approached. sometimes packs of hungry wolves followed at a distance, seeking the remains of the breakfasts which they had left behind. Occasionally the night was made lurid by a distant prairie fire; but this trouble never came near enough to molest them. They often had to ford streams; and sometimes on the banks of rivers they saw Indian wigwams, and squaws planting corn. The most curious and pleasing sight to the children was the little village of prairie dogs, which they left the wagons to examine more closely; sometimes finding on the top of the same mound, the burrowing owl perched in solemn silence on one side of the hole, and on the other, the lively little prairie dog, with his head erect and fore-paws hanging down, ready at the slightest noise to dart into his hole.

Occasionally the sod house of some early settler came in view; and at the junction of the Loup Fork with the Platte River, quite a town was passed through, while along the route near this place, shanties were plenty in which refreshments were offered for sale; and at these places some of the emigrants were wont to refresh themselves in a manner which caused night hideous afterwards.

Farther on, many a snug home marked the dwelling-place of some successful farmer, and these were sheltered by groves of cottonwood trees and fenced by hedges of white willow. They were passing over the land of which Longfellow speaks, when he says,—

Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful
prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine;
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.

After crossing the South Platte, they followed up the Lodge Pole Creek to the Cheyenne Pass. They now had to pass over the vast solitary plains of Colorado, broken occasionally by rugged buttes and bluffs, and famed for their never-failing

breezes even in the hottest days. And this vast region was only the grazing field of thousands of buffalo, or herds of cattle. As they came near the mountains, the scenery became more grandly beautiful. The most dangerous part of the journey had commenced; and the guides of the party had many dismal tales to tell of attacks from bands of savages, who would hide in the mountain recesses, and rush out to murder and rob the unsuspecting emigrant. Thunderstorms were very frequent during their passage through the mountain region; and Charlie never forgot the beautiful rainbow which he saw in this vicinity.

Passing through a narrow gorge in the Rocky Mountains the train entered the valley of the Green River, so called from its peculiar color, which is supposed to be owing to the green shale through which it runs; and which is supposed to contain arsenic or chloride of copper, which, adhering to the pebble stones on the bottom of the stream, causes the water, as you look into it, to bear the same color. They found this valley rich with fossils and petrifactions, of which both

Weston and Charlie would have liked to have made a large collection, but they had no means of carrying them, so were obliged to content themselves with a few of the most curious moss agates and fossil fish.

A small town built of adobe, was on the bottom land directly in front of the gorge; while Castle Rock and the Twin Sisters were plainly visible as the travelers passed on their journey.

The game here was abundant, and some of the small streams afforded them plenty of fish. Charlie was very much interested in the manner in which the old hunters decoyed the antelope within range of their rifles. The hunter would approach the herd, and after being seen by them, would squat down and wave a handkerchief, and then up and down, at the same time moving towards the unsuspecting animals; the antelopes curious to know what was jumping up and down, would approach quite close, and were easily shot.

The whole route abounded with agates and other curious specimens; while soda, iron and fresh water springs were very plenty and near each other.

From some of the springs steam was issuing, rising high in the air; and one spring was so hot that our party cooked a prairie chicken in it. While one man was so incredulous that he took a plunge in the pool and was nearly scalded to death; timely assistance saved his life; and he doubted no longer.

A petrified turtle nine feet across and fifteen in length, was here reported to the emigrants as laying by the side of one of the streams leading from one of the geyser formations in the Yellowstone valley, that would have adorned the museum of any institute in the country.

One of the hot springs was within twenty-five feet of a cold one, and neither seemed to be affected by the other.

The hills and mountains in the vicinity of Bear River were said to be infested with robbers; and the women passed through the ravines with pale cheeks, and the men looked carefully to the priming of their rifles, but the robbers did not appear. Bears, elk, catamounts, lynx, and wolves were plenty; and sage hens, quails, and ducks were added to the daily bill of fare.

After three months of steady travel our party reached the abrupt and massive scenes of Echo Canon, beside which the smooth country lying on both sides the Platte River seemed dull and tame. The scenery here was a constant succession for miles, of natural curiosity. Winged Rock, which was a singular perpendicular column jutting out in front of a ledge, with outstretched wings, looking as if it would fly but for its weight. Kettle Rocks, which were immense gray boulders, looking very much like monstrous kettles; and Steamboat Rocks, called the Great Eastern, and the Great Republic. Then there was Witches Rocks, Battlement Rocks, Egyptian Tombs, Witches Bottles, and the Pulpit Rock, with many others too numerous to mention.

On the south a portion of the Weber River was seen with its green banks and tree verdure forming a relief to the bare, dry plains so constantly seen in this region. The mountain streams were filled with trout; and elk and deer were plenty.

After leaving Weber Canon the scene changed, and the valley with its little villages, grain fields,

and meadows brilliant with Indian pinks appeared. Then the Profile Rocks were passed, and the breezes from the great inland sea, Salt Lake, were plainly distinguished. Then came the Devil's Slide, two rows of perpendicular rocks about eight feet apart, running parallel to each other, and up a steep mountain side. Charles gazed at these scenes with awe, and wondered if the Devil really did slide down that rock.

A party of miners had overtaken the emigrant train just before reaching the mountain region; and kept along with them two or three weeks of their journey. Their destination was California; and as they were all Americans, Charlie sought their society at every opportunity, and soon became quite a favorite among them. And as Weston found their society so much more to *his taste*, than he did that of the Mormons, he was about devising some means of joining their party, when sickness overtook him and put an end to all of his plans. The mountain fever prostrated him, days came and went, but he grew steadily worse; and although everything was done for him that circum-

stances permitted, death claimed him at last; coming not to him as it came to Maurice Burton, slowly and surely, giving him plenty of chance for repentance and sorrow for past mistakes, and leading him to make an effort to restore the lost boy to his mother; but claiming him with his mind clouded with delirium, and leading him through the "*dark valley*," seemingly unconscious that he was going. He died and they buried him by the roadside; a simple board marking his grave, and a pile of stones around it. And thus we leave one of whom we might say,—

Bright was the promise in boyhood,
Dashing his noonday career;
But dark was the hour of his manhood
Passing 'mid danger and fear.

While dark plans of vengeance pursuing,
The hour of his doom came at last;
He rests in the grave on the mountain,
The time for repentance has past.

CHAPTER VII.

"My memory tells of an early friend
Who did a father's care extend,
When by misfortune, I was left
Of every earthly friend bereft;
And his deeds of love, in my memory seem
Like fragrant springtime flowers to gleam.'

CHARLIE was very much grieved at the death of Weston, for the man had always treated him kindly; and he was too young to realize that he had kept him from his mother; and now that he had no one near him on whom he had any claim, he felt all the bitterness of his lonely situation keenly. But the kind Father in Heaven who watches over the friendless and helpless, was raising up a friend for him in his hour of need.

Among the party of miners, was a tall man of commanding presence, who seemed by common consent to be the leader of the little party. Be

tween this man and Charlie there seemed to exist mutual liking, and after Weston's death, he took upon himself the task of caring for the child, and no one made any objections.

Among the few papers found in Weston's effects was the deed given him by the trapper; and this the man took care of, telling Charlie it might make him rich some day. From the child he learned that his father had carried him off from his mother because he was "mad about a divorce," that his mother was living in Massachusetts, but he did not remember where. The child knew nothing of the great search that had been made for him; and his listener's mental comment was, "Some poor fellow who had no peace at home, had started for the land of gold, and perished, like many others, on the way." To the child he said, "Well, my boy, it is impossible to look your mother up now, so we will go to California and get rich, and then you can find her, for money will do anything."

This proposal pleased the boy; and as they were at a point where the Mormon's path diverged from theirs, he bade adieu to the family with whom he

had traveled over three months, and departed with the gold seekers.

The miners were better prepared than the general class of emigrants for travel; they had fine mules, complete outfits, and now that the country was quite level, they made long trips from "sun to sun;" and after a pleasant journey of three weeks were nearing their destination.

The discovery of gold, a few years before, had attracted many to California, and every nerve had been strained to reach the new Eldorado. Many of the first emigrants, in their haste to get to the "land of gold" before the rush, found to their dismay, that they had overloaded their teams, and driven too rapidly, thus wearing out their stock; and they were compelled to throw away some of their stores, which were afterwards picked up by the following trains.

After passing the Great American Desert, our travelers were glad to arrive at the Humboldt Wells, as the thirty springs were called, which always formed the great watering place and camping ground in the days of emigrant overland travel.

Another group of noted springs were passed, one of which was called Chicken Soup Spring, for the water by adding salt, pepper, butter, and crackers, tasted as much like chicken soup as that which is usually served at hotels.

The waters of these springs were said to be a certain cure for rheumatism and all diseases of the blood; to have a remarkable effect in all paralytic cases, and to cure consumption when not too far advanced

The Piute Indians catching fish with hooks made from rabbits' bones and greasewood, were a great curiosity to Charlie, and he wondered very much to see them pull out two or three fish at a time. The Puffing or Steamboat Springs also attracted his attention; for every fifteen or twenty minutes they would blow up water and steam into the air, reminding him of the steamer he had seen leaving the wharf just before he joined the emigrant train.

Our hero, who was now in his eighth year, began to show quite a talent for music, and from his new friend who played the violin, he learned many [illegible] and sang them in a sweet voice beside

the evening camp-fire, holding his audience silent listeners while he sung.

Being the only boy among so many men, placed Charlie in a position to be made quite a pet of, and his gentle disposition made him a great favorite with the whole party; and as he remembered his winter home on the banks of the river in the forest, and many of the stories related by his old friend, the trapper, he would repeat them in such an earnest manner that would always win the attention of the entire party. He always listened himself, with rapt attention, when the men talked of the gold diggings, and soon learned the meaning of the wild excitement which led men to leave happy homes and dare the perils of a long journey to the distant regions of which they knew so lit[illegible].

He soon became as anxious as the other members of the party to reach that land of [illegible]ich some of the men told such stories of fab[illegible]s wealth, drawn from letters which had been received from friends who had gone on before, and he shared their joy when they began to tell that the golden land was very near.

The snow-capped *Sierras* formed the dividing line between our eager travelers and the sought for goal. What grand scenes here met their view; above the timber line rises tall mountains covered with perpetual snow. Cold austere monuments, pointing their spires in solemn stillness to the skies—who would not like to know how long, how very long, they had stood there? Where man has never trod, these pinnacles stand defiant; and beneath these cold towers, at the base of the snow belt, blossom beautiful flowers, watered by the melting snow, seeming in the warm sunlight like layers of spring, summer, and winter. The three seasons seem to meet the eye at a glance, and impress every one with admiration and awe.

Donner Lake, with its blue mirror-like surface, the little gem of the chain of lakes in the Sierra Nevada Mountains was passed by our party, who stopped to admire its beauty and listen to the sad story of "Starvation Camp," where in the winter of 1846–7, a company of eighty-two persons, going to California, were overtaken by snow, and lost their cattle, and were reduced to terrible straits.

Thirty-two of this company were females, and there were a large number of children. Thirty-six were said to have perished, mostly men. Relief was sent to the party, but all could not be saved; and a Mrs. Donner preferred to remain and perish with her husband rather than go away with her children and leave him behind. This tragedy gave the lake its name.

Our travelers turned away with a shudder, and with thankful hearts that they had escaped so far all the dangers of overland travel.

This lake was fed by many streams, and was now full to its banks with very clear cold water, which afforded plenty of speckled trout to the hungry travelers.

The heat was so intense, for it was now midsummer, that they were obliged to seek the shade of the tall pines, and rest at midday, traveling only in the cool of the morning and late in the afternoon.

When descending the mountain side, where the palace car now rushes down at the speed of sixty miles an hour, into the valley of the Sacramento, our travelers were obliged to proceed with great

caution; and places were pointed out to them by their guide where the emigrant wagons had to be let down by ropes, the men taking a turn or two with the ropes around the big pines to prevent too rapid descent.

They also saw near the road the track of a large landslide, where the snow melted by the summer heat, had caused a portion of the mountain to slide or slip down, carrying all that stood before it. Trees, rocks, earth, and animals were all swept on and buried in the ruins. The antlers of deer, and bones of bears and other animals could be plainly seen at the foot of the mountain where the immense weight had stopped.

What a perilous position for a man to be placed in! Yet men have been caught in these landslides, which occur quite often.

This landslide had blocked the path down the mountain side, causing a delay of ten days to the first party who attempted to pass that way. Our miners came up just in time to be of service in helping to clear the path, and were detained five days in consequence.

Among the noticeable features in this locality were the tall trees, and the stumps of trees cut off eighty feet above the ground. This fact was explained by their guide. A great depth of snow had fallen the winter before, and these trees had been used for firewood by camping parties, who had cut them off at the surface of the snow. It was said that the snow sometimes drifted to the depth of one hundred feet; and these drifted masses, melting in the spring and summer, supply the streams with water when no rain falls.

