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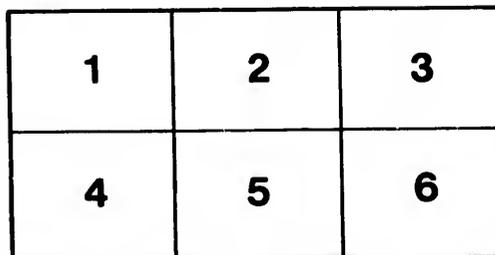
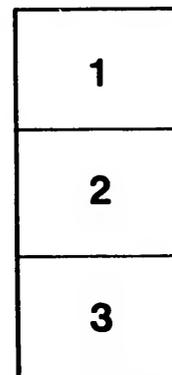
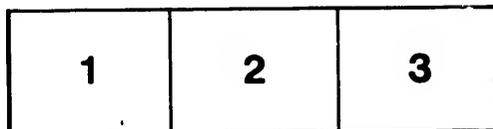
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THE YOUNG AMERICA SERIES

AIR CASTLE DON;

Or,

FROM DREAMLAND TO HARDPAN

By B. FREEMAN [✓]ASHLEY

Author of "Tan Pile Jim," "Dick and Jack's Adventures," etc., etc.

ILLUSTRATED

Some dreams we have are nothing else but dreams,
Unnatural and full of contradictions;
Yet others of our most romantic schemes
Are sometimes more than fictions.

—Thomas Hood.



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WHY NOT?

We now come to our readers with a story of city life in continuation of our experiment of writing about things which have hitherto remained, in great part, unexplored. The readers of a book seldom have an opportunity to talk back to an author. The author, for his part, would be glad to have his readers talk back at him; he would like to come into closer touch with them. Suppose then that when you have read this book, you — no matter what your age, sex or opinions may be — sit down and give the writer a bit of your mind on this book, and its mates, if you have read them. And while you are about it, suppose you also tell him what kind of books you like to have written for young people from seven to seventy. It would be fun for you, and, doubtless, would be fun for the author also. Send along your letters. They shall be answered by an autographic letter from the author, that is, if he be not smothered under them before he gets a chance to answer.

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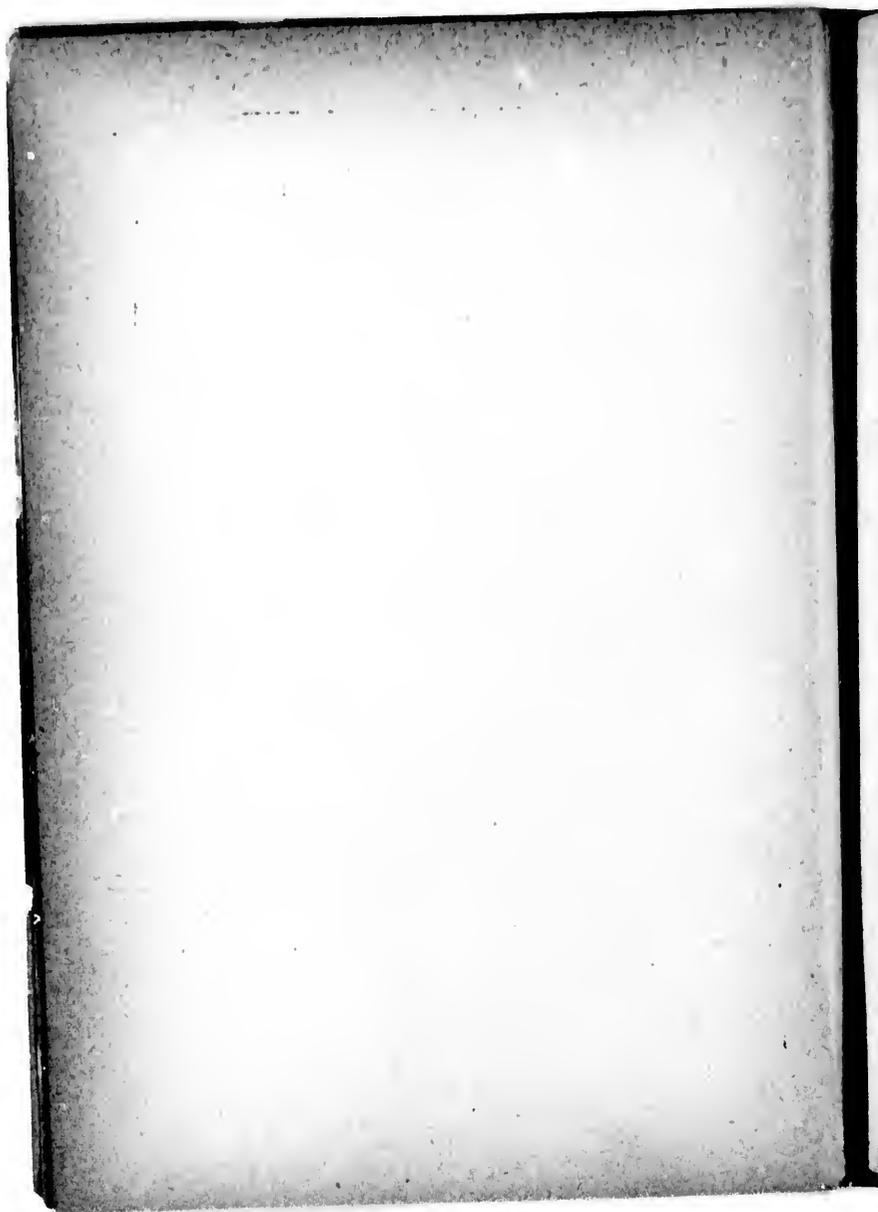
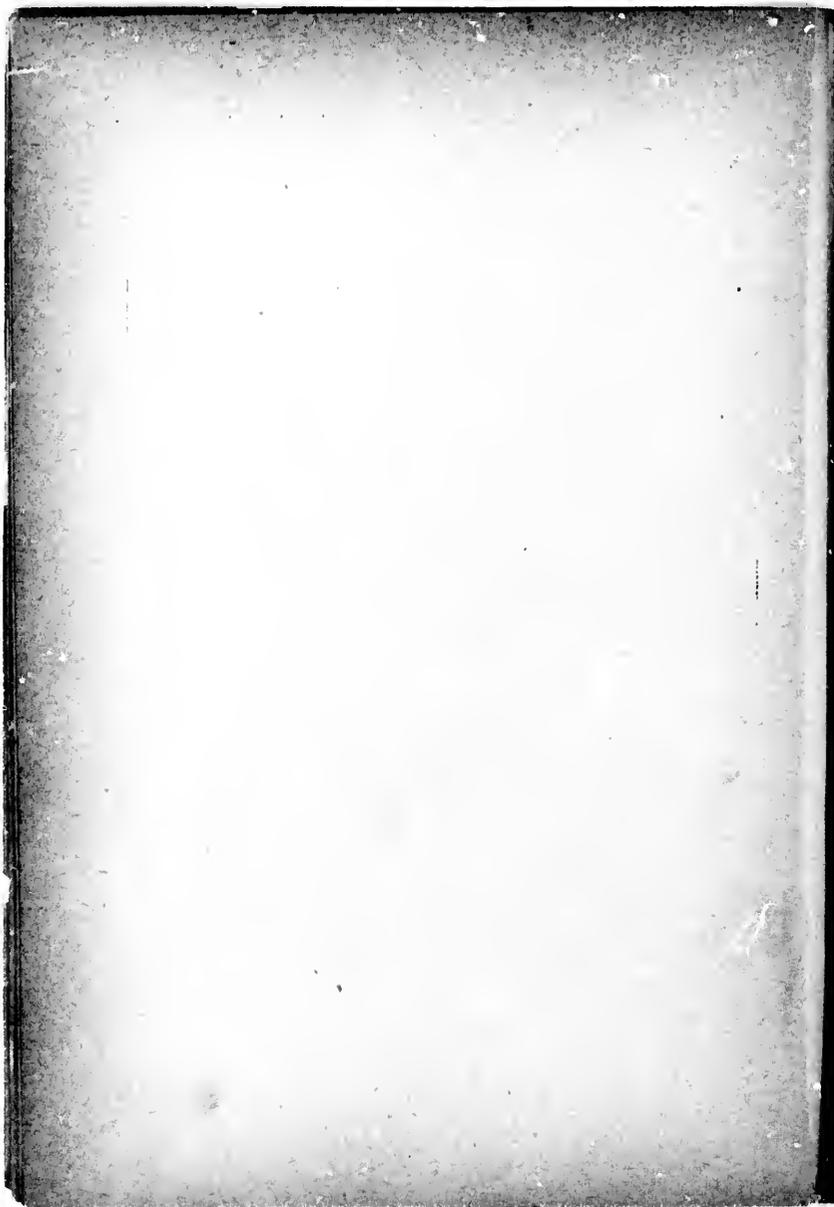


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. Introduces Don Donalds	9
II. The Lady of the Lake Club	18
III. Don Makes Two Moves	30
IV. In the City of Notions	39
V. An Attic Philosopher	50
VI. Looking for a Situation	61
VII. Don Has a Great Day	72
VIII. The Backbone of the Black Art	81
IX. Paying for a Disappointment	91
X. Old Failings Revive	100
XI. Deep Water Soundings	109
XII. Adrift Again	120
XIII. Look Before You Leap	129
XIV. How a City Becomes a Thornbush	138
XV. Spirits in Prison	148
XVI. A Perplexed Family	157
XVII. A Puzzled Youthful Pilgrim	168
XVIII. An Involuntary Detective	178
XIX. Under Cover Again	189
XX. A Queer Temptation	199
XXI. A Telling Illustration	209
XXII. Picking Up a Protege	219
XXIII. Talking Through His Hat	231
XXIV. In a Predicament	240
XXV. Keeping a Contract	251
XXVI. A Frustrated Threat	263
XXVII. An Elopement	273
XXVIII. A Breathing Spell	282
XXIX. An Enlargement of the Heart	294
XXX. As They Sailed, As They Sailed	305
XXXI. On Hannah Screechum's Island	317
XXXII. A Parting Look Into the Kaleidoscope	331



AIR CASTLE DON;

OR, FROM DREAMLAND TO HARDPAN.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCES DON DONALDS.

It is possible for a boy to keep still, and that, too, without being either crippled or dumb, asleep or dead. For instance, there was Don Donalds. He sat upon a grassy bluff below which there was a raceway through which rapid water tinkled with perpetual music, and beyond which was a rocky islet dividing the raceway from a small river that ran over a stony bottom to a deep pool a short distance below. His back rested against a mossy stonewall built by pioneers whose very memory had perished from the face of the earth. Behind the wall there was an old apple orchard that was a Mecca for boy pilgrims from the time of the earliest green apple to the time when the last frost-mellowed one hung on the topmost bough a sun-painted prize for him who had a searching eye and enterprising legs and hands. When Don sat there the spring birds, holding undisputed possession, were experiencing the song-provoking raptures of mating and nest building, while the wind stirred through the leaves whispering strange stories of its adventures in earth and sky.

One patriarchal tree, whose juices ran to sweet apples, stretched a long sturdy branch over the wall and held a thick canopy of leaves over the boy's head to protect him from the rather fervid heat of the rapidly nooning sun. Two robins had selected the very center of the canopy for their nest, and as it was not among their calculations to have a boy so near, they scolded at him from above, and in their restless protests against his intrusion shook down showers of blossoms upon him. Perceiving that he took no notice of their presence, and was as still as the stones against which he leaned, they went about their business. A chipmonk, however, seemed to take up the fears they had discarded. He was making a journey on the top of the wall, and coming to where Don sat, he gave him notice to get out of the way by scolding at him with a series of diminutive barks that sounded like the abdominal squeaks of a toy dog. As no notice was taken of him he sat up on the topmost stone of the wall, and for a moment meditated in silence. What manner of boy could this boy be that would let a chipmonk come in sight without attempting to molest him, and that, too, when pebbles were within reach of hand? He ran by, and not satisfied with his meditations, sat up again and whisked his tail in another attempt to solve the mystery surrounding the still figure. He could see that Don's eyes were open, and that his chest gave evidence of his being breathingly alive, but that was about all. The chipmonk passed on his way, but his subdued manner said as plainly as any manner could, "I give it up. That boy beats any nut I ever attempted to crack."

There was nothing mentally or physically wrong with Don that he should keep so phenomenally still. His dark, vivacious eyes were filled with slumbering fires of thought, and his lively face and reasonably stalwart limbs gave countenance to

the supposition that he was at that stage of his existence when the monkey propensities of human nature are at their highest. He, in fact, could clear a wall at a bound, and vie with any noises common to the average boy throat, and was not slow to join in the athletic sports or roystering rackets of his fellow boys.

Perhaps he was looking at things around him, and listening to the varied sounds that punctured the silence of the scenery. Swallows and martins raced dizzily in the air and occasionally dipped with crazy motions into the waters of the stream. A milk-white flock of geese squatted on the green grass of the islet pluming their feathers and quacking about their adventures in the pool below. Beyond them a dozen or more of crows were quarrelling over a herring that one of them had pulled from among the shore rocks of the stream. A fish-hawk circled high in the sky above them watching for a chance to descend and claim the herring for his own, or to make a swoop upon some of the trout that, ignorant of danger, occasionally shot above the surface of the water in pursuit of insects hovering temptingly near.

On the far side of the stream, the stones of the village grist-mill monotonously grumbled as they ground out their daily grist of oats and barley. On the near side, the single saw of a dilapidated sawmill growled hoarsely as it danced up and down and struck its big teeth into the vitals of a great oaken log that was being turned into ship plank. Above the bridge which crossed below the mills the low, vibrant thunder of the dam predominated over all other sounds, reducing them to a general harmony, so that even the whang of the blacksmith's sledge, and the whock of the carpenter's hammer striking on the other side of the stream were made tributary to the concord.