The road being opened, our party rushed on to their destination, until they reached the last of the steep mountain paths that they would have to descend; here they found themselves obliged to pass over a narrow, dim, rough, Indian trail, surrounded by precipitous cliffs and craggy rocks, at the peril of life and limb, for should their "buroes" (mules) misstep, they were liable to fall three hundred feet to the rocks below.

Their guide pointed out to them a spot where a miner had lost his mule and all his effects only two weeks before, and when they had reached a safe

camping ground, he told the story, which was as follows:—

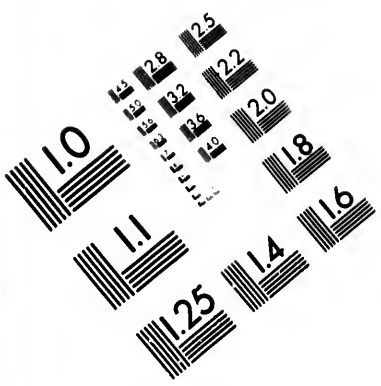
"Jim Saylor was always lucky at the mines, but of a rovin' nater, and always lookin' for somethin' better; he had be'n havin' good luck at the 'Red Dog;' but hearin' of the big doin's up to the 'Tin Cup,' he fitted out a pack mule with minin' kit and kitchen, and he started over the mount'in path alone. After breakfastin' near this spring here, he lashed his kitchen on one mule's back, and ridin' another, started for his day's journey. The trail had n't be'n passed over in some time, and had become filled up by rubbish, and badly washed by meltin' snow. You observed the mount'in side was terrible steep, 'round where the trail went; and them jagged rocks and the dizzy highth above the canon was enough to make yer blood run cold. At the steep p'int where I took the boy on my back, the pack animal, who was remarkable sure-footed 'most-ways, lost his hold and with a loud startlin' bray, and struglin' clutch at the air, he went down, down, the—the bottom of the canon, where he lays now, if the wolves and

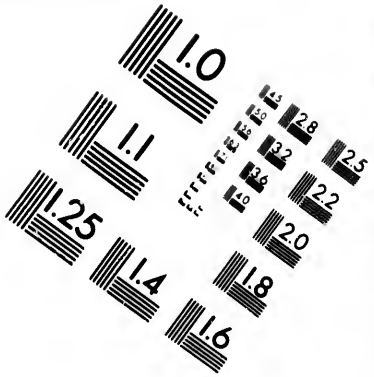
buzzards haint car'ed him off. The poor buroe and all that was attached to him was lost. To attempt to save anything wasn't to be thought on, and the whole kit, which cost three hund'ed dollars was gone past cure. There was nothin' for the unlucky 'gold seeker' to do, but to go on until he reached a place where he could turn 'round, and then return to the nearest town, buy a new kit, and start ag'in; this he did, and at last reached the 'Tin Cup' in safety."

"I tell you what, boys," said the guide, lighting his pipe, when he had finished his story, "this minin' aint all gold, anyway."

Charlie and his friends at last reached a place on the Stanislaus River, which was called Pine Log, because a pine log had fallen over a narrow portion of the river in such a manner that it formed a rustic bridge, which the miners used. Here they decided to locate, and here Charlie took his first lesson in placer mining.

Our hero soon became very handy in the various departments of surface diggings; and occasionally had the pleasure of earning for himself the appar-





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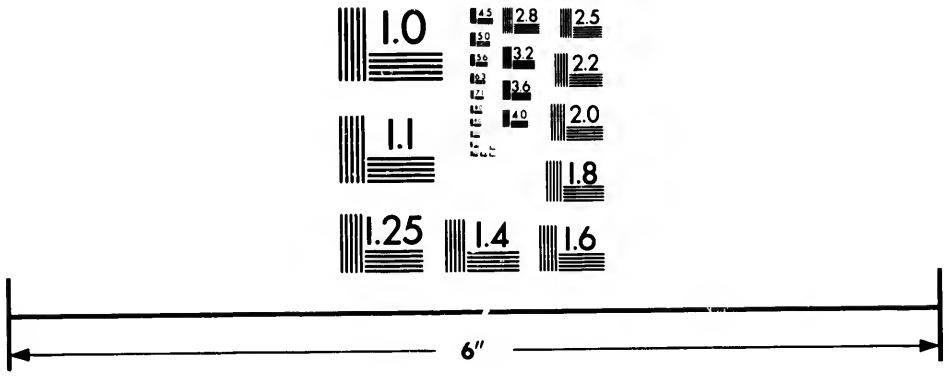

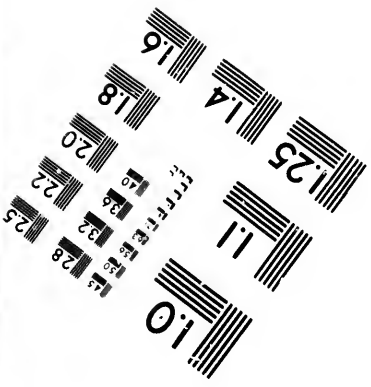

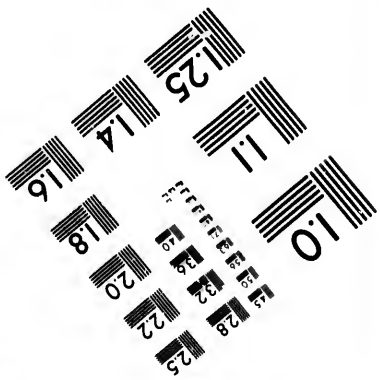

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ently large sum of a dollar and a half in a day; we say apparently large, for when we take into consideration that it cost from seventy-five cents to a dollar to feed a boy in this region, the remainder of the dollar, fifty, would not go very far towards paying his board on the days in which their toil brought them comparatively nothing. The boy however was so useful to the whole mining party, that he was welcome to share their meals at any time; and his guardian always laid aside his little earnings for a time when he might need them more.

The habits of frontiermen and miners are very rough, but there is no class more kind or charitable to a person in distress. They make no loud boasts, but each bestows his mite freely and without hope of return. Rough songs, rude jests, and the practical joke form the sum of the miners amusements. An insult is quickly resented, and the offender quickly punished.

Living away from the restraints of society, and the softer influence of women, they soon learn to act from impulse instead of reason, and as a rule

their temper becomes quick and ungovernable, and they resist any encroachments upon their supposed rights by the quickly drawn bowie-knife or revolver; and if under the influence of whisky, the person who chances to incur their displeasure sometimes meets death at their hands.

All speedily lose their polish, but all do not become depraved, and in some the pure gem is still seen, shining brightly through the rough exterior. They all soon become infatuated with their business, and whether successful or not, they plod on, led by the "Will o' the Wisp" hope which still points to the bright future in the distance, when they shall behold the golden harvest or silver product of their severe toil.

Ah! how intoxicating the dream. They know that fortunes have been accumulated in a week, a month, or a year; and they labor on still hoping, until from exposure they break down and die, meet with some dreadful accident, or from sheer want, are obliged to abandon the enterprise. When a miner wins a fortune, no one is the loser by it, but all around him feel the influence of his gains.

For several weeks our party of miners were able to keep together; for the camp at which they located was rich in surface diggings for many miles around, so they could dig and wash out their earnings in the river and all return to one camp at night; but the time came when they were obliged to strap their blankets, provisions, pick, pan, and shovel upon a pack mule and trudge over the mountains to search for new spots of treasure.

When a place was reached where the brick color of the earth seemed to promise a reward for toil, the mule was unpacked and turned out to graze; and the miner went to work with pick and shovel to fill his pan with the earth, that he might separate it from the mineral by washing it in the mountain stream; and when the days' work was done, and the evening meal eaten, he would roll himself up in his blankets, with a stone or a log for a pillow, and no shelter but the starry sky, find sleep and rest, except when disturbed by the wild beasts which infest this region.

Charlie usually accompanied his guardian on these prospecting tours; and they were generally

successful in both finding mineral wealth and freedom from attacks by wild beasts. When making their bed for the night, under the side of a shelving rock, his friend would sometimes say, "Never mind, Charlie, if the bed is hard; if we can only wash out plenty of "Cheipsas," (the term for large pieces) in this region, we will go East and find your mother."

While among the hills, they saw plenty of deer; and one day an accident occurred, which impressed itself upon Charlie's mind, so that it was never forgotten.

One day while making their way through the scrubby bushes and small pines they came upon two buck deer engaged in an earnest fight; almost every one will stop to witness this sight; and our two friends watched the battle with considerable interest. The struggle was a fierce one, for both contestants were powerful, and each received many a deep wound from the antlers of the other. For an hour and a half the bucks plunged at and goaded each other without any sign of yielding or triumph; they were about equally matched. At

last both seemed exhausted, and withdrew a short distance from each other, as if by common consent seeking rest. While their gaping wounds bled freely, and their breath came in quick short gasps, they displayed a wonderful instinctive knowledge of the art of healing; from a shrub or bush which grew near them, each buck was seen to pluck the leaves, and in wads of six or eight, thrust them into the wounds within reach of their mouths.

Here were self-taught doctors; and the result of their healing art was, that after the space of an half hour, they again returned to the charge, and the fight was continued until one of the deer broke his antlers, when he turned and fled. The other started in swift pursuit, and soon both were out of sight.

The man and boy were both deeply interested in this scene, and they gathered some of the plant to carry with them when they returned to the Pine Log camp. Here they found the Indians used the same herb on fresh cuts and bruises, and also made infusions of it for their fever patients. They perhaps had learned its virtues in the same way that our friends had.

The party of forty miners who had crossed the plains together, soon became widely scattered; now and then some of them would meet and learn from each other news of those they had not met. Some had made a "big strike" and gone home rich, via the Panama railroad; others in prospecting had *struck* the bottom of some rocky canon, leaving their bodies a prey to the wolf and buzzard; others still, who were fortunate enough to have the means by them, had grown sick of the life of risk and toil, and returned to earn a sure but humble living in the "*States*"—as the homes they came from were called by them.

One poor fellow had met a sad fate at the hands of the vigilance committee. He had gone to a new camp where it was said the diggings were very rich, and meeting with a miner at the store where they had obtained supplies, he had made a partial bargain to join him at his claim. He was to go to the miner's cabin in the evening and complete the bargain. That night the miner was murdered in his cabin, and his bag of gold, which was buried in one corner of the clay floor was carried off. One

of the vigilance committee had seen the stranger near the cabin, and the crime was laid to him. In vain he denied the accusation; and in six hours after he was arrested, he had been launched into eternity. The next day two roughs were caught stealing horses, and when about to be hung for this crime, they confessed that they had murdered the miner, for whose death the vigilants had hung an innocent man.

Charlie and his friend had left the vicinity of the Pine Log Camp, and were living a few miles from Placerville, where Mr. Gordon, Charlie's friend and guardian, kept a store. He had placed the boy at school to obtain his long-neglected education; and was assisted in this, by little sums which the successful miners sent to him for that purpose, whenever they had opportunity.

Charlie spent three years at school, and as he improved every moment, he was able to acquire more useful knowledge in that time than many boys obtain in twelve where school is no luxury to them.

At the end of the third year he left school and

assisted his friend in his store; for Mr. Gordon was now doing a large business. Improvements had increased rapidly; stages made daily trips to the steamer landing, fifty miles away; and the overland mail route and steamship line made communication with the East comparatively easy. The population was continually changing. New comers were daily arriving, and those who had obtained fortunes, or were discouraged with the prospects and had friends, were returning to the States.

New discoveries were reported every day, and trade grew prosperous. All staple articles had to be brought from eastern cities. A sack of flour could be sold readily for a dollar per pound, and other things accordingly.

Among the new comers were those who were seeking profitable investments, and to one of these Mr. Gordon sold his business at a good figure.

Five years of constant *success*, or well-directed industry had made William Gordon a wealthy man. In the East he had many friends, and among them a blue-eyed girl had promised to wait until he could earn the means to support her in the style

of living to which she had always been accustomed.

This had been the hope that had sustained him amid all the dangers and privations of overland travel and mining; and now that which he came for was won, the same idol which had cheered him in his toil, now lured him to his home.

Charlie was again to be left without a protector. His friend obtained for him what he thought was a good situation, for he found a man who promised to give him a *home*, with a chance to study, and wages at a fixed sum per week, in return for labor performed. Here he left him with a small sum of money, and plenty of good advice, and departed to take the steamer to return to his eastern home.

CHAPTER VIII.

"The cloud may be dark, but there's sunshine beyond it;
The night may be o'er us, but morning is near;
The vale may be deep, but there's music around it,
And hope, 'mid our anguish, bright hope is still here.

"Still here, though the wing of dark sorrow is o'er us,
Tho' bitterness dregs every cup that we drink;
With a smile in her eye, she glides ever before us
To yield us support, when we falter or sink."

—THE FLOWER VASE.