But Don was paying no attention to things visible or audible; and he remained as silent as the vacant church, school-house and courthouse that formed the still group of public buildings on the far side of the stream. A cow with a bell at her throat came up the bluff and tinkingly grazed her way to his feet without having any more notice taken of her, or of her gently surprised moo than if she were not put on four legs for boys to throw stones at or to torment in sundry other ways. Like the robins and the chipmonk, she wondered at him awhile, asking all sorts of questions of her internal self and then passed munchingly on to where taller blades of grass invited the coil of her industrious tongue.

Don had removed his hat—a curious chip made from the strippings of a birch by an ancient Indian squaw for his especial benefit—and had put it over a small flat stone to the great terror of a pair of field mice that had been watching him from beneath. Don was reading a book; and this was the secret of his apparent indifference to things in Heaven, things on earth and things under the earth. The book was so absorbing that the whole outer world was as if it were not.

Not far distant, standing upon the middle bridge of the thrice divided stream, and leaning upon the rail was another figure almost as motionless as Don himself. It was the figure of an old Scotch fisherman, who had wandered around the world so long and had seen so much of human nature, and, other things, that his chief refrain was "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." This was Peter Piper of whom Madge, Don's sister, declared, that he was the very Peter who picked a peck of pickled peppers—the Peter Piper of the pronouncing puzzle that Avard Doane, the village schoolmaster used to test his thick-speeched pupils by. And she further declared that there was no need of asking, Where's the peck of pickled peppers

that Peter Piper picked? for he carried them about with him and was always ready to administer liberal doses of them to both young and old on the slightest provocation. Her belief in his sour and peppery disposition grew mainly from the fact that he had once reproved her for doing her hair up in curl papers.

Peter was in some respects the victim of popular injustice. Although the softer soil of his heart had been covered by irruptions of hard experience, it was not destroyed, and one had but to go deep enough to find it. At that very moment he was thinking of the native cottage and land from which he had wandered so long and so far; and like many another of us older ones, he was sighing for the days of his youth. And knowing that they could never return in this life, he was trying to console himself with the thought that some of the things that he learned in the "auld kirk at hame" would turn out to be more than true in the life to come. In his own way he was saying to himself:

I am far frae my hame, an' I'm weary aften-whiles,
For the langed hame-bringin', an' my Father's welcome
smiles,
An' I'll ne'er be fu' content till mine een do see
The gowden gates o' Heaven an' my ain countree.

Shaking his tears into the stream to dry his eyes, he compressed his quivering lips and resolutely lifting his head he thumped his gnarled stick vigorously upon the planks of the bridge in protest against his melting mood. Just then he caught sight of Don and his book, and the sight restored to him his peck of pickled peppers.

When Peter saw a boy reading a book at his own sweet will—free from all compulsory tutorings, and in a corner by

himself, he at once jumped to the conclusion that he was reading something that ought not to be read. He doubtless remembered the escapades of his own young days, and judged the lad by his own misdoings, as is apt to be the case with those who have indicting memories.

"Gin I were the daddy o' that lad," he wrathily exclaimed, "I'd take all his haverings an' burn them afore all men, an' gie him fu' screeptural authority for that same: See Acts o' the Apostles, nineteenth chapter an' nineteenth varse. An' gin that wadna cure his appetite for all sich cantankerousities, I'd supplement the fire wi' a gude birch rod: See Proverbs twinty-third an' fourteenth: 'Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt save his sou! from hell.'"

It eased Peter's recollection of his own shortcomings to think that here was a chance to discover and comment upon the failings of others. And he continued: "See what comes o' havin' a meenister for a daddy wha preaches sae much at ither people there's naethin' left for his ain bairns. 'If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the house of God?' See fust Timothy, third chapter an' fifth varse. Charity begins at home; see—see—Aye, Peter, where did ye see it? Ye ought to know that it's no' in the buik, an' is not a text o' the elect."

And having tired of talking to himself, and to make amends for having quoted unscriptural authority, Peter determined to interfere with Don's reading, and to find out for himself what he was reading. Don was so absorbed in his book that he didn't notice Peter till he was close upon him.

Without ceremony Peter touched the book with his stick and said with his whole peck of pickled peppers in his mouth: "Ye'll be readin' Fox's Book o' Martyrs, or The Lives o' The Saints, the noo?"

Don had had many encounters with the Scotchman, encounters which he rather enjoyed than feared, and he replied laughingly: "No, Mr. Piper; I took those bitter doses when I was coming up from the scarlet fever, and because Betty Crowell brought them in and said they were good for sick boys. But that was a bad day for the books, for the Doctor ordered them into the stove after I got through with them lest they should give the scarlet fever to somebody else. Betty has been mourning for them ever since."

"More's the peety! Gin ye had filled yersel' wi' them ye'd be more likely to make a mon o' yersel'." And seeing that Don was not disposed to volunteer information about the book in hand, Peter added: "Maybe it's the Scotch varsion o' the Psalms ye're tunin' yer soul wi'."

"I didn't know that the Scotch had written any Psalms," said Don, half innocently and half mischievously.

"Hoot, laddie! I said 'varsion.' Dinna ye ken the meanin' o' varsion, an' ye a meenister's son? Gin ye'd ben nursed at the paps o' the Old School Presbyterians, like mysel', ye'd no' be the coof ye are this minute." And not to be diverted from his purpose, Peter returned to the charge. "I make free to say that the buik ye're spierin' into belongs to the frogs an' the lice kind which hae come into the land for its wickedness. That's the cause o' your eegnorance of the varsion. 'Ephraim is joined to his idols': See Hosea, fourth chapter an' seventeenth varse. An' may the Lord hae marcy on your soul afore ye're given up to a reprobate mind, for ye're bewitched wi' wickedness."

"Yes, I am bewitched; and if Sir Walter Scott is wickedness I am bewitched with wickedness, for I am reading Peveril of the Peak, and this is not the first of his books I have read."

Don spoke proudly when he should have spoken with some

twinges of conscience. He had read Scott to an excess. His head was full of castles and towers; moats and drawbridges; shining steel and brilliant banners; gallant knights and beautiful ladies, and stirring trumpets and thrilling tournaments. Under the wand of The Wizard of the North he had gone straight up to the clouds, where he lived more than was good for his mind.

The moment he mentioned Sir Walter Scott, Peter changed; his gray eyes became luminous, and his world-seamed face shared in the glow of his eyes. For the time being he forgot the Book of Martyrs, The Lives of The Saints and The Scotch Version of The Psalms.

"Sir Walter Scott!" he exclaimed with growing excitement. "He was the canniest Scot that ever climbed a hill or drew in the breath of the heather! I was born in sight o' bonny Abbotsford. When I was but a lad aft hae I seen him roamin' the gray hills wi' his high bred dogs. His face was like the sun shinin' aboon the mountains. These lugs o' mine hae heard his voice soundin', sometimes like the waters amang the rushes, an' sometimes like the flood comin' down the brae. Mony's the time I hae got him a flower frae the cliff or fetched him a pebble frae the bottom o' the brook. He wasna a snob always a fearin' his respectability might dissolve in a shower, but he took my gifts an' thank't me for them, an' talked about them like a gentleman. An' when I carried him a pair o' salmon ye wad haethocht I were a givin' him a crown. He didna forget that he was a lad ance, an' though he became a lord he was not ashamed to own the bairns wi' whom he played. Ye mind his words in Marmion:

And much I miss those sportive boys,
Companions of my mountain joys,
Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
When thought is speech, and speech is truth."

It was Don's turn to be astonished, and he said: "Why, Mr. Piper I never knew that you had seen—actually seen Sir Walter Scott!"

"That's not to be wonnered at. 'What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?' See fust Corinthians, chapter two, varse eleven. We dinna so much as know the people on whose toes we tread ivery day; we are a' meesteries to ane anither."

"Please sit down and tell me all you know about Sir Walter," pleaded Don earnestly, and with a respect that he had never before felt for the old fisherman. And thus it happened that the two who seemed to be at the opposite poles of life found themselves on the equator together. As the man went on with his recital of what he had seen of the great romanciet and poet, Don saw that he was possessed of reminiscences that were far more interesting than some things he had read in the books about Sir Walter Scott.

"Aa' noo," said Peter at the end of his narrative, "I hae said ewer much to the praise o' Sir Walter, an' maybe ye'll be readin' him mair than ever, an' that too, without asavin' mixture o' other things. The emagination, ye ken, is a gude friend, but an unco bad guide. Gin ye live on stories an' tales a' the time, ye'll be like the stork which is a' legs, wings an' neck, an' which has an uncanny way o' spendin' the maist o' its time in the marshes cockit up on one leg by itself. Or ye'll be like Jacob dreamin' aboot angels an' angels' ladders ower-much; see Genesis twenty-eight and twelve. Angels' ladders, ye ken, were not made for the likes o' Jacob to climb. Whin ye get to be an angel it'll be time enough to try that way of rising; but while ye are a mortal bein', ye maun do your wrastlin' an' fight your battles on solid ground, e'en though ye hae to do it in the dark, an' get your hip crackit in the doin' o' it."

CHAPTER II.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE CLUB.

Barrington Head was so far removed from the bustle of the outside world that not even a telegraph instrument clicked to disturb its quiet. The weekly stage arrivals, and the Sunday gatherings at the two 'meeting houses' were the most exciting events of current history. An occasional gale of wind with a seasoning of thunder in it was welcomed for variety's sake. The people went to bed betimes and rose up early to greet the first rays of the sun.

When the village school was in session there was a pleasant hum of life in its vicinity, for the youth of both sexes were no exception to their kind when they gathered on the green before the bell rang, or poured out in noisy tumult when the welcome times of recess released them from their books.

The court house by the school seldom or never had a trial to disturb its vacancy and stillness. When the circuit judge made his annual visitation, the most he ever did was to put on his robe and wig, and then in addition draw on his white gloves in compliance with the customs of the time as a sign that his docket was white or empty of cases. With this formality the court was adjourned and His Honor hied to the stream to angle for trout till it was time for him to go to some other place to go through with the same arduous ceremonies. There was so little litigation in the hamlet that no lawyer deemed it worth his while to become a resident of it. The people knew their own business and attended to it without any legal aid.

It would have taken a day's travel to discover a liquor saloon. Any attempt to fix such a curse upon the community would have resulted in the tipping of the building into the river without the benefit of either judge or jury. Drunkards were as scarce as white elephants.

Nevertheless, quiet as was the hamlet it was the home of mariners who did business upon the great waters, and who went down to the sea in ships and sailed with them unto the uttermost parts of the earth. And not a few born in these scenes of silence became the occupants of exalted stations in centers of both commercial and political activity.

Don lived in an old colonial house near the bluff on which we found him sitting with his book. The gabled residence was a house of many rooms each one of which was finished in a style suggestive of a wealth of wood and no end of time.

By the irony of Fate or the miscalculations of the builder, the two porches of the rear of the house fronted upon the public highway, while, by way of contradiction, the quite elaborate front backed upon the orchard through which no visitor ever thought of making an approach to the premises. Not so much as a footpath invited from that direction, for the orchard was bounded by a thornhedge, and the thornhedge by a salt meadow that ended in the waters of the harbor—a deep dented bay scooped out by the Atlantic during the innumerable years of unrecorded time.

One gable of the paint-despising building faced a turn in the road, and the old sawmill; and the other commanded an extended view of the winding highway along which were scattered the few houses of the hamlet that seemed in danger of tumbling into the boundless contiguity of space or into the dark evergreen forest that belted the sea-jagged coast.

One of the porches—the one that served as the main

entrance to this wooden cave—opened into a large room or kitchen whose most noticeable object was the great fireplace flanked on either side with yawning ovens deeply set in the enormous chimney. The crane and andirons, and great bulging pots and kettles might have served for the kitchen utensils of the Cyclopean monster whose single eye Homer's hero punched out with the burning stake. The fuel for this omnivorous fire-cave was amply furnished by the waste slabs and logs from the convenient sawmill. The narrow window opening between the two porches afforded a dim light to the odd reception room into which no visitor entered for the first time without experiencing both surprise and curiosity. The general furniture of the room was largely extemporized by family skill from the scantlings of the mill-yard.

The ample cooking facilities were exceptionally convenient for the Donalds family, the offspring being both numerous and healthy. And visitors were so frequent that it was seldom the house was without one or more guests. Now it was the lord bishop or the chief justice of the province, and then a patent medicine vender, or a lecturer who carried an accordeon with which to increase his chance of a hearing. The house, however, was not a hostelry; that dignity was reserved to the Homer Hotel, situated on the green opposite, whose keeper was a county celebrity, a member of the provincial parliament, and a man of such knowledge and oratorical ability that when he mounted the hustings the people bowed before his eloquence as the tree-tops bow before the wind. His guests seldom left his hotel without first paying their respects to the old house and its occupants, and it thus happened that the Donalds, both small and great, were kept well apprised of the current gossip of the world without.

As Don knew the haunts of the trout, and was skilled in the lures best adapted to them, he was in frequent demand as a guide to the fishing pools. But being jealous of his reputation as a companion he always refused compensation as an attendant. Although the visitors often smiled at his airs, he suffered no inconvenience from their private opinions, for where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise.

One day a man of middle age, all the way from London made his appearance in the place and signified his intention to remain for several weeks. Little by little it came out that he was an artist of great distinction; one who had made sketches in Africa, India, South America and in the United States; and one whose domestic infelicities had been paraded wherever the English language was printed. Mr. Barry, for that was his name, sought the province thinking that he could here effectually seclude himself, but only to find that his fame had preceded him. Although connected with a titled family, his manners were simple and hearty, and he was as much devoid of all pretence as though he were the descendent of a log cabin family. Being a passionate angler and hunter, as well as an ardent artist, he at once secured Don for his attendant.