IN OUR last chapter we left Charlie at his new home. He was now thirteen years of age, and had reached a great change in his life. Hitherto he had only felt the rule of love. In all the changing scenes of the past, those by whom he had been surrounded had always sought to make him happy, and to soften for him the rough path of his life. Now for the first time, he had changed a *guardian* for a *master*.

With John Norton, "a mouth to be fed must

earn its bread;" and he took care that Charlie should be kept well employed at all times; while he endeavored to impress upon the lad's mind what a good thing it was to have a home; and how thankful he ought to be to have somebody to take care of him and look out for his interests. He never believed in praising anybody who was under his rule; it was apt to make them put on airs and forget their place.

If Charlie forgot any of his prescribed duties, or failed to perform any of the tasks set him, he was told that it was strange he could be so ungrateful after *all* that had been done for him; the *all* was covered in Charlie's mind by sufficient of the plainest kind of food. The chance to study which had been bargained for, was confined to rainy days when nothing else could be done, and the daughter of the house happened to be in the mood to lend books, or give him help, which was not often; for this young lady did not see any need of the *hired* boy being treated like one of the family; and never permitted him to enter the parlor; that place was reserved for the use of herself and her visit-

ors; and her books were all too nice to be taken to the kitchen, or fingered by a dirty, careless boy. And so the boy who might have added much to the pleasure of an evening, when she entertained her friends with music from the piano, by his sweet voice, was early taught that his place was in the kitchen when not at work.

Mrs. Norton was a kind-hearted woman, and if she had been left to herself, would have tried to make the boy's life pleasant; but her daughter and husband ruled the house, and she was accustomed to always defer to their wishes.

John Norton was in very good circumstances, and had never denied his only daughter anything she asked for. He was proud of her accomplishments, and liked to speak of "my daughter's music lessons," and tell of the very large sum it cost for the years she went to the academy; but his early training had made him very penurious, and he never liked to incur any expense unless he could make a great show, or was certain of sure gains to follow.

This man was a farmer in a small way, and kept

the village post-office, together with a small store, which contained a stock of miner's supplies. He had been reared in the back woods of Maine, and in *his* boyhood days there were very few school advantages, and he belonged to that class of people who seem to begrudge the rising generation all the advantages which they possess above those who were children fifty years ago.

He had a vivid recollection of the time, when his own wardrobe consisted of one new suit of home-spun clothes for Sunday wear and visiting; and a suit of the same material well covered with buck-skin patches for everyday; while the one pair of heavy shoes per year were only worn when absolutely necessary. These facts were always served up for Charlie's benefit whenever he was found with a book in hand or chanced to forget any appointed task.

He was not a bad man; indeed he thought himself a very good man; he went regularly to church, asked a blessing at the table, and boasted that he owed no man a dollar. His present comfortable situation had been obtained by dint of hard

labor, small savings, and rigid economy in former days. And he thought he was fulfilling the terms of the bargain William Gordon had made for our hero, in the fullest sense of the word.

The boy ate at the same table with him except when his wife had company; and then, although he knew that Charlie always had to wait, he never thought to inquire whether any cake or preserve was saved for him or not; but the young lady daughter did not think it at all necessary to serve cake to a hired chore boy, so he seldom obtained any sweetmeats; but his master laid aside his stipulated wages with great regularity; and told Charlie that he would take care of the money, and when he wanted clothes, he would get them for him.

When Charlie found that he could not obtain books in the house which was called his home, he sought for them among the neighboring families, and found them quite willing to lend him all he wanted; but his master thought it very foolish to waste so much time with books; he was accustomed to remark, "I never had but fifty-two days schooling in all my life, and I always got along well

enough." If he saw Charlie with a book in his hand, it seemed to arouse a desire to find him some other employment; and the boy came to expect if his master found him reading, that he would think of beans that were to be shelled, or that the store wanted sweeping, or of some new goods that he had forgot to mark; for there was never a moment in that house when some work could not be found; and at last Charlie began to ask himself, if there was any need of his enduring this kind of treatment.

William Gordon had said to him when he bade him good bye, "Stick to one place as long as you can, Charlie, 'a rolling stone gathers no moss,' and if you are not quite suited, don't leave a *poor home* until you are sure of a better one." And this advice kept the boy patient nearly a year in the home that was so full of small thorns. But when John Norton refused him a lamp to go to bed with, because he found that the boy often read for hours in his lonely chamber, he began to think that he had been patient long enough.

A party of miners coming to the store to obtain

supplies, brought to Charlie's mind a prospect of relief from the unpleasantness of his situation.

He found from their conversation that they were bound for some "new diggins" of which they had lately heard; and Charlie made up his mind to go with them. He found no trouble in obtaining an outfit, for he had never spent any of his wages; and although his master was unwilling to have him leave, and told him he would surely rue the day that he had left so good a home, when he found the boy was determined to go, he paid him the full amount due him, in goods from his stock in trade.

From the fund left him by his friend, Mr. Gordon, he was able to purchase a mule and still have a little cash left for future use.

On the day appointed, Charlie, with the party of miners started for the new discoveries, near the Stanislaus; and this trip led them through a new part of the state, and along the banks of its winding rivers, with majestic scenery on every hand; through deep canons, under cliffs of perpendicular rocks three thousand feet in height, and among the

tall redwood trees, whose immense height and size have since become the wonder of the world. With these scenes now and then mingled a fine stream of water whose volume, increased by melting snow, formed cataracts and tiny waterfalls, each a panorama of itself. Camp life amid such scenes was very inviting; and our party consisting of four young men besides Charlie, who was very tall for a boy of fourteen, made a very happy group around the camp fire.

Charlie had become quite an expert as camp cook during the two years that he had spent with his friend William Gordon among the mines, but I cannot say that he had reached the ability in the art of making slap-jacks which miners usually claim; for they often say that unless the cook can successfully toss his slap-jacks in the air and catch them again, nicely turned and right side up, he should lay no claim to being a camp cook. Some even go so far as to claim the ability to send the slap-jack up the chimney and be ready on the outside to catch the same, nicely turned, done brown, and ready to be served with bacon, beans, coffee, etc.

While on their way to the diggings our party found plenty of game; and the streams afforded trout, deer supplied them with venison, and quail on toast or "torteias" was common.

A short distance from the route they were pursuing, the wonderful Natural Bridges of California were to be found, and our travelers paused and turned aside in their journey to visit this great curiosity.

These bridges, of which there were two, were reached by passing down a very steep path or trail, and all at once they were in sight of, and actually under the bridge, which hangs between the high ridges of mountains, like a huge umbrella without any handle. The upper arch is forty feet high in the centre and two hundred and seventy-five feet from the entrance to the end. These formations are of cream colored rock, and slope towards the ends or entrance. They have the appearance of being formed by water running from limestone ledges, so much impregnated with lime, as to form granulated and solid masses of rock, in the same slow manner in which the water forms crustings on the inner surface of our teakettles.

From underneath the arch, stalactites or slender spiral points of rock, hang in clusters looking very much like icicles, only they are cream color tinged with green. These are formed by water dripping from above, and are met in places by stalagmites from the bottom of the bridge, or rocky floor through which a torrent of water roars, forming a grand spectacle, and impressing our hero with the idea that he must be dreaming of some wild, unreal pleasure excursion, from which he will sometimes awake to the cold realities of life.

After leaving this grand and beautiful scene, and passing through the grove of mammoth trees, now known as the Calaveras Group, where several prostrate trunks were seen that were much larger than the tallest trees then standing,—one of them measuring over four hundred feet in length, and many of the standing trees measuring from ten to eighteen feet in diameter—the miners found themselves nearing their place of destination.

They proposed to engage in river mining; and they located their camp, and built their sluices near the banks of the Stanislaus.

The sluices were made by nailing three boards, twelve inches wide and twelve or fourteen feet long, together, forming a bottom and two sides; these boxes or troughs were fitted together, by placing the ends into each other, thus forming a long line; in the bottom was placed strips of inch square lumber crosswise, at short distances from each other; these were called riffles, and were intended to catch and retain the gold. These sluices were placed where a stream of water could pass through them, and the miners by their side shoveled dirt into them all day, and at night collected the sediment that had accumulated during the day, and washed it out in their pans, thus obtaining all the gold caught in the riffles. Sometimes quicksilver was dropped into the sluice boxes to catch, and cause the fine gold to settle, thus saving it all.

Charlie was now a miner like the rest, and depended solely on his own efforts for support; but he had high hopes, and sturdy arms. The scenes in which his boyhood had been spent, had given him robust health, and made of the slender, deli-

cate boy, a strong-limbed youth; while living almost wholly among resolute men, who were ready to dare any dangers to achieve the objects in view, had cultivated a strong self-reliant character seldom found in one so young. Each day found him by the side of his sluice shoveling the dirt and gravel with as much vigor as the rest, and fortune seemed to favor his efforts.

He still looked forward to a time when he should be rich enough to return to the States and find his mother. While living with John Norton, he had at one time mailed a letter to his foster-brother, but this had came back to him, from the dead-letter office; and a letter of inquiries directed to the postmaster of the only town in Massachusetts of which he could remember the name, brought the response that no such person lived there. Thus all hope for the future rested in the prospect of obtaining wealth enough to go East and look for her. The thought that she might be dead never troubled him. To the imagination of youth all things wished for are possible, and when very weary with his hard toil, this thought of finding

his mother, which had always been his day dream, cheered him.

About a mile and a half from their camp, three men were mining in a gulch, and living near their mines. These men were almost entirely shut out from the world by the high mountains, and no traveled road or trail passed near their cabin, as they called the rude dwelling they had built for a shelter. They called their place Nugget Gulch; for several gold nuggets had been found there. These men sometimes visited the camp by the river, and their visits were returned by Charlie and his mates. But although these persons often met, they never sought to learn each others past history. Their conversation was chiefly about the "*big find*" of yesterday, or mournful comments on the days which brought them nothing. And sometimes the miners in the Gulch had tales to tell of encounters with grizzly bears, or panthers. Thus, although Charlie had lived at the camp by the river a year, he had never spoken of his past life, only as it was connected with mining.

These diggings did not prove very rich, only

yielding a comfortable support, and one by one the members of the party drifted away to other camps and new diggings, until Charley was left entirely alone; he then sought and obtained leave to make his home with the miners at Nugget Gulch.

The fact of a boy of fifteen being alone in the mines without any protector, aroused the curiosity of the men from whom he had sought shelter; while his companions had remained, they had supposed that he was in some way under their protection; but the young men themselves, knowing that he had left an unpleasant home when he joined them, asked no questions. When questioned by these men about his past life, a natural delicacy had kept him from speaking about any trouble between his parents; so he began his story with the time when he had found the emigrant train with his uncle.

At this time he had been known as Charley Weston; and the boy had almost forgotten that he had any right to any other name. The miners with whom he had crossed the plains had only known him by this name; and when later years

had brought added knowledge, and a reference to the trapper's deed had shown him that his true name was Burton, he had not thought it of any consequence; so he still answered to the name of Weston in his new home.

One of the miners seemed to feel a great interest in Charlie; he was known among his mates as Short John or Dumpy, for he was below medium height; and as he was never called anything else, Charlie had been at Nugget Gulch a whole year before he learned that he had any other name. This man was about thirty years of age, and had met his two companions, who were known as Father Thomas and Sam Johnson, at a mining camp near the river. Here the three men had joined their fortunes, and built the hut in the Gulch for a shelter.

These men were very rough in their manners, and inclined to make sport of what they termed Charlie's "fine gentleman airs," but they were kind to him after a fashion, and he was grateful, and bore their rough jests with patience. He was able to make himself quite useful to them by

writing their letters home, and cheered the solitude of the cabin by sweet songs and amusing stories drawn from emigrant life.

It chanced one day that Short John, and Sam Johnson who always carried a bowie-knife and brace of pistols in his belt, went to the nearest town to obtain supplies for the camp. After they returned, a dispute arose between them, about the amount of money paid out, and Johnson, who had been drinking, grew very violent and flourished his bowie-knife in a dangerous manner.

Father Thomas had received his cognomen, because he was the oldest member of the party, being twenty years older than Johnson, who was forty, and he was their acknowledged leader. Fearing that the quarrel would result in blows, he stepped between the disputants and ordered them to be quiet; they obeyed, for they accepted his commands as law.

Having produced order, the old man called upon Charlie to reckon up the articles purchased and see who was right; whereupon Short John pulled a paper from his pocket, saying that he always took

a bill of the goods when he bought for "partners." Charlie took the bill, and read, "John Burton bought of——" With an exclamation of surprise he let the paper fall to the floor.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Father Thomas.

"John Burton was the name of my foster brother, who used to live in Troy with grandmama."

"And I was brought up with my grandmother in Troy," said Short John.

"Here's a family history to be raked up, said Father Thomas. I always thought them two looked alike."

The dispute about money was forgotten in this new excitement; and the other two men listened with interest while John and Charlie compared notes of the past.