When Peter Piper saw them together for the first time, he said in his most peppery manner: "It's unco bad for a nobody to be cheek-by-jowl wi' a somebody unless, like Elisha he grows beeg enough to wear his mantle; see fust Kings, nineteenth an' nineteenth. The lad'll be going straight to the clouds, an' when his ludship's gone it'll be a twel' mo before he sees ground agen."

At the same moment Barry was saying to Don: "That's a saucy looking little craft lying out there in the bay. I'd like to charter her while I'm here. She's just the size for nosing in and out among the harbors of this coast." If he had looked

more closely he would have seen that her sails were not bent, and that she was far from being in trim for sea-work.

"That's The Lady of The Lake," Don replied.

"Lady of The Lake?" exclaimed the artist. "How did she get such a name as that in such an out of the way place as this?"

"She was built in the woods by Jacob Kendrick, a man who knew as much about Sir Walter Scott's poems as he did about his Bible, and what he didn't know about the Bible was scarcely worth knowing;" and Don answered with spirit.

"Built in the woods?" Barry exclaimed, with increasing surprise.

"Yes; three miles above this; back of Oak Park; two of them. The other one was called The Youth. The Lady is about twenty-five tons burthen, and the other was about nineteen tons."

"How did they get them down to the sea?" Barry interrupted, believing that he had stumbled upon a new thing under the sun.

"They put them in cradles, and the cradles on rollers and hauled them down with a long row of oxen to low water mark; and when the tide came in, they floated as trimly as though they had been built in a regular shipyard and had gone into the sea on tallowed skids."

"And you saw all this with your own eyes?" and Barry looked into Don's eyes as if searching the retina for some photograph of the scene.

"Oh, no, but it's just as true as if I did. That was more than thirty years ago; and the little craft out there having served her day, is no longer fit for sea. She is now headquarters for The Lady of The Lake Club, and but for the club she would have been torn to pieces long before this."

"Well, I have stumbled upon some oddities in my time, but, judging from what I am learning in this place, I have not yet exhausted them all. Pray, what is this club of which you speak?"

"It is a club of ten boys—the upper ten of Barrington—ranging from twelve to sixteen. I'm the Grand Keyman of the club, and if you would like to go aboard and take a closer look at The Lady of The Lake, I'll row you off at your convenience."

"I'll accept your invitation on the spot; we can afford to let the trout keep themselves in the water till we get back."

Don led the artist down to Sargent's wharf without delay. Here they stepped into a gaily painted yawl, of which Barry said with a merry twinkle: "Somebody believes in paint as much as I do."

"Yes," Don replied, with some hesitation; "we painted her ourselves and with the odds and ends of all the forsaken paint-pots of the village."

"Here, I'll take one of those oars," said Barry, as he saw Don seat himself with both oars in hand.

"Then you can row?" Don answered, looking rather suspiciously at the artist's delicate hands.

"I was born on the Thames, and have wet several pieces of wood first and last; but you may play stroke-oar if you wish."

"Well, here we go," and Don fetched a stroke which was intended to swing the boat strongly against the artist's side.

But Barry countered the stroke so quickly the yawl instead of looking around to watch her wake shot ahead as straight as an arrow, and Don instead of giving a lesson to Barry took several for himself. When they reached the vessel the artist was breathing as easily as an infant, while Don was puffing like a porpoise.

"She is rather past the prime of life," said Barry comprehensively, running his eyes over the craft swiftly and discovering that although she sat the water like a duck, all her running rigging had been removed, save the color-halliards which still clung to the maintopmast as if for use. The railing was much dented and weatherworn, and the decking showed many signs of amateur calking and tarring where the club had worked to prevent the seams from gaping too widely to the weather.

Taking a formidable key from his pocket, Don turned the great padlock from the companionway-staple and pushing back the slide, and shoving open the two parts of the little door, stood aside for Barry to descend the steps to the cabin. The bulkhead, which originally divided the cabin from the hold, had been removed and a new partition made, which increased the length of the room to half the length of the vessel.

"Wait till I light the chandelier so that you can see better," said Don, as the artist stumbled against the near end of a long table which ran lengthwise the narrow cabin.

"That is a chandelier worth having," remarked the artist when the suspended moose-antlers illuminated by ten candles, one for each member of the club, lighted up the cabin. Taking one of the plain wooden chairs placed neatly by the table, which he noticed was covered with clean napery and a fair supply of dishes ready for use, the artist sat down and began to look around. One end of the table that was not occupied by dishes was covered with books. The plain spaces of the cabin were pasted over with pictures, and little shelves here and there contained curiosities gathered from forest, stream and sea shore. But what most attracted him was a motley array of many-hued and many-shaped robes that hung upon the rear wall of the cabin.

"What's all this?" Barry asked, going up to the garments and fingering them over.

Don almost giggled at the artist's eager curiosity, and said: "When the ship Anglo-Saxon was cast away on Cape Island several years ago she had on board a whole company of actors and actresses who were bound for England. All were safely rescued and sent to Halifax. Among the few things saved was the theatrical outfit of the company. At the auction of the wreckage no one wished to buy the 'unholy stuff', and it was stowed away in an old shed. To prevent it from rotting uselessly we took possession of it for the benefit of the club. It's all there from the royal garments of the king and queen down to the cap and bells of the king's fool. The robes are rather the worse for the wear, but I guess they will hang together as long as the club does."

"This is a brand new freak of rustic juvenility," said Barry scratching his eyebrows vigorously. "Tell me more about your club."

"We have heard that secret societies call their officers by the biggest names they can get, and then buy robes to fit the names. Examples are catching, you know."

"Who are your officers, and what do you call them?"

"Arnold Doane, Most Sovereign Potentate; James Doane, Grand Viceroy; Joshua Smith, Sublime Scribe; John Perry, Sublime Warden of Pounds Shillings and Pence; James Cox, Sublime Door Defender; Joshua Harding and John Homer, Jr., Sublime Marshals of Pots and Kettles; George Crowell and Winthrop Sargent, Jr., Most Puissant Dishwashers and Keepers of the Pantry. Besides being Grand Keyman, I am Knight of the Cap and Bells. We change officers every three months. The Fool's Cap is the badge which is the most eagerly sought. Every one is obliged to fit his language to

his clothes. We meet once a week, and each one brings something for the supper. No monkeying is allowed except by the Regular Fool. Part of the time is spent in reading. If you'll come to the next meeting and tell us something about hunting the tiger in Africa and the elephant in India, where you have been so much, we'll make you an honorary member and put the king's robes upon you at your visit. I am Grand Sovereign Committee on Guests and will see that the invitation is written out and sent to you in form."

"I'll come, sure," said Barry, and his ready acceptance so pleased Don that he determined to do all he could to make the visitation the event of the club's history.

"But what use do you make of these female robes—worship them?" asked Barry.

"At the installation of officers each member of the club is privileged to bring one girl friend with him, and to offer to her for her use during the evening the robe which is the nearest match to his own rank in the society."

Barry went to the club according to promise, and after he had entertained them for an hour with an account of his travels and some of his adventures in Africa and India he compliantly allowed them to put upon him the king's robe and tinsel crown and, notwithstanding the grotesqueries of the meeting and the banquet, he enjoyed himself to the fullest bent of his humor. He had insisted as one condition of his visit, that nothing of their usual form should be omitted.

Thereafter the boys were at the disposal of the artist for anything that could administer to his pleasure or to the main object of his stay in the vicinity. He was well acquainted with the stirring history of the ancient times of this part of Acadia, and told them more about the vicinity than any of them had ever heard before. They took him in their yawl and under

sail carried him to Cape Sable because he wanted to see the famous island upon which the Norseman, Leif, the son of Eric the Red, of Brattahlid, in Greenland, landed before he went on to discover the shores of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. He was acquainted also with the fact that the Cape was the scene of the exciting adventures of the French Latour and his beautiful and heroic wife, and that Port Latour, just below Barrington, was named after the Frenchman, he having built a fort and made his home there many years, growing rich on the furs bought from the Indians, who at that time were thick in the land. It was here that his wife—'Constance of Acadia'—acquired unlimited power over the savages by living among them as one of them and teaching them the simpler and gentler arts of civilization. It was here, during the absence of her husband, that she successfully defended the fort against their white enemies and put them to flight. The boys of the club rowed the artist down to Coffintown and walked with him over to Port Latour in search of the remains of the old fortification.

On their return, while passing through a clump of pines not far from Coffintown, Don said to Barry: "Here is the place where the club played ghosts and captured a cap and sword from an officer of a war ship."

"How was that?" asked the artist.

"A man-of-war came into the mouth of the channel and spent several weeks surveying the harbor for chart purposes. The purser got acquainted with a pretty girl living not far from this, and pretended to make love to her. He visited her in full uniform with side arms, and cap with the newest gilt band more than two inches wide. We got wind of the time of one of his visits and came down, each one dressed in the longest robe available from our supply, and hid ourselves in this clump

of trees. At midnight we heard him clamping along in the darkness on his way back to his boat, and when he got opposite the place where we were lying flat on the ground, we rose up with a yell and with our robes flaunting about us, gave chase to him. He fled like a calf, dropping his cap, and finally losing his sword out of its scabbard. These we picked up and carried with us back to The Lady of the Lake."

"Did you ever hear from him after that?" asked Barry, when he recovered from his merriment.

"Not a word," Don replied. "What account he gave of himself when he reached the ship, never reached the shore; nor did he ever come on shore again while the ship was here."

"Evidently Acadian ghosts were not to his liking. But does The Lady of The Lake Club do much of that sort of work among the sinners who happen here occasionally?"

"Oh, no!" responded the mild-mannered Most Sovereign Potentate of the club; "there is no need of a vigilance committee in such a place as this. We'll confess, however, that we once tried to cure a very bad case of foul-mouth by taking a boy who was affected with it down to the river, and scouring his mouth with soft soap, sand and water. The remedy appeared to be effective for awhile, but when he removed to another place it is said that the disease broke out worse than ever. Our outside work is mostly confined to widow work."

"Please enlighten me—what kind of work is that?"

"There are several women in the neighborhood whose husbands were lost at sea. Some of them are in poor circumstances, and we do what we can to keep their wood-piles from getting low, and if their garden or potato-patch needs looking after we offer our services, for all of us know how to work."

"Young gentlemen," and the artist spoke with deliberation and emphasis, "your titles are rather top-heavy, and your club

clothes are a bit gaudy and flimsy, but there is no discount on your deeds. By way of expressing my approbation of your aims I shall, while I am here, paint a panel for your club quarters; and I hope that it will give you as much pleasure as you have given me."

This was such an unexpected honor that the club greeted the announcement with a three times three, and the ghost yell with which they vanquished the purser of the man-of-war ship.

CHAPTER III.

DON MAKES TWO MOVES.

Don's days were not all spent in reading and dreaming and leading gentlemanly excursionists around the region. Family needs required that he should pick up pennies wherever they could be had for the equivalent of work. When in the spring the herring were going up-stream he stood all day long upon the rocks and dipped them into his herring barrel, and when in the fall the eels were going down-stream, he stood on the bridge till twelve of night ensnaring them with his net, for both herring and eels were easily turned into cash. He mended holes in the highway, picked rock-weed when the tide was out, shingled shanties, cleared the slabs from the gangway of the little saw-mill, turned oats in the kiln of the grist-mill, and planted potatoes or dug them. When the wild berry season was on, he made them pay tribute; and when the rabbits were on the run in winter, he turned many of them into the family larder. He hated a gun, but was never averse to fishing tackle, and so first and last he was worth at least as much as his salt came to.

One day he was ten feet underground scooping earth into a bucket as a well digger, when Feter Piper, who was at the windlass over his head shouted down the opening: "Come up, lad; here's a mon a' the way frae Argyle that wants to see Don Donalds."

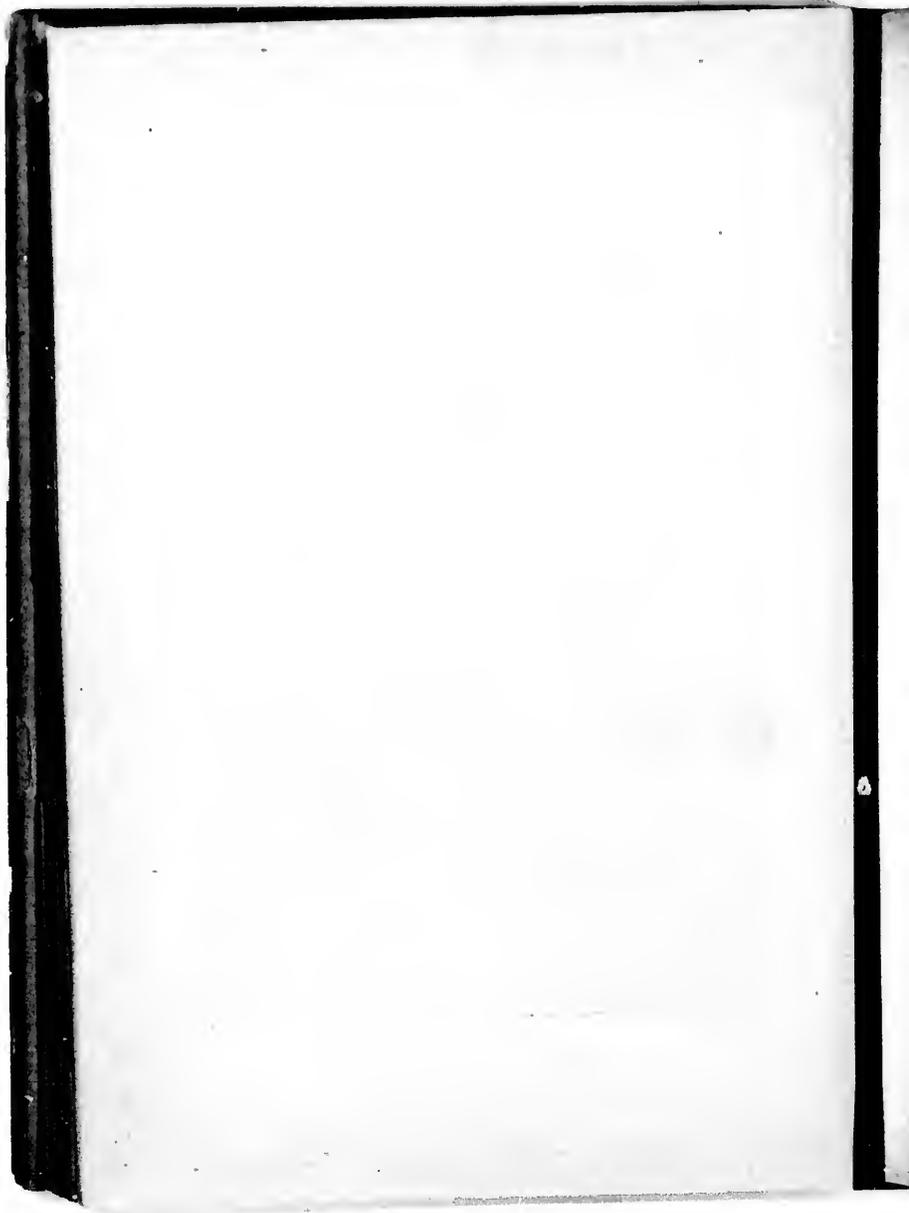
Argyle was thirty miles away. He knew no man there, and wondering what his errand could be, Don climbed the

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bucket rope, hand over hand, begrimed with mud, presented himself to the dapper little gray haired man who awaited his appearance.