When John told of the uncle who had been so kind to him, and afterwards filled a drunkard's grave, being found drowned in the river, which it was supposed he had fallen into while drunk—the death-bed scene in the forest cabin came back to

Charlie's mind like a long forgotten dream, and he remembered that the dying man had told of reading his own death in the paper, and resolving that if the folks at home thought him dead, he would never undeceive them, until he could go back a man they would be proud to know. John's eyes were blurred with tears when Charlie told of the lonely death-bed, and the grave under the big cottonwood.

When both Rexford and John spoke of the earnest search that had been made for the missing boy, Charlie recalled the time when he had started for the East, and the hurried wandering journey had ended at the trapper's cabin; and both men saw a connection between the letter he spoke of as having been sent by Weston to his mother, and the one which sent Mary Burton's agents into the wilds of Michigan to look for the lost boy.

Sam Johnson declared the story was as good as a novel, and proposed "to treat all round," in honor of Charlie's new found relatives; an offer which was promptly declined, for Johnson was the only one in the cabin who ever tasted intoxicating

beverages. The drunken man had regained his good humor; and instead of being angry when his treat was declined, he poured out a glass of brandy and "drank the health of the lady who was going to find her baby," and then betook himself to bed to sleep off his drunken frolic.

Charlie and his other friends sat up late that night to talk over the strange events which had just come to their knowledge; and the young man expressed himself very anxious to see his mother at the earliest possible moment.

"I remember now," said Father Thomas (his proper name was Rexford), "coming on the same steamer with your mother. Poor woman! Her friends thought she was in consumption. Your sure she's livin', John?"

"Yes, she was six months ago; for I saw a friend right from the same neighborhood, and he told me about her."

A trip to San Francisco and back would take some weeks, but the sympathy of Thomas Rexford was aroused, and he suddenly resolved to start with Charlie the next day, and take his bag of

gold, the savings of many years, and send the proceeds home to be invested in land which was selling at a low figure in his native town.

This plan agreed upon, Charlie and his two friends retired to rest.

The next morning Charlie and the old man strapped their gold upon their persons, and each, mounted upon a good mule, set out on their journey. It was the intention of both to return again to the Gulch, and their companions wished them a happy journey.

CHAPTER IX.

"I wonder that some mothers ever fret
At little children clinging to their gown;
Or that the footprints when the days are wet,
Are ever black enough to make them frown.
If I could find a little muddy boot,
Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber floor—
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
And hear it patter in my house once more,
If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky,
There is no woman in God's world could say
She was more blissfully content than I."

—SELECTED.

MARY BURTON had been an inmate of her brother's family for ten years—weary years they had been to her—filled with patient sorrow and waiting; bitter years, picturing the lost one, the victim of cold and hunger, of harsh treatment, of manifold temptations; and then came those years of more subdued sorrow, when her heart had learned to wait, doing the will

of the Master, accepting with calm patience what each day brought—as from the hand of the Lord.

Changeful years they had been, for death had entered the family and taken a loved one, leaving the bereaved husband and daughter to need her consolation and care. Now we find her in her brother's home acting as housekeeper; for he is a widower, and his position as a prominent physician makes her cares and duties numerous.

"I feel unusually light-hearted this morning," she said to her sympathizing brother.

"Perhaps you will hear some good news soon."

"I am afraid this relief to my usually oppressed heart is but the precursor of some new disappointment."

"Please do not always look for disappointments, auntie," said the sweet voice of the doctor's daughter. "The mail from the East is due this morning, perhaps you may hear some good news; some trace may have been found of Charlie."

"Yes, this is the day for overland mail, and the steamer is overdue three days, but I seldom receive letters, you know."

There is an old proverb, "Coming events cast their shadows before." Why may we not change the idea a little, and repeat, cast their sunlight before them. Certainly there is a powerful magnetism that attracts heart to heart; and the eagerness that glowed in the heart of that long separated son, now speeding over the road to the city in the mail stage, was reflected like sunlight in the heart of the mother, as she went about her daily duties humming an old tune.

The welcome mail would soon arrive. What an eager throng was already waiting at the post-office, just down the street. Many would go away with joyful faces, and others with disappointed looks and sad hearts, missing the letters that never came. "Hark! there comes the stage," was heard in nearly every house; for the day on which the overland mail was due, was an event of great importance.

"Oh, auntie, the stage is stopping here!" exclaimed Alice Rossimere. "Somebody is getting out!"

It was Thomas Rexford who left the stage first,

and Mary Burton recognized the kindly face of the man who had shown her so many kindnesses on board the steamer when her heart was so nearly crushed by her recent *loss;* but a young man was descending now, and the mother's heart gave a quick throb; for there was the same blue eyes, and light wavy hair of the boy she had not seen in nearly eleven years. Her heart could not deceive her, and in a moment she had flown to the door, and mother and child were folded in a loving embrace. Tears followed freely, but they were tears of joy—and the first meeting over, the friendly miner was greeted with a hearty welcome and overwhelmed with thanks.

After an hour had passed, Dr. Rossimere returned from his round of morning calls, and gave to the nephew he had never seen before a fond embrace, and to the elderly gentleman who had assisted at the reunion of mother and son a heartfelt welcome.

A happy party were soon seated at the nconday meal; but the joy and excitement in the hearts of two, at least, did not leave them much appetite for

dinner. The story of the meeting in the mines, by the foster brothers, was discussed; the thrill of joy that pervaded the mother's heart in the morning, was referred to, and then Mr. Rexford began to talk of returning to the mines, and asked Charlie if he was going back with him.

It was the doctor who answered the question. No! Mary cannot spare her boy, she has been deprived of him so long."

"I'm a man now," said Charlie, "and I must make a home for my mother. She has been dependent upon the bounty of others long enough."

"We will admit, Charlie, that you are a man in stature, and a well-proportioned one," said the doctor, gazing with pride on his nephew, who was six feet in height, and although of slender build, possessed strong, well knit limbs, "but a boy of sixteen has much to learn before he will be capable of making a home for his mother; besides, I am not ready to spare my housekeeper yet."

The question of Charlie's returning to the mines was at once settled by the doctor promising to find him some employment in the city; and the kind

friend who had accompanied him was pressed to remain for a long visit. He decided to accept the hospitality offered him for three days, after which, he said he must return to the gulch, for his two friends there would begin to be anxious at his long absence. The three days were spent by Mary Burton and her niece in showing their visitors the principal objects of interest in the city, and then Mr. Rexford bade them farewell, promising to sometime visit them again, and returned to the mines, well pleased with his errand, and carrying with him pleasant recollections of one face he had left behind.

After their visitor had gone, the family inquired more particularly into the past life of their long lost relative; and Mary Burton wept over the death-bed scene in the forest cabin; forgiving in her heart the wretched man who had caused her so much sorrow, when she heard from the lips of her son of his repentance and lonely death. When Charlie told of the wild journey, which had ended at the trapper's cabin, and of the months spent with the Mormon emigrants, the doctor and his

sister both thought of the gay and dashing Arthur Weston, and felt sure that it was the same man who was sleeping in the lonely grave by the mountain roadside.

When the story was all told, the mother clasped her boy in her arms, and sent up a silent prayer of thanksgiving, that her child had been kept in safety amid all the perils of his surroundings. The long weary years of praying and waiting had passed; the full fruition of her hopes had come—her boy was restored to her again; not as he might have come, soiled and tarnished by his contact with the world, but a picture of manly beauty, with a heart as pure and unsullied as it was the day he left her side; and she realized at this moment the full force of this great blessing.

When the mother told of the weary years of waiting, and the bitter tears she had shed as she thought of what might be his fate, Charlie kissed her, and told her he would make her last days her best days.

"How very tall you are, for a boy of sixteen," said his mother one day when they were alone together.

"I have lived among tall trees and tall mountains," he said, laughing; and then more soberly, "Uncle William calls me a boy, but he does not know that I have felt a man's responsibility for the last three years."

The beautiful month of May had come with its buds and flowers; and the orchard near the house was white with apple-blossoms just ready to shed their bloom in a white carpet on the ground.

Three weeks had gone by since Charlie's return, and they had been so full of pleasure that they passed away very swiftly; but the young man was growing uneasy; he had compared his mother's pale, wan face with the picture taken twelve years ago, and had noticed that the bloom had faded from her cheek, and he was anxious to be at work, earning for her that home which had now become the goal of his ambition.

The time he had spent in William Gordon's store and his year with John Norton had fitted him for a clerk's position. Helped by his uncle's influence, he found no difficulty in obtaining a clerkship, which he retained for two years, saving quite

a sum each year. After this time an opportunity offered to engage in a business that brought him a large sum of money in a short time. This business was traveling to sell musical instruments on commission; his former wandering life had given him considerable knowledge of the country, and a naturally pleasing address and ready fund of anecdote gained him admission where others would not have been received. He gave every energy to this business, and found it very profitable.

After he had spent two years as a traveling agent, he was able to furnish a humble home for his mother. He was very glad to be able to do this, for his uncle had taken another wife, and now that her brother no longer needed her services, she did not wish to remain a burden upon his charity.

What a satisfaction it is to have a home of your own, be it ever so humble—a place where you can do as you like, without fearing that some one will think you are taking liberties—where you know you are always welcome, and no one has a right to intrude upon you.

To the mother who had been deprived of a home

of her own for fifteen years, this change was very grateful; to the young man who had never felt the blessing of a home since he could remember, a little cottage furnished and supported by himself seemed a paradise of itself. When returning from his toil, the flutter of the white curtain through the partly open blind, and the perfume of the climbing rose by the door, brought to his mind a sense of possession that was very sweet.

One evening while Charlie was chatting with his mother, something led them to refer to the past, and the conversation drifted back to the winter in the trapper's cabin; this brought the deed to Charlie's mind. Now he had never mentioned this deed to any one since William Gordon returned to the States. Shortly after his return from school, he had mentioned the deed to his friend, and Mr. Gordon had then given it into his possession, with the remark that "he did not know as it was good for anything." He now mentioned it to his mother, and she, after examining the document, advised Charlie to write to the agency and see if he could learn anything about the trapper, and this he did at once.

About this time our hero made the acquaintance of a young lady toward whom he felt very much attracted. For four years the love of a mother had seemed all that was necessary to his happiness; but the society of the opposite sex had great attractions for him, and he soon overcame all the awkwardness which his early training caused him to feel in polite society, while his sweet voice, genial disposition, and varied travels, made him a welcome guest at many firesides.

During his travels as a salesman he had met this lady, whom he thought was the one, of all others, necessary to his happiness. She possessed great beauty and intelligence, and the attraction between them was mutual. Three months acquaintance served to convince this pair that they were intended for each other; and the end of it all was, a quiet wedding one bright June morning in a small frame house in the valley of the Sacramento. After two or three weeks spent in farewell visits to the companions of her girlhood, Charlie brought his wife to San Francisco, and left her with his mother at the cottage on the hill, which overlooked the bay,

while he still pursued his vocation of traveling agent.

Charlie's mother was very much pleased with his choice, and it was very pleasant to her to have the companionship of a young girl to cheer the hours of loneliness when his business called him so much from home. It seemed hard for this mother to be separated from her son at all, but he seldom remained away long at a time, and always left an address at which she could write to him. His own letters to her were very frequent, and now the presence of his bright-eyed wife made her home very attractive.

Charlie was a great lover of home, and the wandering life he had been forced to lead only served to make it dearer to him; and now that he had taken a wife, he began to think seriously of seeking some other employment. It is true, the business in which he was engaged, furnished them with a comfortable support, but it had this drawback, that it took him so much from home.

About three weeks after his marriage he received an answer to the letter he had sent to the agency,

where he had first met the trapper. He had received no intelligence from this part of the country since that day on which he had bid the trapper and his pet pigeon good bye when he had expected to start for school at Des Moines.

His letter now told him that his kind friend was dead; that he had been killed by a falling tree; and had perished with no one near him, but the dog which had been his companion for many years. The friendly Indians, he had often fed, had found his body, with the dog watching beside it, and buried it. This was sad news to our hero; and he recalled, with moistened eyes, the many little toys his kind friend had made for him; and how he had striven in every manner to make that lonely cabin pleasant.

His letter also stated that there was a deed on record giving the farm in Iowa to Charles R. Burton; that this person had been advertised for, and the property placed in the hands of an agent until an owner could be found. The farm had been divided into town lots, and the owner not appearing, the trapper's mother after being convinced

that her son was dead, had signed a writing consenting to the sale of some of these lots.

Charlie sent a letter to the county recorder and obtained the address of the agent holding possession of the property. It took several months to get at all of the facts of the case; but the final result was very pleasing. The property was his, without doubt, after the death of the old lady, who was represented as very feeble, and very anxious to meet the young man, in whom her son had taken such an interest. The trapper had written to his mother, when he had failed to hear anything from Weston, and had told her of the little boy to whom he had given the farm, after they had got through with it. The agent advised that Mr. Burton should come at once to Des Moines and prove his right.

This piece of information came in good time. The little cottage on the hill was to be sold, and Charlie was expecting to be obliged to leave this home that had been so pleasant to him. With the prospect of a large fortune soon coming into his possession, our hero found no trouble in hiring money enough to purchase the cottage in which

they lived. Desiring a rest, and having enough money in the bank to pay the expenses of a trip to Des Moines, he decided to take his wife and go East. The completion of the Pacific Railroad had made such a journey nothing but a pleasure excursion, and the appearance of John Burton at the cottage, just at this time, removed the last obstacle in the way of the journey, that was—somebody to stay with his mother.

Charlie had held a correspondence with his old friends in the mines, and had often urged them to make him a visit; but the time for visiting had not come for either of them. Now the camp in the Gulch had been broken up; Sam Johnson had been killed in a drunken fight with another miner; and Thomas Rexford and John had made arrangements to commence the broker's business in San Francisco. Mr. Rexford had invested his bag of gold in bank stock in San Francisco, instead of sending it to the States as he had at first intended, and both he and John came to board with Charlie's mother.

They had celebrated our hero's twenty-first birth-

day, soon after John's arrival, and on the first day of the New Year, Charles R. Burton and wife took tickets in the palace car for Omaha.

How different was this journey from the one he had made thirteen years before, as seen from the window of the palace car; not only that everything was dressed in its winter robes, but the hand of time had wrought many changes. The same tall trees and mountains were there; the same wonderful rocks, deep canons, and dark ravines; but the former desolate region was enlivened by houses, shops, hotels, and the busy hum of life where only nature had been visible before; and where he had then made but twenty miles a day they passed over in an hour—each hour presenting some new feature; now dashing through a tunnel, then a snow shed, up the steep mountain road, and again into a valley, until the level plains were reached.

Charlie and his wife had risen early on the morning that they crossed the plains, and were rewarded by seeing the sun rise in majestic glory from behind the mountains just visible in the dim distance;

while the frightened buffalo and deer scampered away over the plains now white with snow.

Along the waste country lying between the Wasatch Range and the Rocky Mountains, they saw many beautiful, bright pink flowers growing in and through the snow, which were called snow flowers, and were very curious. They were a species of fungie, resembling somewhat the Indian pipes or convulsion weed which we find in swamps in the Eastern States during the spring.

Arriving at Des Moines, he soon found the agent, and was received with all the deference due to the handsome property he was expected to inherit; from this person he learned the whereabouts of the trapper's mother.

The agent, together with Charlie and his wife, paid a visit to the old lady to arrange the law matters between them, for she was anxious to give up the property to her son's protogee, retaining for herself only a yearly income sufficient for her support.

She gave the young man and his beautiful wife a kindly welcome; and inquired the name of his

parents, and his home in the East, tracing his pedigree away back to his great grandfather, on his father's side, then embracing him with tears of joy she exclaimed, "'Tis as I thought, you are the child of my youngest brother."

Charlie had heard his Aunt Jane mentioned by his mother, but she had not been heard from for years, and was supposed to be dead. She told her listeners that she had gone West with some distant relatives, at the age of fifteen. The family had located themselves in Iowa, and built a cabin upon a tract of government land. When she was about seventeen, the house had been plundered and burned by the Indians. Her cousin and his son had fallen in the defence of their home, and his wife, who had been wounded, was dispatched by the tomahawk and thrown into the flames, while she had been carried away captive. She had been rescued by a trapper, who asked her to become his wife. They were married, and he had taken up the farm and built a sod-house upon it, and there they had dwelt happily together.

They had been blest with two children, a girl

and boy. Her daughter and husband had been removed by death before her son had reached his twelfth year; but her son had always been good to her, and provided her with a comfortable home until that *false-hearted girl* had turned his head. He had taken after his father for hunting; and although he never came home, or wrote to her much, she did not blame him; he knew she had all she wanted. She had written once to her friends in the East, but not receiving any reply, she thought they had forgotten her.

The old lady's health was rapidly failing, and she begged her new found relatives to remain with her to the last. This they did, her death occurring in three weeks after their arrival.

After the funeral, the property, which was quite valuable, was all disposed of, making the fortunate owner worth forty thousand dollars, after all expenses were paid.

This sum he placed on deposit with a reliable banking house, and started with his wife to visit the home of his boyhood. He soon found the city in which he was born, and the one from which he

had been stolen. Here he was able to point out to Minnie, his wife, the identical schoolhouse from which he had been abducted, the locality having been given him by his mother.

There was no one in either place with whom he was acquainted, for his aunt and grandmother were both dead; and after looking at the few houses, which his mother's description had localized to him, and visiting the objects of interest to strangers, which both cities contained, they took a state room on one of the sound steamers for New York and from thence they traveled in the palace car to San Francisco, stopping by the way to visit the principal cities, that Charlie might decide where to locate his future home.

In Chicago he met several gentlemen who were interested in mining, and were about forming a new company. Charlie became one of the company, and was elected as its agent for the Golden State. The business arrangements all being completed, Charlie and his wife departed for their Western home.

"What an eventful life I have had," said Char-

lie, turning from the car window, to address his wife.

"Yes," replied she. "It seems more like a story than reality."

"I wonder how much more of tumult and change I shall have to pass through," said he, gazing intently at the distant hills, now bathed in the slanting rays of the setting sun.

"Oh! we will hope for a brilliant life and happy days. We are both young and may have a long life before us; we certainly have a very fair prospect."

Minnie Burton had a hopeful nature, and always looked on the bright side of things.

"When I get home I shall have to go to mining; how will you like to exchange city life for the rough mining districts, and no society to speak of?"

"I think it will be splendid! I always loved rough scenery, and as for society, I shall have you my dear, and I will ornament our home with the curious things which are always so plenty in mining regions."

"What a surprise for mother we shall have,

when we tell her about Aunt Jane. I have not written about this, there was so much to tell—and that poor fellow who did so much for me, was my own cousin."

"See that steamer, Charlie." Minnie was pointing down the Mississippi, for the train was nearing the river, and steamers were passing in both directions. The one that attracted Minnie's attention was just coming towards the great bridge that spans the river, and would have to pass under the bridge, while the cars were going over it. Minnie felt some curiosity to know how the steamer could pass the bridge without its being withdrawn; and while her husband was explaining that the bridge was built high enough not to interfere with the steamer, the handsome boat passed up the river directly under the car window, making a very fine picture.

They were soon passing over the same streams, past the same landmarks, and close to the road that he had traveled over with the Mormon emigrants. A few days more and they were at the little cottage on the hill, where they were received with a glad welcome from the waiting mother.

Not many days after their return they bade John Burton good-bye on the deck of the mail steamer, wishing him good luck, for he had decided to return to the States.

In a week there came another parting, for Mr. Burton and his wife were obliged to leave for the distant mountain region, in the northern part of the State; but before they went, they assisted at the private wedding of Mary Burton and Thomas Rexford; and Charlie made the happy pair a present of the cottage on the hill.

CHAPTER X.

"Oh, there is a solemn peace, and strength sublime,
And holy fortitude, and deep, sweet rest
In all our thoughts and visions of that clime
Where dwell the spirits of the loved and blest.
In every line of gladsome beauty drest,
They come across our hearts like gleams of light,
Fraught with a mission, at God's high behest—
A mission to relieve our mental sight
By glimpses of a life where all is calm and bright."

—Flower Vase.

THE marriage of Charlie's mother came about very suddenly to all concerned; but the bridegroom urged that as they had known each other for many years, and were both advanced in life, there was no need of a long courtship; and as Charlie and his wife were both intending to leave her so soon, the bride was more willing to consent.

The next morning after the wedding, Charlie Burton and wife started for the mines, for which he was to act as superintendent and business agent.

They were situated on the banks of the Yuba River, and the journey, which was partly by rail and partly by stage, occupied five days. A small house was obtained about three miles from the mines, and furnished plainly, and this place, which was to be their home, Minnie at once set herself at work to render cheerful in every possible manner. The walls, which were of matched boards, and were not papered, she hung with pictures which they had brought from the city. The windows were curtained with plain white muslin, trimmed with lace knit by her own fair fingers, while the chintz-covered lounge and cushioned rocker were made more tasty by the addition of the embroidered tidies which had been the wedding gifts of her young lady friends. Three boards, of graduated length, finished on the edge by strips of leather, making an indented or scalloped edge, stained black and varnished, made a very pretty bookshelf, when held in place by strong cords.

They had reached their stopping-place near the last of February, and the rainy season, which had just set in, kept Minnie nearly all the time within

doors, and she spent her lonely hours in adding to the beauty of their home.

The kind of mining which this company engaged in, was called placer mining by hydraulic force. This is considered the most thorough system of placer mining, for large quantities of earth are washed down in a short space of time by the force of a very heavy pressure of water. Streams of great volume are led into ditches and flumes, from great distances and high altitudes, to a large reservoir, or other confining points; and from here they are led through large pipes, down mountain sides, up over steep hills, finally to the distributing points, where the pent up volume is allowed to rush against the side of a hill, with great force, through a small pipe not more than ten inches in diameter, carrying everything before it. By this means whole hills are washed down, and the waste water, dirt, rocks and debris are at last lead through long flumes, subdivided, and continued in some cases many miles. The gold is caught on the bottom of the flume, which is composed of two bottoms, one made of five or six inch thick pieces

of timber, sawed from the ends of logs, and placed in the bottom of the flume for riffles, and to protect it against wear from the rocks that pass through it.

It took some time to get everything ready for operation; and then six months passed before a clean-up was thought desirable.

The clean-up took eight weeks, and was conducted in the following manner: All of the water, or nearly all, was shut off, and the log ends pulled out from the bottom of the flume, and the settled ore and sand were allowed to work gradually off by forcing a small stream of water through the flume, thus carrying to its mouth the bulk of the dirt, and at convenient distances wide water-platforms were placed with riffles or strips nailed closely together, being not over one and a half inches apart, and over this the sediment was finally washed, and thus the gold was saved. The result of nearly nine months' labor was a small dividend after paying all of the costs.

Our hero found his work very confining, but he received a good salary, and was intending to remain

another year at this place; but just at this time a great excitement was raised among the miners in the neighborhood by the silver discoveries of Nevada. There was a great rush for the new diggings, and for a while men could not be found to work the mines near the Yuba. Charlie at last became infected with the prevailing fever of emi gration, and soon gave up his situation and joined the crowd that were pushing into Washoe County.

A twenty-four hours' ride by railroad brought Mr. and Mrs. Burton to Virginia City. They found more men already gathered here than could find employment, and leasing a hotel they commenced the business of entertaining guests. This they found very successful, for Charlie proved a most agreeable host, and Minnie showed herself capable of ruling a large number of servants in the very best manner.

In this position Charlie was able to obtain a great deal of information about mining and stocks, and saw a great deal of life under different phases. Among his guests were some who had grown rich in a single week through successful speculation, and

others holding stocks, which had cost them thousands of dollars, but which now paid no dividend, were glad to barter them for the means to return to their friends in the East.

One poor fellow, who had left Charlie's house with full pockets and a light heart, returned at night asking to be trusted for his board until he could earn the means of paying it. He had met with sharpers, while waiting for the cars, who had found means to fleece him of his hard-earned gains.

In a short time, our hero had accumulated sufficient wealth to enable him to spend the rest of his life in comparative ease, and finding a favorable opportunity to sell his interest in the hotel, he did so, and with his wife returned to San Francisco.

He had invested his surplus funds with the most reliable bankers in Virginia City, and with the money obtained from the sale of the hotel business he built a handsome residence in San Francisco, where he and Minnie expected to spend long years in happiness.

This beautiful home was richly furnished. The library contained a full collection of books and

engravings, and upon the walls might be seen fine paintings by the best modern artists—charming views from the Yosemite valley, marine views from the Atlantic, and one sweet little basket of flowers, whose half-open buds seemed to fill the room with fragrance. Minnie's room was a perfect bower of elegance and comfort; from the deep bay window, with its fine lace curtains lined with red damask, the hanging-pot with trailing vines, and the silver cage in which her pet canary sang its sweetest songs, to the tables on which lay the many curiosities which she had gathered during the year which had been spent in the mining districts.

Adjoining this room, and connected with it by folding doors, was the spacious parlor, which was furnished with elegant taste. In one corner stood a large piano, upon which the husband often played while Minnie mingled her voice with his in the popular songs of the day; and here they gathered around them a large circle of admiring friends, for Charlie soon became quite a leader in the musical circles of the city.

One year of nearly perfect happiness had passed away since they entered their beautiful home. Then came the desire for change and variety which comes to all who have led busy lives and afterwards found time for rest and ease.