"You have been recommended to us for a teacher," said the man without ceremony. "My name is Thomas Tubbins, and I have come down to engage you for the fall and winter terms. Will you come?"

"But I have never taught, and I'm only fourteen years of age," Don replied, in astonishment.

"You are well enough qualified, that I have found out already," said Tubbins, "and that you are big enough and strong enough to handle anybody we've got in our school I can see with my own eyes. Say yes, and we'll settle the rest in no time. School is to begin week after next."

"I must first go home and see what they say about it there," Don replied, rather overwhelmed at this summary way of doing business.

"Oh, I went down to the house first, and your father said yes, providing you thought you could manage a school. It's between us two now; if you're not minded that way, I'll hunt up somebody else."

Don stood hesitating when Peter broke in with: "How long halt ye between two opinions. The Scriptures bid ye to do with all your might whatsoever your hands find to do; see Ecclesiastes nine and ten."

"I'll go," said Don, acting rather upon his own judgment than upon the texts Peter was inclined to fling at him.

"You will board at my house; there is nothing else for me to say; so, good day." And Mr. Tubbins walked away without deigning another word or look.

"Blunt as a peekax and straight as a crowbar," was Peter's comment as Tubbins disappeared over the wall into the high-

way. "Ye'll ken him a' right withouten ony deectionary. But ye maun feenish the well afore ye take the schoolmaster's rod."

"Of course," responded Don, at the same moment making for the rope and sliding down to the bottom of the well again, well satisfied with himself and all the world besides.

He had resumed his labors but a short time when he called out: "Peter, I've struck a pile of money!"

"What do ye mean?" asked Peter, thinking that Don was making sport of him in the fullness of his spirits.

"There is money here in the dirt," and Don threw a number of black coin into the pail, saying: "Pull the pail up and see for yourself."

"Lord help us!" Peter exclaimed in alarm, while he turned the coin over in his hand; "I hope Providence isna goin' to spoil ye by puttin' gowd unner your feet now that ye're elected to become a teacher o' bairns." But he presently added with a sigh of relief: "Ye're delivered frae temptation, lad, for the stuff turns to dust though ye try it never so little."

They were working through an old cellar over which a house had gone up in fire many years before. The total number of coin discovered were few and of no value. Being Spanish pistareens made of adulterated silver, they were so thoroughly corroded that they broke and crumbled like so much clay. The owner of the premises happening along was informed of the discovery, and became so excited that he ordered Don out of the well and went down himself to see what he could find. He was of such ample girth that he was like a cork in the mouth of a bottle. Before he could be brought to the surface again half a dozen men had to be called. The only way they could get him out was by rigging a derrick and pulling him up by block and tackle.

He was so blown and red when he reached the surface and was dumped on the grass to recover himself, that Peter looking upon him with a grim peppery satisfaction, muttered to himself: "Gin the hole had been deeper the auld coof would ha' broken through into the bottomless peet, an' then he would ha' looked redder than he is now."

When Mr. Pauncefort was able to stand up, being a man of active suspicions and dormant honor, he looked at Peter and Don and intimated that they might have found something of value and concealed it about their persons.

At this Peter shook his fist in the man's face and said in great anger: "I'll work no more on yon well tho' ye gae wi'out water thro' a' eternity;" and he stalked off, followed by Don, who, though he said nothing, was white with wrath.

Pauncefort attempted to call them back to their work, but his appeal fell upon deaf ears.

"The mon has no more respect for the ten commandments than he has for the sermon on the mount," growled Peter, "an' that's why he thinks there's nae bottom to onny body else's morality an' Chreestianity. In body he's as beeg as puncheon, but in soul he's as sma' as flea. Gin ye see a mon wha's always spiren' for faults in ither people, ye may be sure he's as full o' holes as a sieve."

Don's time was now mainly spent in repairing the little old sealskin trunk that had long lain in the garret, and in packing into it his personal belongings preparatory to his rapidly approaching departure. It was a proud and exciting morning when he mounted the outside of the stage by the side of the whip, after having condescendingly received the parting salutes of the family, and the coach with its full fare of passengers rolled over the bridge on its way to Argyle.

At the end of the bridge Peter stood with uplifted hand as

a peremptory sign for the coachman to pull up. The stage stopped, but the whip protested that he had no room for an extra passenger.

Nevertheless Peter climbed to the place where Don sat, and with the utmost deliberation and solemnity said: "Ye mind, lad, Revelations ten and second, where the angel set his right foot upon the sea, an' his left foot on the earth? That's a safe trick for an angel; but na lad like you should try it on. Keep baith o' your feet on solid land. When ye're an angel ye can cut up angels' capers." Mid the laughter of the passengers, the blushes of Don and the anathemas of the whip, Peter hobbled down to the road again and watched the coach till it rolled out of sight.

This was Don's first coach trip and the ride through the pines and over the barrens, around the head of harbors and by the foot of lakes filled him with keen delight. At noon he reached his destination, sorry that his journey was at an end.

"Punctual as the spring swallows," said Tubbins by way of greeting. A minute afterward Don and his trunk were in his snug quarters. Having brushed and washed away the dust of travel he went down to an ample dinner, of which Tubbins remarked: "It is better than you will average here. We knew that the pincy woods would give you an extra appetite, and so we have put on extra fixings. Everything is in readiness for you at the schoolhouse, and I have cut a fine birch switch and placed it on the wall behind your desk in full sight."

"I hope that I shall not be obliged to use it," said Don, who had no stomach for compulsory virtues.

"Hope you will, sir," Tubbins said bluntly. "A school without a rod is like a church without a Bible;" and the chief school committeeman looked at Don and sniffed at him as if he had detected the odor of heresy in his garments.

Juvenile nature in Argyle was as timid and gentle as the lambs on the hillsides, and there was no occasion for the use of the birch, save once. A raw girl, fifteen years of age, from the first of Don's appearance became infatuated with him, and spent most of her time in the school-room in pouring out upon him from her great, sky-blue eyes a flood of amatory glances. The young master threatened her with the rod if she did not look more at her books than at him. The threat proving unavailing, he called her up before the school and gave her a couple of taps on the palm of her right hand. They were so gentle, however, that the girl, regarding them as a favor, smiled in his very face, and went back to her seat to resume her looks. The school giggled, and Don relinquished all attempts to subdue the fervor of her eyes, although they, instead of conquering him, chilled him like the staring eyes of a codfish fresh from the deep.

Saturdays were days of freedom and ecstasy. With Tubbins' boat at his disposal, Don rowed and drifted among the hundreds of islands of Argyle Bay like one roaming in fairyland. For change, he would take Tubbins' old white mare and ride up among the Tusket Lakes, where among the hundred or more crystal-clear water gems, he would fish and dream to his heart's content. Like "Tan Pile Jim," he could scarcely feel the necessity of getting ready for another world when this one looked so beautiful.

The winter was not so pleasant; the deep snow was difficult to wade through, and the fierce congealing blasts were hard to face. His fireless room was like the interior of an iceberg. At bedtime he buried his head under the ample pile of quilts, but only to find, when the morning came, that every opening where his breath had found vent was spangled with frost-flakes, which, however beautiful, were like jewels set in a

refrigerator. At the schoolhouse, not over tight at best, Jack Frost played all sorts of pranks notwithstanding the wood went into the great stove at the rate of a tree a day. Trials have their uses, and in the absence of outdoor attractions, teacher and scholars made advances in their work at a gait that delighted Tubbins.

"I did a good thing for Argyle when I pulled you out of that well in Barrington," he said to Don one day, after putting the school through a committee inspection.

"I am glad you think so," Don responded simply, blushing to hear himself praised.

"Even Milly Hatfield has caught the study fever," said Tubbins, referring to the girl with the codfish eyes. "That's because she doesn't worship you as much as she did. I thought for awhile that we should have to remove her from school, she looked at you so steadily. Seeing so much of you has disenchanting her;" and Tubbins chuckled over his own sapiency.

With the return of the green leaves and the singing birds Don resumed his voyaging among the islands and his rambles among the lakes. A great change was taking place in him. He felt as though he must plume his own wings and take a flight into the great world. His elder brothers, with the irresistible instincts of Americans, had already gone over to the States. One was supposed to be in Boston, in an apothecary shop, and another in the same city making ready for a voyage around the world in a clipper ship. Another was somewhere in the interior of Massachusetts taking an academic course of study; and still another was somewhere in New Hampshire making his first experiments in preaching, upon a country congregation.

Seeing the topmasts of a schooner peeping over the tree-

tops of one of the harbor islands one Saturday morning, Don rowed off and boarded her. To his surprise he saw that she was named The Milly Hatfield, and when he reached the deck he was still more surprised to learn that the captain was Milly's father. He soon learned that the captain and his crew were getting ready for a trip to Boston.

"When do you sail?" Don asked.

"One week from to-day, at eleven sharp, wind and weather permitting."

"Will you take me for a passenger," said Don, seized with a sudden inspiration.

"Certainly—half a dozen of you, if you wish; and you have done so much in the way of packing Milly's head with common sense, the trip sha'n't cost you a cent." And the dry old captain looked at him so quizzically, Don felt as if a package of needles had been using him for a needle-cushion.

"But I am in earnest."

"So am I."

"Thank you. I'll be on hand for the trip."

"Coming back this way?"

"Of course not."

"Have you received permission from home?"

"No," said Don with emphasis, tossing his head with a swaggering swing. "I guess I can take care of myself." His experience in school had puffed his vanity and independence to a dangerous extent, and he was ready to lock horns with almost anything in the way of adventure.

"Very well; if you can risk it, I'll do the same; but I hope you have laid in a good supply of sand and grit. Boston isn't Barrington, you know. And a youngster like you makes a small showing among the old elephants of a city."

But Don was not to be frightened. On the Friday follow-

ing Tubbins paid him an even fifty dollars, after deducting his board.

On Saturday morning he rowed his young boarder out to the Milly Hatfield, and found her just at the point of raising her anchor.

"If the Yankees prove too much for you," said he, "come back to Argyle and we will give you the school for the next season. And if you stay here long enough, perhaps Captain Hatfield will give you his daughter, and throw the vessel in to boot."

The allusion to Milly almost destroyed the possibility of a sentimental separation from the jocular Tubbins, and Don replied with inward ire: "You may be sure that I'll never come back to Nova Scotia to live; no, not for all the girls and all the vessels in the province."

"Well, here's a good-bye to you, and good luck to you wherever you go," said Tubbins with strong feeling as he went over the rail and turned his boat to shore.

The Hatfield pulled her anchor to the cathead immediately, and after disentangling herself from the many islands of Argyle Bay, pointed her head directly for Boston. If she had been as big as The Great Eastern, her capacity would have been inadequate for the cargo of expectations Don carried secreted under his vest.

Midway the Bay of Fundy the vessel ran into a gale of wind that raised such a tempestuous sea, Don was turned into a hive of miniature volcanoes. In the agony of his throes he thought of Peter Piper's last words, and from the bottom of his soul wished that instead of putting both feet upon the sea he had been wise enough to glue them to the land. When fairer weather returned his spirits went to the masthead again, and the horizon once more became roseate with youthful hopes and anticipations.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE CITY OF NOTIONS.

Don's head was packed with points concerning the possibilities of boys. From the parental fountain, from the Sunday school corner, from the pulpit, and from the pages of divers books that gave patent recipes for getting on in the world, he had acquired a stock of principles and examples sufficient to equip a regiment of boys. Even a bishop had laid his hand upon his frowzy head of hair and predicted for him success and distinction.

By the most approved processes it had been drilled into him that many a boy who began his career barefooted had reached conditions in life in which he was able to wear a different pair of shoes for every day in the week. It had not occurred to him that all boys—and girls, too, for that matter, are born barefooted. Much less was he aware that in spite of the best footwear no means had yet been devised by which one could entirely avoid an occasional stubbing of one's toes against unforeseen obstructions. Being so full of the idea of wearing patent leather shoes and walking on paved streets, there was not enough room left for him to think of things which might joggle his understanding and pitch him forward on lines not in keeping with a strict perpendicular. Fortunate it is for boys that their hatbands are not measured by their thoughts, for a hatband several miles in circumference would be an inconvenient thing to carry on one's head.