A party of their friends proposed a visit to the most noticeable curiosities of the Golden State, and Charlie, wishing to visit with his wife some of those scenes which he had looked upon in his boyhood, joined them. His mother still lived in the little cottage where he had first made a home for her, and at his request she closed her quiet home and took charge of his more pretentious dwelling. They spent more than six months wandering from one scene of beauty to another. Visiting the wonderful geysers by a stage ride, amid beautiful mountain scenery; here the ground literally boiled and bubbled under foot. There were devil's inkstands, caldrons, teakettles and whistles enough to satisfy any one in a short space of time. Then, by a stage drawn by six handsome horses, they ascended the long mountain roads, stopping to rest at a hotel upon the summit, where they witnessed the most

glorious sunset and sunrise scenes, and saw the great valleys, and the bay spread out before them.

They wandered through the Petrified Forest, visited the mud baths at Paso Robbs, and spent days and weeks at some of the most famous watering places in the State.

After crossing a succession of low hills covered with oaks our party ascended Mt. Diablo, where they remained all night and listened to the Indian legend which tells us that the country west of the Sierra Nevada Mountains was once covered with water, and the top of this mountain was then a little island. At this period, says the legend, the devil was there imprisoned by the waters for a long time, and therefore great prosperity and quiet resulted to mankind, which caused his name to be given to the mountain.

Seeking the Yosemite Valley they visited the Bridal Vail Falls, Cathedral Rocks and Three Brothers, pausing to rest at the various hotels and ranches where travelers were entertained.

Minnie enjoyed these travels, and was never

tired of listening to the falling water or gazing at the high towering cliffs.

They lingered in the valley to visit the South Dome, the Clouds' Rest and the foot of the Upper Yosemite, taking in the gradually growing wonders of the place. To Minnie, who had lived almost wholly in the city, the life at the ranche possessed almost as much interest as the beautiful scenes through which they were passing; the waving fields of grain, the orchards loaded with fruit, and the many vineyards where grape raising was brought to the highest perfection. They examined Bower's Cave, which they found to be an immense and picturesque crack or sink in the solid limestone of the mountain top, into which one might descend to an irregular bottom, about a hundred feet square, and in a corner of which is a small and beautiful lake. They then passed on to the groves of mammoth trees, where they saw one, the prostrate trunk of which was hollow for three hundred feet and large enough to admit two horsemen abreast, with an opening in its side large enough for one to pass out at a time. There were trees standing that

were said to be from two hundred and fifty to three hundred feet high.

They visited the Natural Bridges which Charlie had passed in his journey to the mining camp by the river. They found the place much improved, and a cabin at the entrance ready for the weary traveler to eat his luncheon and rest, while an entertaining old gentleman told them how he came to live here, all about the bridges and the formations, which he had watched, etc., and furnished torches with which to explore the spot.

Minnie and Charlie listened with awe and wonderment while the old man pointed out rocks on which he had watched the crystallizing substance forming for twenty years, and in this long time only a thin coating had been obtained, and Charlie found himself attempting to make a computation of how long these bridges might have been forming, from the substance formed each year, but he stopped appalled, for his calculations led him back over three million years. The old man told of a time when he had mined under these bridges and killed deer in these parts.

After feasting their eyes on these scenes as long as they wished they departed to visit other scenes, ending their travels at the beautiful Lake Tahoe, whose placid clear surface reflected the snow-capped summits of the surrounding mountains. Speckled trout gliding through the water were visible, and the pebbles on the slanting bottom near the shore could be plainly seen at the depth of one hundred and fifty feet.

Leaving this beautiful scene they were descending the steep mountain road in a stage coach when an accident occurred which came near proving fatal to some of the party on the spot, and did cause the death of others not long after. When near the foot of the mountain, just as they had reached a sharp turn in the road, the driver, who had been drinking, carelessly allowed his reins to drop from his hand, and they becoming entangled with the horses feet caused them to stumble, and the stage was overturned. All the passengers were badly bruised, and one man had his arm broken.

Fortunately the stage itself was not much injured,

and after a short delay the travelers were able to proceed on their journey. Half an hour later they reached the railroad station, where the man whose arm was broken found a surgeon to attend his wounded limb.

Charlie and his wife hurried forward with all possible speed towards San Francisco, for although Minnie made no complaint, it was evident that she was suffering from the effects of the accident.

The third day after their arrival at their own home, Minnie gave birth to a little blue-eyed daughter; but ere the sun had set, both the mother and child were sleeping the silent sleep of death, and in the grand parlor, where his treasures lay so white and still, the bereaved husband sat with bowed head. and heart full of anguish, questioning, "Why could not I have been taken also?"

In this hour of sorrow he felt that the world had nothing left for him. It mattered not that the summer scene was bright with beauty, that the birds in the branches of the maples sang their sweetest songs, that his note on his banker would be honored for a large amount, or that his mining

stocks were paying heavy dividends; all, all were as nothing compared with the treasures he had just been deprived of.

The funeral was over—the mother and child had both been laid in one grave, and the bereaved husband seemed buried in an apathy of grief; his old pursuits and pleasures were forgotten; everything reminded him of his lost wife; and the days and weeks were passed in silently pacing his chamber floor, or setting with his head buried in his hands, recalling every look and tone of the lost one. All the efforts of his mother and friends to arouse him from his grief were unavailing.

Nearly three months had passed away in this manner when one morning Mr. Rexford startled them all by reading from the "Chronicle" of the heavy failure of Floyd & Bullion, bankers, of Virginia City. Nearly all of Charlie's fortune was invested with this house, except what he had in mining stocks, and another reference to the morning paper told that these were decreasing in value rapidly.

Our hero was becoming a poor man again; but

our afflictions are sometimes blessings in disguise, and the loss of his wealth proved effectual in arousing Charlie from his lethargy of grief.

The gold and silver mines of Arizona and Mexico were at this time attracting considerable attention. Several attempts had been made to work the mines in Arizona previously, but the aggressions of the Apache Indians, and the lack of means of transportation, had caused most of the pioneers to become discouraged and abandon the enterprise; but at this time the power of the Apaches had been broken by General Crook and the Indians confined to their reservations, while the means of transportation were being constantly improved, so Charlie made up his mind to try in this new field to retrieve his shattered fortune.

His mother felt unwilling to have her son leave her for this new and somewhat dangerous region; but she knew that a life of activity and excitement would help to draw his mind from his great sorrow, so she did not try to dissuade him from his purpose.

The splendid mansion where he had been so

happy with his wife, and which now brought her so constantly before him, was sold to his step-father, and the few treasures that he wished to keep he left in his mother's care.

CHAPTER XI.

"Light came from darkness, gladness from despair,
As, when the sunlight fadeth from the earth,
Star after star comes out upon the sky,
And shining worlds, that had not been revealed
In day's full light, are then made manifest."

AS OUR hero took his place once more in the busy ranks of life, his sorrow assumed a more subdued tone, and he found a melancholy pleasure in imagining his lost wife ever near him, guiding his thoughts and prompting him to aspirations after a higher life.

Some lives seem full of hardship and trial, but each bitter lesson, if used aright, has its purpose in forming our character or stimulating us to higher achievements.

At the end of three weeks Charlie's preparations were all made, and he left the city by the Southern

Pacific route and crossed the Sandy Desert of California, where he saw multitudes of "desert palm," a green tree or plant growing from six to twenty-five feet high, with leaves green and thick, which are used for making paper. This tree is said to bear a seed similar to the fruit of the banana. There were many other species of trees and millions of cactus plants in tree and bush height, while for miles and miles it was sand, sand, sometimes drifted up in heaps, that looked like snow-banks glistening in the sun.

He reached Yuma after traveling over 750 miles by rail, and was not sorry to be obliged to wait two days for the steamer by which he was to continue his journey up through the grand canons of the Colorado.

At the hotel at which he stopped he became acquainted with a gentleman from the States, who was, like himself, seeking the mining regions, and the two soon became firm friends. Passing up the Colorado they were interested in the landscape on both sides of the river, and spent a great deal of their time in examining, through the captain's

field glasses, the curious cactus plants along the shore.

One large species, called the Suarra, was from twenty-five to fifty feet high, full of sharp, green thorns, and looked like a log set up endways in the ground. Some of these had a few branches extending from their ugly stalks, but they were nearly all single shafts.

The "Petayas," which were in bloom, had flowers of the most brilliant pink and magenta tints, and the captain told them that this species bears a very palatable fruit, which is pear-shaped, of a pink color, and considered a great delicacy by both the Indians and whites. Then there was the nigger-head, or water cactus, clinging to the side of the rocks, and resembling what the ladies in the Eastern States raise in their flower-pots and call Turk's Head, only much larger. These, they were told, contained from four to five quarts of watery fluid, which is often very acceptable to the thirsty traveler when no other water can be had.

The settlements along the river were mostly of Indians. They were very industrious, and cut and

sold wood to the steamer. The kind-hearted captain had taught them to use the axe, and bought their wood, taking ten cords at a time, at two dollars per cord. They also cultivated small farms, and their wheat, planted in hills, showed large heads and stalks, while in some places squashes and melons were large and plenty. The flora and fauna of this far-off country was a study in itself, and Charlie counted ten different varieties of cactus, every one covered with sharp, green thorns.

On reaching the height of steamboat navigation our hero and his friend struck out across the country on foot, the mining region which they were looking for being forty miles distant, and there was no public conveyance, the mails being carried to the interior on mule-back.

The Indians had so long held the prospector in a state of fear, and so many unfortunate individuals had lost their lives, that the very name of Apache had become a synonym of terror and cruelty, and our travelers received a great many hints that they were about to start on a very dangerous journey; but they were well armed, and Charlie

at least felt no fear, for he had all his life been accustomed to danger and privation.

They were not molested during their journey, and found considerable pleasure in examining the "*Auchoyas*," which were two distinct species of cactus common to the country, and in listening to the stories about the "Road-Runner," a bird about the size of the partridge, of a bluish-gray color with speckled wings, which were told them at the small adobe house where they stopped to obtain refreshment and rest.

It was said that these birds were determined and aggressive enemies of the rattlesnake, and that they would search diligently for the snake, and, when found, commence their attacks by flying or hopping around it until the enemy was rendered dizzy by their circling motions; then, by an instinct purely their own, they pounce down, striking the snake directly on the top of the head with their beak, killing him instantly. They also have another very novel plan, which is to collect the broken branches of the auchoya and lay them quietly around a sleeping snake in piles, and when

their enemy is fully surrounded they drop one of these needle-pointed thorn stems on their victim's head, rousing him from his slumbers with a terrible squirm, and by this device entangling him in a nest of the sharpest thorns. Hovering around their helpless victim they watch his struggles, and if the thorns do not finish him, a blow on the head from their long sharp bills completes the work. After the snake is killed the bird eats a portion of it and then strolls off at a fast walk to find some other pastime.

The country lying between the Colorado River and the Peacock Mountains is crossed by different ranges, and some of these are divided by broad valleys. The mineral-bearing mountains are the second range from the river, and are a branch from the Cordillers. Here our travelers found a small village in a very rough state of civilization. It contained a post-office, and one store, kept by a Jew, who retailed a few of the necessaries of life at enormous prices, and plenty of whisky. The residents were half-breeds, Indians, Chinese and a few Americans. But it furnished a stopping-place

at which our travelers could obtain coarse food and shelter at the rate of ten dollars per week, while they took a view of the country and found a place to locate themselves.

Charlie wrote often to his mother, and she felt pleased to read the cheery tone of his letters, for it told her that he had in a measure forgot his absorbing grief in the new scenes by which he was surrounded.

Having been acquainted with mining from his boyhood, he found no trouble in securing some very rich mines, but their distance from the lines of transportation made the cost of working them very heavy, and he missed the refinements of civilization to which he had for some time been accustomed, while the constant diet of bacon, beans and coffee, without any other vegetable or fruit, seemed almost like starvation to one who had enjoyed the many luxuries to be obtained in San Francisco.

The mines which Charlie and his friend had located were situated about eight miles beyond the village in which they found an abiding place, and a fine spring furnished them with water for all

needful purposes. The two men soon decided that it was useless to undertake to work the mines without machinery of their own, and they at last determined that Mr. Smithson (this was his friend's name) should go East and try to raise a company of capitalists to work this grand area of mineral wealth.

During the absence of Mr. Smithson, Charlie spent his time prospecting and laying plans for the future. He had removed to another town or village in order to be nearer the mines. This place he found had once been a thriving village, but owing to the high prices of provisions and the hardships of frontier life it was now almost deserted, but it still contained a post-office and a few very fine American families. In one corner there was a burial-place which contained fifteen graves, many of whom had died violent deaths from causes produced by the common practice of drinking whisky. Charlie soon became quite a favorite among the better class of people in the village, and quiltings, surprise parties, dinners and musical entertainments filled up the long winter evenings and helped

to make the time pass pleasantly while waiting for his partner's return.

In a few months Mr. Smithson returned, having been very successful in forming a company to work the mines, and bringing with him a large quantity of provisions, which helped to make their life more endurable.