The Hatfield was approaching her destination when the lookout at the fore shouted: "Land, ho!"

The inexperienced eye could see only three purple spots on the horizon ahead, but the captain recognized in them the Blue Hills, and the Wachusetts and the Monadnock mountains. Presently the whole coastline rose out of the sea like a blue cloud, and Boston Lighthouse could be seen pencilled distinctly against the sky. Passing the frowning fortifications of the harbor the Milly Hatfield dropped her anchor a short distance from the end of Long Wharf. The dome of the capitol and the gray shaft of Bunker Hill monument seemed to Don to be among the wonders of the world. But what most impressed him was the forest of steeples, for he thought where there were so many churches there must be few chances for a boy like himself to come to harm.

In the midst of his reflections the customs' officer pulled alongside and soon after was rummaging his trunk with scant respect for its contents. Don consoled himself for the desecration by watching him while he performed the same ceremony for the personal baggage of the captain and his crew.

"Now that you are here," said the captain to Don as soon as the officer had disappeared, "where are you going to put up?"

"At Covert's boarding house on North Square," was the prompt answer. "That is where my brothers put up when they are here."

"Very good, my lad; then we'll keep each other company; for that is where I always stay when I am in port. We will send our duds up by dray, and walk up ourselves, for as soon as you set foot within a city, you must tighten the strap around your pocket book and make a business of seeing how little money you can spend. Pocket books in a place like this soon

become flabby unless you keep the stuffing in them as long as you can."

Don thought of his fifty dollars and felt quite sure that it would be a long time before his wealth could take wings to itself and fly away.

The most verdant thing in all this world is a lad dropped from the heart of the country into the heart of a city for the first time, except, perhaps, the lad who is dropped from the heart of the city into the heart of the country for the first time. Don had heard of Boston as The City of Notions, but had vague ideas as to the origin of the phrase. Now he was sure that he understood why the words were used; the variety of buildings, the diversity of the people on the streets, the multitude of things offered for sale, the crookedness of the thoroughfares and the lack of uniformity among the vehicles made it all as plain as day. Later in his experience he enlarged his understanding.

Ascending a hill, and turning through a narrow dingy street they entered a small triangular space which the captain said was the square for which they were seeking. At the top of the hill they came to the head of the square, and midway the block that formed one side of the square they stopped in front of a comparatively modern red brick four-story house, down the stoop of which ran a pair of highly polished brass railings. At the door they were met by a middle-aged man who had a flaring set of false teeth, a thick shock of black false hair, a pair of narrow watery eyes and an artificial smile that was a perpetual fixture along the straight lines that answered for lips.

"Hello Hatfield!" exclaimed a thin nasal voice which came from the top of the nose instead of from the bottom of the lungs. "I was just thinking of you and bluenose potatoes. You know you promised to bring me fifty bushels when you

came over again. My boarders think there is nothing in the world like bluenose murphies." And he shook Hatfield by the hand with the heartiness of an apparent friend.

"The potatoes are on board all right," Hatfield responded, laughingly, and with a deep sub-bass of a voice that, by contrast, made Covert's voice sound like the squeal of a mouse or the squeak of a door-hinge. "But let me introduce you to this boy; he's a brother of the Donalds tribe, of whom you have had four here already. He's out to take a look at the world, and wants you to take him in for awhile. He's going to become a millionaire and will stay with you until he can get his bearings."

"I'm rather particular about my boarders, but I know that his tribe is a good one, and I'll take him in with pleasure," said Covert, extending a hand, the touch of which made Don feel as if he were shaking an eel that had just been pulled from a mud-hole. The looks, voice and touch of the man convinced Don off-hand that either the church steeples had failed to do their duty by him or else had failed to make any impression upon him.

They were now in the reception room, where they were met by Mrs. Covert, a short, thick, red-skinned woman, whose studiously benevolent face seemed to make immediate amends for her husband's abounding deficiencies. Don thought that she was certainly the better half of the man, and he immediately jumped to the conclusion that the only excuse he had for sharing the premises with her was the fact that he was her man-of-all-work.

Hatfield began to make inquiries about the Donalds brothers in the hope that some of them were in the house, or at least in the vicinity.

"The one who is the first officer of The John Bertram sailed

for China yesterday," said Mrs. Covert. The one that preaches in New Hampshire, together with the one who is studying in Worcester, came down to see him off. They left the city this morning. The one who used to be in the apothecary store on Blackstone street left the city some time ago for some place in Rhode Island.

Seeing that Don was bitterly disappointed, she immediately added, with a great show of sympathy: "I hope that you will not take this news too much to heart. You are rather young to be so far away from home with nobody to look after you. I liked your brothers and shall like you. Make our house your home and consider me and my husband as your friends, for we will do all we can to make the house pleasant for you and to help you along."

"And all this for only five dollars a week, with washing and lights free," squeaked Mr. Covert, with ostentatious bluntness, and looking at the lad as if estimating his resources and the amount of squeezing he would bear.

Don thought that this was a somewhat singular way of making things pleasant, and he began to make a rapid mental calculation, the effect of which was by no means reassuring.

"My husband never thinks of anything else besides dollars and cents," said the woman. "If he were burying me he'd think more about the dollars it cost than he would about the dead and lost. I'm not built that way, as the saying is, though if he were to die, I should immediately begin to look for a man who was born with a soul in him."

Under this withering attack Mr. Covert, so far from shrinking, only extended his habitual smile up his nose and into a tenuous laugh that was thinner than the upper notes of a worn-out singer.

"My wife has so much soul," he squeaked, "that if I were

not here to look after her, her boarders would crowd her into the almshouse in less than six months. If she were to die I'd hunt up someone who had sense enough to keep her heart under lock and key."

A maturer acquaintance with this pair of human oddities convinced Don that there was a good business understanding between them notwithstanding the apparent discrepancy between their dispositions. Mr. Covert made profitable traffic in his wife's seeming generosity, while she craftily utilized his ostentatious meanness. He used her beaming face by way of attracting customers; and she used his mercenary spirit by way of securing prompt payments and limited expenditures.

"Don't take either of them too seriously," said the knowing Hatfield, when both husband and wife had left the room; "but keep your eyes peeled for both of them. If you fear the man too much he'll skin the hide from you, and if you trust the woman too much, the effect will be about the same. The only difference between them is, she rows with one oar on one side of the boat, and he uses the other one on the other side. Between the two oars they keep going ahead and manage to lay up considerable of their boarders' money."

Don spent several days looking about the city and getting used to the stir and noise of the metropolis of The Old Bay State. The streets were so crooked that he made short excursions at first, but little by little he acquired a courage which enabled him to extend his adventures to Boston Common and the old historic elm tree, which, in view of his acquaintance with the monarchs of primeval forests looked both dilapidated and disreputable. And the Frog Pond, with its seven by nine dimensions carefully bounded by granite curbing, and its shallow bottom paved with cobble-stone, and its dirty water kept from evaporating altogether by the squirtings of a fitful foun-

tain, suffered immensely by comparison with the crystal-clear waters of the ponds and lakes he was familiar with in the vicinity of home. The State House on the hill caused him to remove his hat while he wandered to and fro among the corridors, but The Old State House at the head of State street, notwithstanding its colonial associations, failed to gain from him more than a passing contemptuous glance. The Old South Church, and The Brattle Street Church, with its ostentatious cannon ball sticking like a black punctuation point among the drab-painted brick were grievous disappointments. Later, however, when his Boston tastes were more generally and intelligently developed he swore by the old landmarks with all the enthusiasm of one to the manor born, for there is nothing like education for the multiplication of exclamation points in one's every day life.

Hearing of The Maeonion as the place where Theodore Parker, the most distinguished preacher of Boston preached, he went out to see it. When he came out of the building his nose pointed the wrong way, and before he knew it he was walking among green fields in Roxbury. He was badly lost. If it had been a case of being lost in the woods of the primitive wilderness of the government lands in Nova Scotia, he would have turned around three times to the right, and three times to the left, and then with three summersaults to finish the ceremony, he would have started on a bee line for home as surely as if he were guided by the north star or a pocket compass. But he did not dare to cut up any such capers as this among the people who were passing. Seeing the Old South steeple in the distance, he steered a straight course for that, and by good luck reached his boarding house in time for supper.

"What did you do when you discovered you were lost?" asked one of the boarders.

"I hailed the first good looking man I met and requested him to tell me the way to Mr. Covert's house." Don could not quite understand why the table broke into such violent laughter at his answer.

"What did he say?" inquired Covert, whose smile had more semblance of genuineness than it had shown for many a day.

"He didn't say anything, but looked at me in a puzzled way and then hurried on. He must have been a deaf and dumb man."

The laugh broke out afresh, and Don began to get red and angry.

"The next time you get lost," said Covert, "ask the way to North Square. Although this square is respectable enough in itself, it is at the head of Ann street—the worst street in the city; and everybody knows where the worst street is, just as every man knows his neighbor's worst points."

"Your own bad points are so conspicuously prominent that no one needs be at the trouble of hunting for them," said Mrs. Covert, slyly.

"Of course not," Covert retorted, with seeming anger. "I wasn't cut out for an angel, as you were."

The boarders had become so accustomed to these false sword thrusts that they took no notice of them, except to put themselves on guard against any fresh demands the two might combine to make upon them.

The boarders consisted of fifteen men and nine ladies. The first time Don took his seat at dinner he thought that the ladies were the most wonderfully and fearfully arranged affairs that were ever created. And he tried to imagine the excitement that their appearance would make in a place like Barrington. It was the first time he had ever seen the sex in all the glory of widely expanded hoops, elaborately shirred waists,

and innumerable soap curls arranged around the upper countenance like a semi-circle of scroll-work. The rings of their fingers made him think that there must also be bells on their toes.

The lady who sat at his right hand was passably comely, but aided by the fashions she was celestially beautiful. She had the manners of a young girl and he fell violently in love with her and worshipped her for a week. He cultivated the curls on his own head and contemplated making material improvements in his own wardrobe during that time. At the end of the week, in answer to a fatal inquiry, Mrs. Covert said:

"Miss Arabella Agincourt is of good family, and has some means, but she is between thirty and forty, has man-made teeth and a very unsuccessful way of besieging the affections of men. She has tried each one of your brothers, but without favorable results. What her object is in dallying with you is more than I can conjecture. She may possibly think that by lavishing her kindness upon you she may regain the chance to hook some one of your brothers. She is very anxious to become a sea captain's wife and has made desperate attempts to capture your eldest brother. I shall not say anything against her, for she will make a most excellent old maid."

This drastic dose ended Don's illusions and set him to thinking about more serious things. He determined to visit his clerical brother and get his advice as to what his course should be. He had never travelled by railway and when he took his seat in a car for the first time his sensations were novel. While wondering how any power on earth could draw after it such a palace-like vehicle, the train started. It was his impression that an earthquake had taken it in tow, and when the speed increased to an express rate, he was quite sure that the first earthquake had been reinforced by another. He sat

bolt upright and held on to the seat in front of him. The screeching of the whistle at every road-crossing was a greater mystery than he had ever heard preached from the pulpit, and vastly more trying to the nerves. Observing that the other passengers evinced no alarm, he slackened his strained muscles and, after a little, ventured to take snap-glances at the whirling landscape.

On arriving at the scattered hamlet of Puddlewit, in New Hampshire, he asked the station agent, who aped the manners of a major general and spoke the language of an ignoramus, to direct him to the house where his brother—giving his name—was staying.

"Rev. Donalds haint stayin' nowheres in this place at present," was the curt and impatient reply. And then, for a wonder, he voluntarily expended a little more breath in adding: "From what I hear, he won't come back here no more. He's such a shadow of a fellow, it's a wonder he can stay anywheres long enough for anybody to make out the shape of his body. If you're gonter chase him about, you'd better straddle the wires and send yourself along by electricity. If you want to get back to where you came from, the train will be along in two hours from now."

Don was so hurt at heart, and withal so angered at the agent's boorishness, he turned his back on him and began to pace the platform. A passing farmer seeing his restlessness and woe-begone appearance, spoke kindly to him, and after melting him into a communicative mood, insisted upon taking him home to dinner.

"I'm a deacon in the church to which your brother preached," he said at the dinner table, "and he left word with me to forward his mail to Logville, Maine. We liked him well, but a bigger church got hold of him and pulled him away

from us. It is all right, however; if a minister does not look after his own pie and pudding, no one else will do it for him. 'Covet earnestly the best gifts' is what the Bible says; and I suppose that the rule is intended to work for the benefit of the ministers as well as for the benefit of the churches."

The good man pressed Don to spend the night with him, saying: "It will give you a chance to look over the country, which your brother said was as pretty a bit of scenery as God ever decorated the earth with. He rambled about here a good deal and made use of the things he saw in such a way in the pulpit that we had to keep our own eyes open to see what was going to come next. Most of the preachers we have had here gave us such common things in such a common way that I have wondered why the patent medicine men have not bottled them up and advertised them for sleep-producing remedies, to be taken just before going to bed."

Don returned to Boston on the next train, and the following day went to Worcester in search of his brother, but only to learn that he had removed to a distant field to take charge of an academy.

Seeing that the stranger lad was much cast down by this intelligence, the principal sympathetically drew from him some account of his desires and purposes, and, in the end urged him to enter the school, assuring him that he could easily find work enough to provide for his board, while the tuition fees might remain a debt until such times as he was able to pay it.

Although strongly inclined to accept the offer, Don, on second thought, revolted against the idea of putting a mortgage on his future. "Pay as you go" was a cherished rule, and he determined not to become divorced from it.

Thanking the kind principal for his generous interest in a total stranger, Don turned his back upon the attractive buildings and beautiful grounds and returned to Boston.

CHAPTER V.

AN ATTIC PHILOSOPHER.

Don's resources were rapidly dwindling. It became necessary for him to reduce his expenses and to procure employment. Believing in doing one thing at a time, the first thing he did was to consult with Mrs. Covert concerning a lower rate of board, which he thought he could obtain by taking a smaller and less advantageous room.

"Of course," said Mrs. Covert cautiously, "if you are getting out of money, you must fit your outlay to your necessities."

"In other words," interrupted her husband, "five dollars is our lowest rate, and if you are not able to pay that amount, you must make way for those who can. We do no business for charity."

Such brutal business bluntness as this turned Don into an icicle so far as further confidences were concerned, and he left the house without a word. In less than half an hour he had contracted to board with Widow Williams, on the same square, for two dollars a week. His accommodations included an attic room and two meals a day.

"When it is more convenient for me, I will take dinner, also," he said, while making his terms. But by a harmless prevarication he concealed his intention of going without his dinner until such times as his finances would allow of his engaging full board, and he did it with such an air of genuine independence that the widow had no suspicion of the truth.

Shouldering his trunk with more of triumph than of humiliation, he crossed the Square and mounted to his attic. Nor did the limitations of his quarters diminish from the elasticity of his spirits; he had taken the bull by the horns and considered himself master of the situation, such as it was. The Wellington of Waterloo could not have experienced any higher satisfaction.

The attic had but one window which commanded a lonesome view of a wilderness of monotonous slate roofs and chimneys. The room was barely high enough for him to stand upright in, and the furnishings consisted of a single bed, a wash-stand, a lone wooden chair, and a faded piece of carpet placed in front of the bed.

Being neat and scrupulously clean himself, he was glad to notice that, although the paint of the room was battered and worn, the bed and the floor were neat and clean.

"Well," he said, after surveying his surroundings, "I am nearer Heaven than I have ever been before; that's one satisfaction. I'll just imagine that I am a crow swinging in the top of a Nova Scotian pine. The next thing in order is for me to get something to do, so that I can put myself in the way of moving a little lower down in the direction of a room that has four good square walls. That low place under the eave looks as if it were an invitation to mice, and, possibly, to rats. And now I wonder what sort of people I have fallen among this time."

His curiosity was soon to be satisfied. Mrs. Williams was the relict of a sea captain, who lost his life upon the coast of Madagascar. Although he had been dead several years, she was still wearing mourning. She owned the house in which she lived, and was trying to retain it by keeping boarders on a small scale. She was tall and thin, with a pale face that bore

marks of struggle and anxiety, which, however, did not efface the signs of refinement and sweetness which seemed to dominate her features and her manners.

After Don had taken possession of his attic, he went down to the sitting room, where Mrs. Williams introduced him to her only daughter, Leonora, a rather petite, pretty brunette of eleven years.

"I hope you will be good friends," said the widow to Don, "though I must forewarn you that she is an incorrigible bunch of mischief. Besides her, I have a son who is about your age, as I should judge—an only son between whom and you there is a very striking resemblance. Bert is rather old-seeming for one so young, but for that very reason he is a great help and comfort to me. He'll be glad when he learns that I have taken a boy-boarder, though possibly, he may undertake to oversee you as he tries to oversee Nora, here."

"He's an awful boy, and will wind you around his finger like a piece of thread unless you are as spunky as I am," Nora volunteered to say, while her eyes showed that she was indulging in a bit of precocious slander against her brother, just for the fun of the thing.

"I am very fond of awful boys," replied Don, solemnly; "and I suppose it's because I am such an awful boy myself."

Nora looked at him keenly, and seeing the latent mischief in his eyes, broke into a ripple of musical laughter. "I think you will do," she remarked with candid indefiniteness. "Bert will find his mate when he comes home to-night and begins to get acquainted with you."

"Do you think that there will be a fight?" asked Don, with comic seriousness.

"Yes; just such a one as we are having."

"Then no harm will come to either of us; for I am sure

that you are treating me very kindly, and that, of course makes me feel friendly toward you.

The mother seemed to enjoy the juvenile blade-testing that was going on in her presence. It was plain that she took a motherly pride in her children, and was not given to drawing the string of the youthful bow too tightly. It was also evident that Don's self possession and general manner gave her a good impression of him. This impression was deepened when he voluntarily gave a short account of himself—how he came to be in the city, and how he happened to make application to her for boarding. Nora listened to him seriously, as he told his brief story, and once or twice almost cried as he told of his disappointments and perplexities.

On going back to his attic, Don congratulated himself upon being in a house that had two young people in it, and especially upon having a landlady who appeared to possess a soul. While he was leaning with both arms upon the window-sill, and with his face turned pathetically up to the blue sky—for he was thinking of home—there was a sharp rap at the door.

On opening the door he stood face to face with one who, in size, age, complexion, features and entire appearance, was the very picture of himself. But for the more stylish clothing he would have thought that he was seeing himself in a mirror. He recalled Mrs. Williams' remark, but was scarcely prepared to look upon his double.

"I beg your pardon," said the visitor, "I am Bert Williams. My mother has just told me about you, and Nora gave such a rosy account of you, and both said we looked so much alike, I came up without ceremony to tell you that I am glad that there is another boy in the house."

"Thank you," Don responded cordially; "come in and take

a seat," and he handed to him the lone chair with such precise politeness, and withal with such a gleam of unmistakable humor that Bert laughed outright. His amusement was increased when Don, taking his seat upon the edge of the bed, added, "please excuse me for occupying the sofa."

Bert thought to himself: "It is as Nora says, 'This country chap is nobody's fool.'" Then giving way to a sudden apologetic impulse he said: "It may give you some satisfaction to know that I am an attic boy myself—I occupy the one on the other side of the house; for the fact is, that in order to keep our heads above water we are compelled to give the best rooms in the house to the boarders who can pay for them."

"I am glad to have you for a neighbor," Don replied sincerely. "A pair of attic boys ought to get along together nicely. I'd rather be a boy in an attic than an old man in a palace."

"So would I; but I'd hate to live in an attic till I became an old man. Old people ought to have the best that goes. There's mother, for instance—if I thought that she would have to live in my attic when she got old—or in a place that was no better than that, I'd do something desperate to prevent it."

At this moment the supper-bell rang and the two went down together feeling as if they had known each other for years. Mrs. William and Nora exchanged glances of satisfaction when they observed how respectfully attentive Bert was to the newcomer. The boarders—seven men and four women—all of the commonest class—took little notice of the stranger. Their own incessant struggle for existence and for the most ordinary necessities of life made them comparatively indifferent to the existence of others. They were moving along on that dead level where people seldom become very bad or very good, and where they are content—after a sort—if they can manage to make both ends meet.

After tea Bert invited Don into what he called his hole under the roof. It was very much like Don's attic except that it had two windows which looked down upon the Square and over the pavement to the Mariner's House opposite. There were two chairs in the room, which, upon the whole, was furnished slightly better than Don's quarters. But what attracted Don's attention more than anything else was a little library of about two hundred and fifty books, that appeared to be nicely bound, and to be made up of authors of national and general fame.

Seeing that his visitor was interested in the books, Bert said: "They didn't cost me a cent, and they are a queer lot. I am a sort of boy of all work in Ticknor and Field's Old Corner Book Store, up on Washington street. It's the funniest old shanty you ever saw. They say it was built when the cows went to pasture up in that part of the city—in the times when the Puritans talked religion through their noses all day and went about looking like scarecrows. That was before they had the Boston Tea Party we have heard so much about. Well, I get only five dollars a week, and, of course, can't afford to buy books. But every book that gets bound wrong end foremost—with the beginning in the middle, or the end at the beginning, or bottom-side up, or mixed up generally—as if the binders or the printers had been on a big drunk—every book of this kind is given to me. Those that I want to read I can easily piece together enough to get the hang of them and those I find too dull to read, I let stand on their heads to their hearts' content. So it doesn't matter whether the books are bound right or wrong, so long as I can manage to get out of them all that I care to get.

"That Old Corner Bookstore, by the way, has more big literary customers and visitors than any other store in the

United States; and they come there so often that they talk to me as if I were the son of every one of them. These books," pointing to a number that stood by themselves, "were given to me by the persons who wrote them.

"Mr. Lowell made me a present of his Bigelow Papers—and there are piles and piles of fun in them. Doctor Holmes gave me that Breakfast Table book, and his Wonderful One Hoss Shay is the greatest rib-tickler I ever got hold of. Mr. Thoreau, though he is such a farmer-like oddity, gave me that Life in the Woods. I get lost in that sometimes, it carries me so far away from the city. Longfellow and Whittier gave me those volumes of poems, and when I am a head taller I shall probably prize them, even more than I do now. That tall Emerson and little Whipple gave me their Essays, but they are like boxes of raisins, you can't eat much of them at one time. Big Bayard Taylor gave me the Travels, and you can see for yourself that they have been pretty well thumbed. Grace Greenwood and John G. Saxe gave me that volume of funny poems, and that Haps and Mishaps—and they are downright good, too. And the rest, that you see there by themselves, were also given to me by the persons who wrote them—I've got all their autographs in the books and when I am old enough, I suppose I shall be mighty proud of them.

It is big fun to be in a store where such chaps meet almost every week. If you keep your ears open, you hear some funny things, for they joke one another like a lot of boys just out of school—but you have to keep a sharp lookout for their fine points, for it is as easy to lose them as it is to lose a fine needle." Bert ran on not boastfully, but by way of entertaining his visitor, as he tried to explain.

Don looked at the boy with growing admiration and expressed his opinion by saying: "Well, if you do live in an

attic, you are on the ground floor so far as books and authors are concerned, and that ought to be a great inspiration to you."

"Inspiration to what?" asked Bert pertinently.

"To reading and all that sort of thing, you know."

"Bert laughed as he said: "If you were in a grocery store and should be inspired to eat the candies and other goodies your inspiration would be likely to get into trouble. Not so much on account of the value of the stuff you ate as on account of the business you neglect. Ticknor and Field are kind old chaps, but if you got to being too much inspired among their books, they'd bounce you in a minute. You are there to look after their business and if you didn't attend to it, they'd make it their business to know the reason why, and that mighty quick, too. They are up there on that old corner to make money; and even if their writers and the big book-bugs didn't make dollars and cents for them they'd get swept out of the way like so much old paper rubbish. That's the way the world wags in the city, and I guess it wags the same way in the country. It's got so here that unless a preacher fills his pews and draws in holy money, his religion goes for nothing. People are measured by what you can squeeze out of them and not by what you can squeeze into them."

Don began to see that this city boy was a good deal sharper than himself; the rush of life and the pressure of competition had forced him to sink his foundations down to hardpan. There wasn't much balloon or cloud stuff in his make-up. He said to him: "You talk as if you were fifty years old. Do all Boston boys talk that way?"

"You have to be pretty old to get along here; but I'll admit that there are lunies here as well as elsewhere who do nothing but sail among the clouds."

Don thought of Peter Piper, and he told Bert about him,

and quoted some of his sayings, winding up, however, with the information that the old fellow was, in spite of his worldly wisdom, as poor as some of the people he saw on the streets of Boston.

"He was so long getting hold of his wisdom that it probably came too late to do him any good except in the way of giving it to others," said Bert, half shutting one eye before he ventured to hint at the solution of the mystery of useless knowledge and experience. "And the trouble with most of us youngsters is, we are unwilling to profit by others' experiences. We flounder into the stream at the risk of drowning when we might go safely and dry shod over the bridge that's been built for our benefit. Next to the old fool who never profits by experience is the young fool who never profits by advice."

The boys spent the evening together, and when Don rose to go to his own attic, Bert, placing his hand upon his shoulder said, earnestly: "I like you, Don Donalds. When you want any of my books or anything else I have got, come in and help yourself. I think that you have been a reader. If you happen to get hold of any of the upside-down, or middle-at-the-beginning fellows, it will be good fun for you to guess how they ought to go. If you don't want to take the trouble of hunting up the connections, you can read right straight along, and in that way you will hit more funny things than you can imagine. If you want to see the fun that's going on in the square, there's a window for each of us; come in whenever you want to look out."

When Don went back to his attic he saw something that was a source of great pleasure to him. The fragment of faded carpet had been removed and a much larger and brighter piece substituted for it. In the middle of the carpet stood a neat

little table with places in it for odds and ends. The lighted lamp stood in the center of a pretty snow-white mat, and by the side of the table stood a very comfortable rocking-chair with a clean tidy fastened by new blue ribbons. On one of the upright walls were two framed prints which pleased Don as much as anything. He was so charmed with the changes wrought by these additions, that he went back to Bert, and begged him to return his visit forthwith.

Smiling, yet embarrassed, Bert said in reply to Don's expressions of pleasure: "Mother, Nora and I put our heads together after tea to see what we could find to add to your furniture and fixings. There was little we could get, but the place looks better than it did before. One reason why I kept talking to you at the rate I did while you were in my room, was to give mother and Nora a chance to finish what they were doing here. Now, if you will take some of my books and place them upon your table, you can imagine yourself a garret genius or anything else you please."

"I am very thankful for the trouble you have taken," Don said gratefully, "but I hope that you have not put yourselves out in putting these extras in here. When the Coverts turned me out this morning, I began to think that the Boston steeples had missed their mission, but now that you have taken me in and conspired so thoughtfully for my comfort, I shall think better of the steeples."

"Don't trust too much in steeples," Bert replied, somewhat bitterly, "they point themselves so high that they miss the most of what is really going on in the world. I sometimes think that they have as little influence over things below as they do over the sun, moon and stars above. If you've got money, the church is a good place to get into; if you haven't, it's a capital place to keep out of. My mother is a good

woman, if there ever was one, and she is a member of the church, but as she is poor, it's precious little notice she gets from the steeples. Perhaps I ought not to speak in this way. It's more than likely that I am soured on the churches, and when one sours on anything, he's as unreasonable as a balky horse."