Active preparations were now commenced; the site of a new city or town was laid out and a company of miners set to work to get out the mineral ready to be turned into bullion by the twenty stamp mill, which was expected to arrive in course of a few months.

A stone house was soon in process of construction to accommodate Charlie and his partner, with such of their company as they would have to find homes for.

* * * * * * * *

Situated in a canon among the high mountains, near which Charlie's company had located their new city, was a small collection of adobe houses styled a town, and this contained the post-office at which Charlie was wont to receive his letters. Among

the residents of this village was a man whom we will call Leechvein. This man was a fugitive from justice, and possessed a very sullen and morose disposition. He was both disliked and feared by the better class of the neighborhood, but he managed to draw around him the thieves and gamblers from quite a distance, and these "roughs" often helped him to do considerable mischief in return for the bad whisky with which he paid them.

In the same village lived Henry Hayback, whose only son had fallen a victim to Leechvein's wiles, and had been killed in a drunken fight many years before Charlie came to the neighborhood. This man had conceived a great liking for our hero, and he was noted for being a warm friend or bitter enemy.

One day, just as the slanting rays of the setting sun were reflected on the sloping sides of the rocky hills which surrounded the little town, Charlie reached the post-office, keenly anxious for letters from his mother and John. He had not been able to leave his work at an earlier hour, and he waited until it was quite dark, but no mail appeared; and

very much disappointed he was walking homeward at a brisk pace when just as he had arrived in front of Leechvein's dwelling the door opened and a stream of light penetrated the darkness while a voice exclaimed in oily tones:

"Stop a moment, Mr. Burton! Come in and take a drink; it will give you courage to travel this lonely mountain path."

"No, I thank you. I do not drink unless I need it, and then only water."

"Humph! so you feel above us miners, don't you? May be you will be compelled to do as I say about it!" advancing towards our hero with a scowling visage and a volley of oaths.

Charlie did not remain to hear any more, but kept on his way with hasty footsteps, for he did not wish to be drawn into a drunken row.

Just at this moment a voice sounded in the darkness—"Wait up a bit, Charlie." He halted, for he at once recognized the voice of his friend Palmback.

"What's the row down to old Leeches?" he inquired; whereupon Charlie told him the story of

his encounter with the proprietor of the whisky den.

"He is after you, my boy, and you had better not travel this path alone. I have been out looking for my horses in the ravine, and so am late myself; but there is no end to the mischief Leechvein and his 'Peons' (slaves) manage to accomplish after dark, and then it is all laid to the Indians."

They had reached Palmback's house and he had invited our hero to remain with him all night, which he did, and found him to be a most agreeable host.

In the morning Charlie spoke of returning to the post-office to see if the mail had arrived, and Palmback offered to accompany him, saying that he had business that way.

They reached the post-office, where Charlie found his long-delayed letters, and as they were returning Leechvein came out and followed them, shaking his fists and calling Charlie vile names. Palmback stepped to the rear and dealt the villain a stunning blow, which felled him to the ground, where they left him to reflect, as Palmback termed it.

The next day a fountain or spring, at which several neighboring families drew their water, was stopped up and claimed by Leechvein as his property. He said he should only permit his friends to draw water there.

Palmback was obliged to use this fountain, and he immediately tore down all the obstructions and obtained the water just as he had done before. To the surprise of all his enemy made no attempt to stop him, but Palmback felt sure he was studying up some new mischief, and he caused a close watch to be kept upon his enemy's movements.

An Indian whom he had in his employ soon informed him that an impromptu breastworks had been thrown up in a path which he often traversed in going to and from some "pockets" which he was working in the mountain. He said the work looked like Indians, and there were moccasin tracks around the spot, but he knew that Leechvein had been out prospecting and had worn moccasins.

The next night would be moonlight, and Palmback, who was of a venturesome disposition, resolved to try the nature of the mountain fort.

He took particular pains to have it known in the village that he was going over the mountains to return a borrowed horse. Just at nightfall he passed through the village mounted on one horse and leading another. Just before reaching the supposed ambuscade he arranged a straw effigy of himself, upon which he placed his own hat and coat, and this figure he securely tied to his well-broke horse, which he started at a slow walk past the fort, following himself at a safe distance.

The straw man sat erect and rode straight ahead. Bang, bang, went a double-barreled shot-gun, the bullets striking the effigy in the back and cutting the cords which held it in the saddle, while the startled horse sprang ahead, shaking the supposed corpse from its back, and with a snort of fear striking out for his home. Then from his concealment sprang the would-be murderer to gloat over his fallen foe, but at this moment, bang went three shots from the revolver of the straw man's spirit, and Leechvein was past doing any more injury.

Palmback straightened out his body and folded his hands across his breast, then he mounted his

remaining horse, which had been hitched in the ravine, and rode homeward, leaving his straw effigy to be seen by the first investigator.

The next day the missing whisky dealer could not be found, and Palmback notified the authorities that he had been fired upon from the cliff, and that he had shot the person who fired upon him. They repaired to the spot and there found Leechvein's body stiff and cold.

Palmback was acquitted on the plea of self-defense, and most of the neighbors were glad to be rid of one who had gained his living by preying upon others.

CHAPTER XII.

"Wait thou for Time, but to thy heart take Faith,
Soft beacon-light upon a stormy sea:
A mantle for the pure in heart, to pass
Through a dim world, untouched by living death,
A cheerful watcher through the spirit's night,
Soothing the grief from which she may not flee—
A herald of glad news—a seraph bright,
Pointing to sheltering havens yet to be."

—Miss Lucy Hooper.

A FEW weeks after the tragedy in the village, which had seemed to grow out of Charlie's refusal to drink, but which was really the end of years of vengeful feeling treasured in the heart of Palmback toward one who had been the means of causing the death of his only son, Charlie received the news that his stepfather had failed in business, and lost everything except the handsome residence where Charlie had lived so happily one short year; and this letter was soon followed by another, which told that the

old man had sunk under his misfortunes, the trouble having produced brain fever; and his mother was again a widow.

He immediately wrote to her, that when he could make a comfortable home for her in this new region he would come and bring her to it, and that meanwhile he would supply her with sufficient means to keep her comfortable. He had now an object to spur him on besides his mere personal interests. He was determined to fulfill the promise he had made his mother—"That her last days should be her best days."

The engrossing duties of his business soon drove away all sadness from his mind, and he became the life of the new circle of friends which he found himself amongst, while the brilliant prospects before him filled his heart with bright hopes for the future.

The Indians were quite plenty in the neighborhood, and they would often come around and beg for something to eat, for they are always hungry, and consider the "*Hickoes*" (white men) are sent on purpose to feed them. For a good dinner they

will gather wood, cut it, carry water, and run on errands. Begging is one of their long-established customs. They do not steal, if they think they are liable to be found out. In this virtue they resemble their white brethren. By the laws of their tribe, stealing is punished by death.

One of the villagers stole a buffalo-robe that an Indian had hid in a cave—cashed, he called it. On discovering the offender he immediately raised his rifle to shoot him, but was prevented and taken before the court. He testified that his people always killed a man that stole; and he could not be pacified until he was promised that the bad man should be banished.

They are very anxious to convince the Hickoes that they do not lie; and as a general thing they keep their promises.

In the new store-house were gathered Mr. Smithson and our hero, with four men who were employed at the mines, and an Indian whom Charlie had taken into his employment. This Indian he found very useful as an assistant in the kitchen, for he was for many months his own housekeeper.

and he also served him as a guide in the journeys through the country, which his business often caused him to make, sometimes on foot and sometimes in the four-mule team which his company had sent for his use.

This Indian was well versed in the legends and manners of the country, and often made their lonely rides or walks interesting by the tales of the adventures and sufferings of the early pioneers, and the habits and legends of his own tribe, which he told in short sentences and broken English

During the forty miles ride between the river shore and the new city the country was very dry and parched, and the tall mountains, which had stood in the burning sun for ages, presented a dark and forbidding aspect, calling forth tales of men who, in prospecting in this barren region, had been unable to find water, and had gone mad, and died in three days from thirst.

"But," the Indian added, "Great Spirit good. Tell his own children where to find water."

Then he pointed out the paths or trails which led to the natural tanks or reservoirs, which have

been formed in the solid rock by the wear of streams of water running into it.

Here the all-wise Creator has caused these natural cisterns to be formed and filled by the heavy rains, and they hold a sufficient quantity to supply the place of springs and streams when no rain falls.

The Indians are familiar with these tanks, and they utilize the localities as hunting-grounds for deer, quails and other animals which frequent them to quench their thirst.

This tribe—the Mohaves—have a legend that the Hickoes were formerly a part of the same great tribe to which their forefathers belonged; but for disobeying the commands of the great chief who ruled them, they were banished beyond the sea, from which they have since been permitted to return to feed and care for their copper-colored brethren.

They do not seem to be overburdened with self-esteem; but are servants, and as such are quite willing to remain.

In their prospecting tours they often came upon

Aztec ruins, which the Mohave said belonged to a race who were neither Hickoes or Mexicans, but Indians with white hair, who came originally from the "spirit land."

Among these ruins were found pieces of colored pottery, still retaining a gloss and perfection of polish that attested the superiority of the manufacturers over the natives of the present day; and the broken ruins of dwellings, three, four, and even five stories high, well-built and planned with architectural skill, still remain to tell the story of a superior people.

In the partly worked mines, stone hammers, picks and rudely constructed mining tools were found, which the Indian claimed were left by the white-haired or spirit Indians of former days.

The wonders of a strange land are full of interest to the new-comer, and the awe-inspiring grandeur of the mountain scenery, when looked upon for the first time, is delightful to behold; but to the miner, who has constantly such scenes before him, they lose their interest; his mind becomes absorbed with the brilliant hopes leading

him on, and the landscape, which once seemed so beautiful, becomes tame and unattractive; night finds him weary, and after a supper of beans and bacon he soon forgets his surroundings and permits sleep to lead him into the land of dreams.

Every strange object met with was of special interest to Charlie and Mr. Smithson, and often formed the subject of conversation when these two men were not engaged with the business which brought them to this distant region.

The other four men found more pleasure in discussing the particular kind of rocks on which they were at work, and how far this or that particular vein of gold or silver was supposed to extend; and they sometimes greeted their employers with, "Struck it rich, to-day;" and then would follow accounts of the rich vein of Horn silver which had been found, and samples of the ore would be produced to attest the truth of the statements. These samples were afterwards forwarded to the company in the East, and the assay satisfied them that their agents had not misrepresented the property.

Sometimes the miners spent their evenings in growling at the lack of good company, or the plentitude of rattlesnakes and centipedes; but none of them received any injury from these troublesome reptiles. Charlie spent all his leisure in writing to his mother and John Burton; and every letter was rich in descriptions of the new country, which was an almost unknown region to his correspondents; and in return he received news from the States and the Pacific Coast.

He had formed a warm friendship with one of the families at the first town at which he had tarried, and with three families at the old town or village nearest to them; and when the stone-house was finished he invited these friends to meet him at what he called a tea-party.

This meal, which was planned, cooked and served by our hero alone, we will describe. The party of ten sat down at three and left the table at half-past four. The first course consisted of, chicken fricassee, roast beef (a la mode), with squash, potatoes and pickles, coffee, tea, hot buns, bread, butter, and honey. The second course, of fruit

cake, jelly cake, caraway cookies, cheese, canned blackberries, peaches, and lemonade made from canned lemon sugar. Third course, berry pie, fresh apples, pears, walnuts, and lemonade. His neighbors loaned him dishes; and the ladies of the party praised each course, and asked for receipts for making the fruit and jelly cake.

The young ladies helped to clear away the table, and wash the dishes; and the whole company had a merry time.

Quartz mining is usually an uncertain undertaking and is sometimes attended with heavy losses and vexatious disappointments. The miner, in looking for a quartz vein in some places where the ledges appear above ground, digs a place or sinks a hole beside the ledge of rock, and examines the soil around it and in it. Tests it sometimes with a pan and water, or by crushing a little of the rock in an iron mortar and washing it in a pan to see if gold will settle.

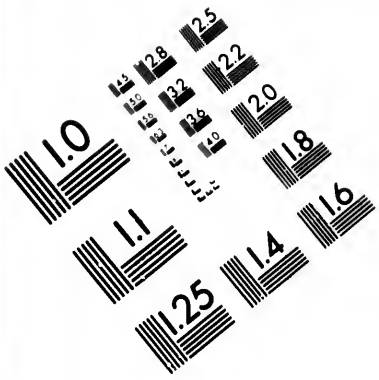
All quartz veins, of any richness, have to be tunneled into, or shafts sunk, to get below the surface; this requires slow and costly labor, drilling, blasting, and hoisting the rocks out of the mines. The

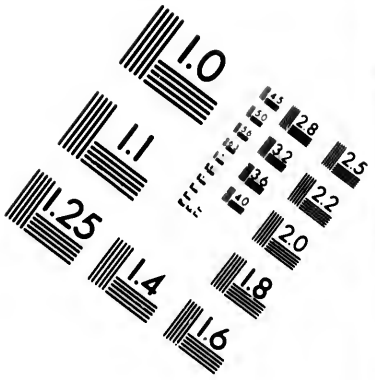
seam or ledge of gold is sometimes very narrow, and large quantities of rock which does not carry gold has to be displaced before that which does can be reached. Much labor and money also has been wasted in tunneling mines that produced comparatively nothing.