"Seeing that your mother is a church-woman, I shall continue to think well of the steeples; if we cannot depend upon them, what can we depend on?"

CHAPTER VI.

LOOKING FOR A SITUATION.

"You will find this hunting for a situation a pretty tough business," said Bert to Don, the next morning, when the latter started with him on the way to the Old Book Store, intending from that point to begin his explorations for employment. "I am Boston born and have lived here all my days, but I never knew what a nobody I was until I began to hunt for work and a chance to live. In the first place, everybody wants you to have a character that is as long as the Ten Commandments, and just as plainly written by some Moses, or some one equal to him. Then, in addition, you must be sharp enough to take all the advantage you can, and have no one take advantage of you. Besides, they'll require that you should reside with your parents or some relatives who will keep a constant sharp-stick watch over you every hour that you are not on duty. Most of them want you to work for nothing during the first six months, or the first year. When they begin to pay you anything, the amount is so small it almost needs a microscope to find it. If you go into anything in the shape of a store, you must have both the manners and the dress of a young gentleman, and must act as old and be as patient as an old gentleman of fifty, and yet be ready to be pulled and hauled about as if you were born a slave. You can't count on sympathy nor anything else of that sort. I thought I had a trump card when I first started out, and told people that my mother was a poor widow, and that I was an only son who was trying to help her along;

it didn't count any more than so much blank pasteboard. Of course there are exceptions, otherwise I should not have had any show at all. After awhile I happened to hit my present employers, and they have done the square thing for me right along, though they have made me toe the mark for all I was worth."

"You are giving me a pretty black picture," said Don, with a feeling of dismay.

"It's black enough, but not very pretty," Bert replied laughingly. "It is better to know the truth from the beginning, for most of us boys have such big expectations that it is best to give them a bit of a tumble from the start. We can then go about our business as if we were on a hunt through Africa, and when the pull comes, instead of whining like babies, we can pull all the harder. You stand as good a chance to stumble upon a decent place as I did. Of course you have got certificates of character with you, signed by your minister and the justice of the peace, and the doctor and the rest of the big bugs?"

"Not a certificate," Don replied blankly. "I never thought of such a thing. I wanted to come to Boston, and so I came at the first opportunity."

"You must be awful green in some things!" Bert exclaimed, forcibly and bluntly. "What did you do before you came here?"

"I taught school."

"Taught school—a youngster like you! Well, that knocks me to pieces. Then you must know something, and must know how to write a good hand. That's two things that anybody can satisfy himself about. People here are great on faces, and perhaps they'll take your face for a certificate of character, just as I did from the start. North Square isn't the

best place in the world to hail from as a boarding place, yet if anybody goes to prying into our family affairs, I think we can stand all the light they can bring. But here I am, at my place of business. You can go up to the Common and ramble around till about nine o'clock; it will give you time to think and to harden up your skin. When you begin your search, go at it with an iron-clad determination. And if your heart takes a notion to sink, prop it up with stiff timber, and remember that there are lots and lots of boys in a worse fix than you are, and they are not all bad boys, either." And with this queer jumble of discouragement and encouragement, Bert turned the key in the door and disappeared. When he went home to his dinner, he asked Nora if Don had got home.

"No," said Nora, "he hasn't had time to get his dinner yet. He doesn't get here till about two o'clock."

A sudden suspicion flashed through Bert's head; he believed that Don went without his dinner. He looked his worry so plainly that Nora asked him what the matter was.

"Oh, nothing, sweet," he replied quickly, knowing that if Don was keeping a secret it would be treason for him to whisper his suspicions to either Nora or his mother. But during the whole afternoon there were wrinkles between his eyes—wrinkles of deep thought.

When he came home at night and found Don in the attic, a single glance at his face revealed the futility of the day's search. Yet Don received him with a cordial smile.

"Haven't hit anything yet?" he asked, explicitly.

"Nor come within a thousand miles of anything, though I have been firing myself into every place I could get into decently. In most of the places I got fired out as quickly as I got in."

"Going at it again to-morrow?"

"Of course! One has to learn how to shoot before he can hit any mark. I'm learning, and that's one consolation."

"Shoulder aches a bit from the kick of the gun, doesn't it?"

"Oh, yes, a little bit; but that's nothing."

"Well, you've got pluck if you are a little green," said Bert, beginning to laugh in response to the mirth he saw in Don's eyes, a mirth which he knew was provoked by the grim catechism to which he was subjected. "Keep that sort of thing up and you'll come out somewhere, yet."

"Yes; out at the elbows, and out at the toes," Don said, doggedly. "And out of Boston, too," he added, after a pause.

"But didn't you get so much as a nibble?" persisted Bert.

"Yes, I got two; but when they asked for my certificate of character, and where and with whom I lived, my face wouldn't pass for a cent, and so I passed out as I went in."

Bert was silent and troubled at this, for it was as he feared it would be. "Well," he said at length, "there's no use in nursing trouble. Shake off this day and get ready for another. And, by the way, why can't you write home and get somebody to fit you to a recommendation. It may be of use yet. Certificates of character are of course puffy things, but like swimming bladders or cork, they sometimes help one to keep on top of the water till he can strike out for himself."

Don said he would write and get a whole battery of certificates; and he wrote accordingly.

But the times were dull, boys were thick, the unemployed innumerable, and business men as touchy and as short as if applicants were as pronounced intruders in the world as bottle-flies are in a domestic establishment.

Ten days passed away, and although Don was indefatigable in his efforts he was apparently no nearer success than the first day he started out on his weary round. Most of the posted

notices, and a large proportion of the advertisements answered were but the disguises worn by unadulterated meanness—baits of men who were planning to secure slaves that would do their work without cost.

Every evening Bert would call upon Don to report, and his company and persistent encouragements did much to keep Don's spirits up.

One evening Don began his usual report by saying: "Well, I have made a big dash this afternoon."

Bert at once became much excited, and pressed for a full explanation.

"I had about made up my mind that I was tired of running around this town like a beggar, when, at the bottom of the Square I saw a notice that a boy was wanted to ship on board a vessel bound for Japan. I went in and after talking with the man who keeps the place, agreed to sign the papers to-morrow."

Bert flushed with excitement, and said almost angrily: "But you will do no such thing. That place is the beginning of perdition to nearly all who step across the sill. It is kept by a land-shark which is the meanest and the most cruel of all the sharks that swim the sea or roam the land. Perhaps you don't know what a land-shark is. I'll tell you: It is a man who tells you that he has got a nice fat thing for you; a chance to see the world on a fine ship, and all that sort of thing. He promises to fit you out with a sea-rig and everything else you need, and to advance you money besides. When you have signed the papers and begin to find out things, you will discover that for your rig and your advance money he has shipped you before the mast and taken a mortgage on your wages from the time you leave port till the time you get into port again. When you get to sea you'll be kicked about by brutes

till you become a brute yourself. If you live to get back again you'll be landed without a cent. Then they'll take you to some low doggery and keep at you till you are forced to ship again under the same conditions. And so they keep it up indefinitely, unless by some special good chance you escape from their clutches. I know the scoundrel who wants to take you in, and if my mother was not such a good woman I'd swear at you hot and heavy for being deceived by such a dog-livered funk as that."

Don had listened to the sugary words of the land-shark, but had no knowledge or intimation of what lay back of the apparently considerate and friendly offers of the unscrupulous schemer, who intended to sell him soul and body. Bert's hot words opened his eyes, and he became alarmed.

"Well," said he desperately, "I have passed my word, and that is something I have never gone back on yet."

"Passed it for what?" Bert exclaimed indignantly. "Did you see the papers? Did the fellow give you any hint of the conditions of the bargain? Don't say a word to me yet," he added, as he saw that Don was about to speak. "Come with me and see how quickly I'll straighten this thing out, and convince you that if a man promises to send you straight to the New Jerusalem that is no reason why you should allow him to put a rope around your neck that will drag you to the other place by express.

Don followed him across the Square to the Mariner's House, which was supported by a religious association, and kept by a religious superintendent in the interest of men who followed the sea.

As soon as they entered the office, Bert, addressing a good looking man, said: "Mr. Truesdale, I want you to go with us

to Lammel's den. He's trying to lay one of his old tricks on my friend, Don Donalds."

This intimation was sufficient, coming as it did from a lad with whom the superintendent was well acquainted, and he immediately followed them. On the way Bert informed him of what had taken place between Don and the land-shark, and also of what Don had said about keeping his word. When they entered the den, Lammels quailed. Nor was he much assured when the superintendent said:

"You have been making one of your bargains with this boy," pointing to Don. "Let me have the papers, please."

Lammels knew the extent of Truesdale's authority, and passed the papers to the superintendent who, notwithstanding the evil scowls of the schemer, read them to Don from beginning to end.

"When you said that you would sign the shipping papers to-morrow, did you mean that you would sign such papers as these?" asked the superintendent, turning to Don.

"No, sir," was the emphatic answer. "He said he would fill in the blanks and have the papers ready for me to sign in the morning."

"But he would have gotten your signature without reading to you the terms of the contract. Are you willing to sign now that you know what the conditions are?"

"No, sir," said Don, more emphatically than before.

"Lammels, you have been trying to inveigle a minor into your clutches; I'll keep these papers and report you to the police," and the superintendent put the papers into his pocket, and turned to leave. He was, however, detained by the pitiful whining of the land-shark, who begged hard for mercy.

Don declared that he himself was partly to blame for not looking more closely into the terms of the contract, and in

case of prosecution he should be obliged to testify to that effect.

Turning to Lammels, the superintendent said, decidedly and severely: "I'll keep the papers, but if you are not arrested it will be owing to the good graces of your interded victim. I am tired of your villainies, and if I can get a good square case against you I'll send you to the penitentiary without mercy; that is where you and all your tribe belong."

"Now, my lad," said Truesdale, while they were walking across the Square, "before you make any more bargains with strangers, come to me and let me know what you are about. The city is full of schemers, some of whom are apparently respectable people, but who for the sake of making a few dollars would stop at nothing. The Mariners' Home is open to you at any time; we have an excellent reading room over there, and you are welcome to the use of it at all times. I am glad that you have Bert Williams for a companion; he's got an old head on his young shoulders, and it will be worth your while to listen to what he says.

When the boys had reached the attic region again, and while they were sitting in Bert's room, he said, referring to their former conversation about church steeples: "Well, Don, I'll candidly confess that the steeple punched a hole through that rascality in a very neat way. But for that Mariners' Home many a poor fellow would be ruined in less than no time."

"Yes, the steeple did the punching, but you did the prompting," Don replied, "and I begin to realize that you have saved me from making a fatal mistake. I'll confess that I am as green a country punkin as ever set foot in a city; but if I am with you much longer I think that I shall begin to show some other colors."

Bert laughed in a shame-faced way, yet used Don's generous compliment as an excuse for another attack, saying, without any beating of the bush: "Now look here, Don, I have got another bone to pick with you. That dinner business is a dead fake. You go without your dinner. And you are green enough to think that you have covered up the deception by saying that when it is more convenient for you, you will take your dinner with us. You might have known that that dodge was too thin for anything, and that I would find you out."

"How did you find it out?" asked Don, giving himself away in the confusion produced by the suddenness of the attack.

"By just guessing at it till I knew it was so," Bert replied rather indefinitely, and with some embarrassment, for he had not failed to observe that there was that in Don's manner that warned him that he was treading upon very delicate ground.

"Have you said anything to your mother or Nora about this?" was the next somewhat portentous question.

"Of course not," Bert said in a hurry. "What you kept as a secret from me, I felt in honor bound to keep secret from them. But the bare thought of you going hollow all through the middle of the day has knocked the bottom out of my appetite time and time again. And when I have left my dinner almost untouched, worrying about you, mother and Nora would dig questions into me so deeply and rapidly I was compelled to burrow like a groundhog in order to keep out of their reach."

Much relieved to find that his affairs were not being discussed by the little family, and grateful to Bert for his manly reserve, Don said: "Your honor and sympathy and generosity are worthy of one of Sir Walter Scott's knights, and I can

talk with you freely. I'm too poor to pay three dollars—the full rate for an attic boarder, so I cut my garment according to my cloth. I do not suffer, and therefore I don't want to be pitied. It isn't a bad plan, this going without one meal a day; it makes you value the other two all the more. Continue to be a good fellow by keeping silent about my dinner.

"But look here, Don Donalds;" this pride of yours may be a good thing to have, and it may grow on the bushes where you have lived, yet I will tell you this: Mother is no fool; she can guess as well as I. I am sure that she is already bothering herself about this dinner affair. Nora is as much of a Yankee as her mother, and she is continually asking where you go to dine. She is such a kitten-hearted thing that she will almost go to pieces if she finds that you are in the habit of carrying an empty stomach one-third of the time."

Don was silent at this new aspect of the case. He saw that his expedient was too transparent to be concealed. Gathering boldness from his silence, Bert said: "Let us split the difference and call it two dollars and a half a week, and then you can eat your dinner like a man and feel as proud as you please."

"It's no use, Bert," Don exclaimed, suddenly becoming confidential; "my pocket-book is far gone with consumption already; and I must stick to my plan even though you proclaim it from the cellar to the house-top."

"Well, here's my ul-ti-ma-tum; I believe that's what they call it, and if you don't comply with it I'll sulk at you with forty-horse power all the rest of the time you are here. I spend more than fifty cents a week for mere nothings. I'll save that money and bank it in you. You'll take it every Saturday night and nobody shall know anything about it. That will make up for your whole board. Of course, it will be a loan, to be paid back when you get ready. If you run entirely

short, you shall stay with us till there's a change in your circumstances. Do you consent? You must take the fifty cents, or the fifty sulks—one or the other."