When a mine is found that will pay from fifty to eighty dollars per ton of milling ore or rock, then mills or arrasters are erected to work it. Some mills have been built at the spot where quartz has been found, and after a short time abandoned, because the vein had run out and no more mineral could be found. The safest way is to erect arrasters that are cheap, and by this plan test a mine fully before building a mill. Nearly all the early mining in Arizona was done in this manner; for the cost of transportation rendered it impossible for any but wealthy companies to import an expensive mill to the spot.

All quartz mills are run by steam or water, and the rock to be crushed is shoveled into the battery a little at a time, and this battery, or stamps as they are generally called, is composed of heavy

round bars of iron, twenty feet long and two and a half to three inches in diameter, with solid, heavy shoes or dies at the bottom, making the weight of each stamp about eight hundred pounds. A ten stamp mill has ten of these bars arranged side by side, about one foot apart; a twenty stamp mill has twenty, and so on. These heavy stamps are raised by cams, two on a shaft, and as the stamps set perpendicularly, confined to pass up and down—the shaft runs horizontally, and each cam raises the stamp and slips off, letting the stamp fall of its own weight some eighteen inches. The cams are placed about half way between the bottom and the top of the stamps, and are quite close to the upright bar. A device for the cam to bear against is bolted to the stamp rod, and this is the method of raising. The sides of the compartments are so arranged as to keep the rock rolling under the heavy iron shoes at the bottom of the stamps, and the rock, which is powdered almost as fine as flour, passes out by the force of the stamps through a screen. The stamps fall quite fast, and will each crush a ton per day.





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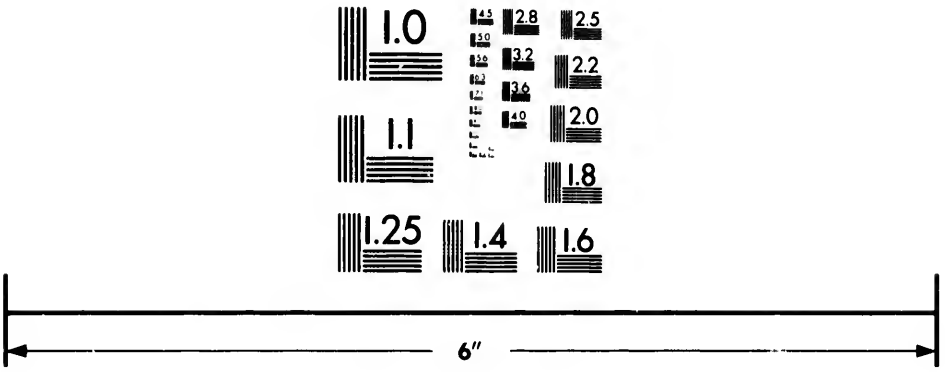

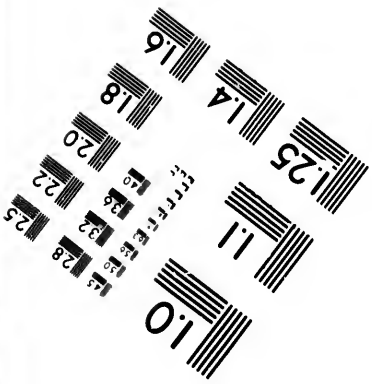

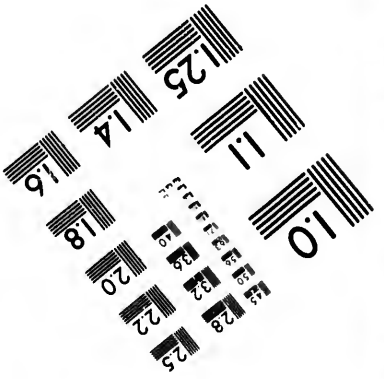

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This dust or powder passes into large iron tub-shaped vessels, two and a half feet deep, called amalgamating pans or settlers; these pans are of different sizes, but generally four and a half feet in diameter. Water is mixed with the dust or powder, and quicksilver is put in the pans or tubs, while stirring machinery, attached to these fans, keep the dust in motion so as to collect all the gold and quicksilver in the bottom of the pans; and the slums, which is called trailings, is allowed to run off.

The quicksilver is called amalgam, because it holds all the gold and looks like quicksilver, just the same; this is now taken out by devices to hold it, and poured into a heavy, stout canvas funnel-shaped bag; then the straining commences, which is separating the gold from the quicksilver, by squeezing the quicksilver all out and saving it to use again; the gold is left in the bag.

Retorting the balance of the quicksilver that remains is the next process, and, when acid is not used to bring the gold to its yellow color, is quite intricate; this is done by confining the mass in

tight iron moulds or retorts, and putting them into a very hot charcoal fire, when the rest of the quicksilver passes off like steam and condenses again for use.

Mining alone, and separate from communities, was somewhat hazardous in this region, but the risk was sometimes taken, as the murdered bodies of two miners attested, which were found alone in the mountains where they had been working a pocket in the side of a ledge.

Sometimes a party of three or four would club together for protection and help, and all work upon the same claim; but even these would sometimes all lose their lives.

A case of this kind came to Charlie's knowledge, which was as follows: A party of four men had clubbed together and opened a shaft in a mine about thirteen miles from the new city. Three of the men were at work in the shaft, which was sixty feet in depth, and one was at the windlass hoisting; their rifles were at the top of the shaft. Suddenly the man at the windlass was surprised by a dozen Indians and instantly shot. The painted savages

then rushed up and rolled down rocks upon the helpless victims in the shaft, killing two and breaking the arm of the third; supposing them all dead, the savages plundered their hut and left. Several hours after the injured miner succeeded in reaching the top of the shaft and hurried away towards the nearest town, but he had only gone three miles when he was shot dead by an ambush of the savage band.

Such were the perils of mining in Arizona when undertaken by small companies in remote regions.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Nothing so small that God has made
But has its destined end,
All in their turn his glory serve,
All to his glory tend.

"And thus the humblest of us all,
God's instruments may prove,
To bless and shed o'er fellow-men,
The bounty of his love."

IT TOOK nearly a year and a half to locate the mines, form the company, and get the proper machinery transported to this distant locality; but Charlie worked with untiring zeal, waiting patiently to reap the harvest, which always follows patient and concentrated effort. The time came at last when he stood again in the broad sunshine of prosperity. The early horrors of life among the mines, when it was a common thing for one man to shoot another upon the slightest provocation, had passed away before the march

of civilization; and the only stain which still lingered in the new city, was the many whisky-shops which flourished. But these were fast becoming unpopular; for the Good Templars were the leading men of the city; and lectures, readings, and concerts formed the chief amusements.

Alas! that any could be found who would permit themselves to become slaves to a demon, who sooner or later will destroy them. The victim, glorying in his own strength of mind, dallies with the first glass, the second, and the third, until the dreadful appetite is formed, and the strength to resist gone. Then, maddened by the poison, he becomes a murderer. Sometimes with the hasty blow or shot—oftener by the slow torture, poured day after day into the suffering heart of a wife, a mother, a sister, or child.

Silently the years slipped by—each day and hour our hero was being fitted for the duties that were to come. As an employer, he won the earnest efforts of his men; for he was always resolute and active, and a most genial companion in social intercourse. The new city, of which he helped to

lay the foundation, felt the influence of his example and leadership; and many refinements of social life found their way to this interior locality years in advance of the older towns near the river.

As the resources of the country became more widely known and understood, this neighborhood was found to contain vast fields of coal and forests of timber, waiting to be called into use by the needs of the future. And there were mountains of salt, clear as crystal, from which cubes of this saline substance were often obtained that were as transparent as glass; while in many places rock salt of excellent quality was abundant.

Charlie now found time to examine the country more leisurely; and a little, lively, black-eyed lady was often the companion of his journeys; for he had won, for his wife, the postmaster's daughter, of the little adobe town among the mountains. They took canoe-rides through the magnificent canons of the upper Colorado, where the stream seemed to have cut its bed deeper in the rocky formation, until walls three thousand feet in height now stood on both sides of the river. Among the

mines they found strata of sandstone, in which were found pieces of petrified wood, lizards and other substances; and these strata contained silver, assaying from three to five hundred dollars per ton, furnishing a riddle for scientists to solve.

They often took long rides across the country, pausing to wonder at the remains of peach-orchards which they found growing wild in watered districts, showing that they had been raised by former inhabitants, ruins of whose dwellings still remained, but nothing to tell who they were or whence they came. In the mountains they came upon deserted mines, in which shafts had been excavated, and the tools, which were rudely formed from pieces of stone, had been left behind. This seemed to prove that mining was among the earliest industries of the world.

At the Mohave villages they were always welcomed, and Mrs. Alice Burton caressed the Indian babies, and tasted the fruit of the Tunies (another species of cactus), while her husband entertained the Indian chief with pictures and descriptions of the large ships he had seen in the bay at San

Francisco; and they ate with their copper-colored friends, bread made from the Mezquite bean, which grows wild, in a screw-shaped, dry, twisted pod, and is pounded up by the natives, and made into bread. There is also another wild species, the pods of which resemble our garden bush-bean; and the natives cook them very much as we do, and they are very palatable; but these grow on trees, sometimes thirty feet in height.

Sometimes Alice took long walks alone, or in company with her lady friends; for, like her husband, she was an earnest student of Nature, and she liked to watch the kangaroo rats sporting among the thorny cactus. These curious animals were about the size of a barn rat, and had large eyes, a broad forehead, and short body and ears, with a tuft of hair on the end of the tail, similar to the lion. Some of them became so tame, that they would stand on their hind legs and eat from her hand; and Charlie told her they were the next link to man and the monkey in the Darwinian pedigree. She often saw large lizards basking in the sunshine, but these would always run with

lightning-like swiftness at her approach. Wherever she wandered, the limitless extent of flowering cactus met her view, for Arizona is a pointed country, if nothing else; but rough and rugged as this country seems, those who dwell in its salubrious climate, find health, and often wealth.

The architecture seems to conform to the surrounding scenery, and nearly all the dwellings are of mud-brick, with thick walls, which are quite comfortable; but once in a while a frame house is seen, with green blinds and vine-wreathed piazza; and one of these we will invite the reader to enter.

It is both large and handsome, and stands upon its rocky foundation, near the spring which furnishes the water by which is run the twenty stamp mill for the Mohave Gold and Silver Mining Company. The large bay-window, from which is seen the first glimpse of the sun as it rises from behind the mountains, opens into the cosy sitting-room, with its comfortable lounges and bright carpet, where Charlie's mother, in her soft black dress, relieved only by the collar and cuffs of white linen and the white apron trimmed with dainty lace, sits

in her cushioned rocker, knitting a tiny sock of soft wool, intended for the fat dimpled foot of the black-eyed, brown-haired baby, who is crowing in the black-walnut crib in the corner.

This rosy-cheeked cherub is Willie Burton; his mother calls him "Birdie," and we find her at this moment watering and pruning her roses and geraniums, which are in full bloom, and which entirely fill one window of the south-room, where we will find her sewing-machine, and the cabinet organ upon which Charlie still gratifies his taste for music. The soil for her flower-pots, as well as that of the tubs which sustained the ivy which is trained over the piazza, has been brought from the forest beyond the mountains; and the flowers and vines form a bright contrast to the rugged surroundings of their mountain home.

Charlie's study and library adjoins this room, and here he has gathered a choice collection of instructive and entertaining books, and a few of the paintings which had adorned his former home.

Down deep shafts, through long, dark tunnels the ores are daily being brought to light and

yielded up to the crushing blows of the mill. The clatter and jingle of the stamps pounding out the quartz can be heard from the house, and it is not unpleasant to its inmates. Life seems full of animation as the machinery turns the pulverized bullion through its many revolutions, until the bars of silver and gold become tangible objects to greet the eye, and promise plenty for the future of old age.

Here in the sweet rest of a quiet home Charlie's mother will tell you that her son has redeemed his promise, for her last days bid fair to be her happiest.

If my foster-brother had been permitted to grow up in his early home, he might have had a happier life; but he would not have been so well fitted for a life of usefulness.

Human nature is elastic, and usually moulds itself to the circumstances by which it is surrounded. From the lonely hours of waiting, in which his boyhood was passed, came his patient spirit, prepared to struggle with adversity—from the hardships of his early life, the strong arm and vigorous frame.

The proverb says, "A rolling stone gathers no moss;" but far better a life of useful activity than one spent in simply accumulating and never distributing. If we were all old mossy stones, the great West would never have been settled.