Don began to laugh; and the more he thought, the merrier he became. He recalled what Nora had said about her brother and thinking of her was like looking at the sun through a rift in the clouds. "When I first came here," he said, "Nora told me that you were an awful boy, and that you would wind me about your finger like a piece of thread. I begin to understand what she meant; you are an awful fellow, in your way. I thankfully accept your offer, but—"

"No matter about the butts," Bert interrupted quickly. "I knew you had lots of common sense beneath your piles of pride, and that I should find it if I kept on digging for it. If you had not accepted my offer, I think I should have taken advantage of our looking so much like twins to put you in my clothes and to send you down stairs to dine turn and turn about with me, knowing that while you were at the table I could have slipped into the pantry and sneaked my dinner. It would have been a puzzler for mother and Nora, and great sport for us."

"Of course you are joking, but our present scheme is almost as ridiculous as that would have been except the fact that we can cover it up better than we could have covered any such game as that. If your mother should find us out I am afraid that she will not have a very good opinion of me."

"Make yourself easy," Bert replied, seeing that a cloud had crossed Don's face, "and come to your dinners like a man. Our secret will be as safe from her as if we had joined the Masons or some other calathumpian society."

Their little fifty-cent romance, of which neither the widow nor the daughter had any suspicion, lasted two weeks.

CHAPTER VII.

DON HAS A GREAT DAY.

Don received mild reproaches from home for starting out into the world before his beard was grown, and the letters were filled with anxieties tempered with hopes and blessings. His replies made no mention of his predicaments; he was too proud to indulge in whining, and withal, too considerate to burden his friends with tales of his sorrows. Judging from his letters one might have thought that the far away boy was sitting in a tree-top of this wonderful world seeing sights and experiencing feelings that prompted only to notes of song.

He got a long and glowing certificate of character signed by rustic dignitaries whose names were of no more account in Boston than the sands upon the seashore, and for the reason that though he pursued his weary rounds in search of work, he seldom or never found anyone who was willing to notice the stranger enough to look at his credentials. He again began to have hard thoughts about the steeples, for he had not yet learned that churches and worldly affairs more often than not, have as little to do with one another as old maids have to do with old bachelors.

Like a far off almost forgotten dream came the old words: "The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be as one born among you, and ye shall love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord, your God." He remembered the words of The Man of Nazareth, "I was a

stranger, and ye took me in," but he became quite sure that either they had never been heard in, Boston or that they had been outgrown by its" people.

On sloppy or threatening days, he avoided business places, for he had learned by bitter experience that in bad weather men's tempers had the rheumatism and that their words were like dragon's teeth. On such days he took refuge in The Mariner's Home, where he spent part of the time listening to the vivid yarns of the old sailors, who in the stormiest weather, like ducks and geese, were in the best of moods. What jolly tars they were! What floods of recollections of the stormy deep and of foreign climes, and of perils and adventures the gusts of wind and splashes of rain set in motion! He almost regretted that he had not been sent to sea to roost with the blue-jackets among the yards and rigging of some far-going ship. The brutes on shipboard could not be more numerous or worse than those on land. He would as soon be bound hand and foot and delivered over to the cruel mercies of the sea as to be left unbound and delivered over to the equally cruel negligences of the land.

Boys think as readily as men, and quite as readily does the black bile get into their blood when fortune frowns unkindly; and quite as readily, too, does the black tide set all their thoughts awry. But, thank Heaven, they are more susceptible to the saving grace of hope and the healing balm of forgetfulness, and far more readily than men do they take heart again. And so, though Don had his mumps he made quick jumps from the 'Slough of Despond' to solid standing ground.

Having formed the habit of reading the daily press he had become so interested in current events as to find in their larger public scope influences which tended to diminish the magnitude of his private annoyances. All Boston and the

regions round about were rife with political excitement. By some inscrutable stretch of partisan meanness the great Daniel Webster had been refused the use of Faneuil for an address to his friends and constituents.

"Daniel Webster shut out of Faneuil Hall!" exclaimed Bert indignantly, during one of their attic conversations. "Great Scott! What a pickle that is for Boston to be in! It's enough to make one sick of the city."

Daniel Webster was one of Don's idols, and sympathizing with Bert's indignation, he said: "I have always been taught that Webster was the world's greatest statesman, yet here he is without honor in his own city. What kind of patriotism do you call that?"

"No, not without honor," was the quick rejoinder. "He comes to-morrow, and is to speak on Boston Common, and you will see the biggest crowd around him you ever saw in your life—yes, the biggest crowd you ever dreamt of. And it will be a crowd of honor, you may depend upon that. You are a lucky dog, for you can be one of them while I shall have to stay cooped up in that old store like a parrot in a cage. You'll remember his looks and his words as long as you live. There is only one Daniel Webster in this world, and he is so great I don't see where they are going to find a place big enough for him in the other world. One of the last things I did before I left school was to recite a part of one of his speeches, and the words made my blood hum as if I were a top."

"Do you remember the words now?" Don asked, carried away by Bert's fervor.

"I remember this much," said Bert, sliding into the stirring sentences as easily as a ship slides into the sea at a launching. They were from Webster's last speech in the senate of the

United States: "For myself, I propose, sir, to abide by the principles and the purposes I have avowed. I shall stand by the Union and all who stand by it. I shall do justice to the whole country, according to the best of my ability, in all I say, and act for the good of the whole country in all I do. I mean to stand upon the Constitution. I need no other platform. I shall know but one country. The ends I aim at shall be my country's, my God's, and Truth's. I was born an American; I will live an American; I shall die an American; and I intend to perform the duties incumbent upon me in that character to the end of my career. I mean to do this, with absolute disregard of personal consequences.

"That's the kind of talk Webster gave us," Bert went on, "talk that ought to lift everyone out of the mud of meanness into the pure sky-blue. And yet, confound it! We've got enough dirty politicians here in Boston to shut him out of Faneuil Hall. If I had them all in a bunch, I'll boil them in a lye-vat and see if I couldn't get some of the dirt out of them."

"Yes, you are at a boiling point already, and I don't blame you," said Don, "for men who would insult such a man as Webster are as bad as that land-shark Lammels, you hate so much."

"Lammels!" Bert exclaimed explosively; "why, he is one of the city fathers; he's the alderman from our ward, and there are several others just like him who run their wards by whiskey and then try to run the city by the same kind of stuff. Most of our politicians are only fit for boot-blacks to the devil."

Don knew little about city governments, and less about politics in general and becoming interested in the knowledge that this city boy seemed to possess, he asked by way of information: "Isn't Webster a politician?"

Bert flashed indignantly at his friend for an instant, but seeing that he was not trifling with him he replied: "Yes, he is a politician, only you spell it p-a-t-r-i-o-t, and that makes the same difference that there is between Satan and the angel Gabriel. And you'll know well enough what I mean when you hear Webster to-morrow."

When Don reached the speaking place on Boston Common the next day, he found the space between the Frog Pond and the Public Garden filled with tens of thousands of people. And when the great statesman ascended the platform the welcoming voice of the multitude was as the sound of many waters. When, after he was introduced by the chairman of the meeting, he waved his hand for silence the tumult sank to a dead stillness that was as impressive as the acclamation that preceded it. Nor was the calm disturbed save when some telling point of the masterly address awoke the plaudits of the rapt listeners.

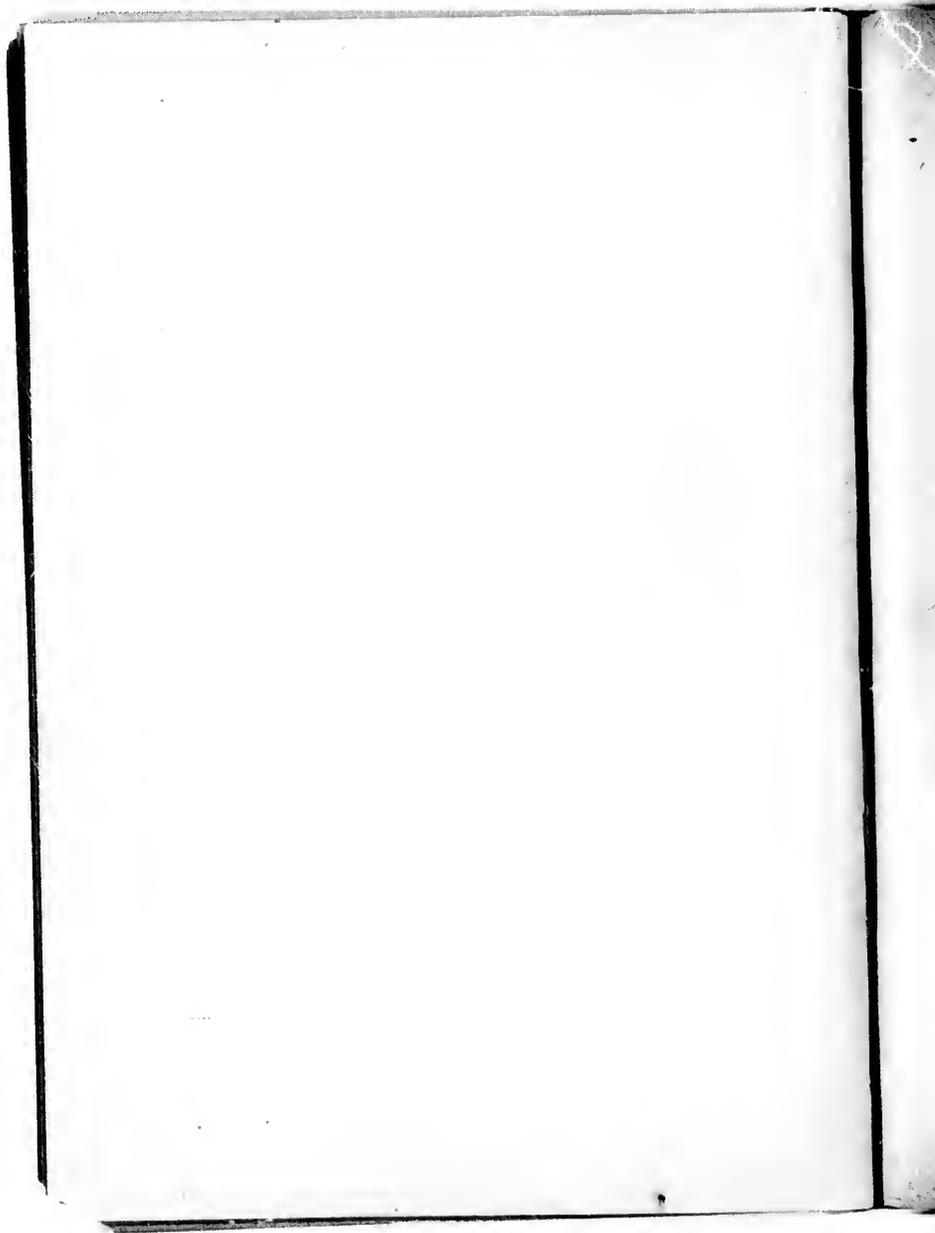
From the outskirts of the vast crowd, by processes best known to a boy, Don edged his way through the mass little by little, till he reached the front of the platform on which Webster stood. Inch by inch, as if irresistibly drawn by the magnetism of the speaker, he wormed his way up the steps to the last one, where he sat with uplifted face enthralled by the high brow, the dark deep set eyes, the grave countenance, the deep voluminous voice, the magic words, the transparent thoughts and the calm mighty earnestness of the "God-like man" before him. And once when Webster, leaning slightly forward for an instant, looked steadily down into his eyes he felt as though he were expanding into the largeness of space itself. Nor was he again conscious of the world about him till the mighty shout which marked the last sentence of Webster's last public speech brought him back to earth. Something in

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the boy's rapt attitude drew the attention of the statesman to him, and while the applause was still thundering through the air he extended his hand to Don and greeted him with a grave earnest pressure that thrilled him with unspeakable pleasure, although for the life of him he could not keep the tears back while, for the first and the last time he gazed into the sad, mighty countenance of America's greatest intellect. Weakened by severe labor, disappointed in his great ambition, overburdened with patriotic anxieties, and, what was far worse, grieved by the rankest ingratitude, Webster returned to Marshfield, where, in a few short months his remains were deposited in the bosom of mother earth.

The spell, which was never to be entirely broken, was still strong upon Don, when Bert, eager to obtain an account of the meeting, rushed into the attic as soon as he returned from the store and began to ply him with anxious questions.

"I shall never see or hear his like again, though I should live a thousand years," said Don, breathing a long, deep sigh. "He made me think of the giant singing pines of Nova Scotia, and of the mighty waves I have seen beating against the Nova Scotian coast. All the steeples in the city couldn't equal the greatness of that one man; and, though you won't believe me, he, Daniel Webster, shook hands with me at the close of his speech."

"You!" exclaimed Bert incredulously.

Then Don explained till Bert believed.

"Yet, the man who can speak like a God, and shake hands with a boy like a friend is shut out of Faneuil Hall by such rascally politicians as Lammels and his gang," Bert exclaimed angrily, unable to banish from his mind the indignity to which his great ideal had been subjected.

"But the fools wrought more wisely than they knew; if

they had not shut him out he would not have spoken to fifty thousand people to-day," said Don, possibly exaggerating the number of the vast audience.

Don's great day extended over several other days, for that one hour and a half of Webster remained so vividly with him as to obliterate the divisions of day and night and morning and evening. And it was while he was preoccupied with the one event that another—a second event happened, and welded itself to the first, so that the two thrilling experiences were identified with each other.

On the third evening after the Webster speech, Bert, without the ceremony of knocking, about which he had always been scrupulously particular, broke into his room radiant with some new excitement

"What do you think, old boy!" he exclaimed, almost breathlessly.

"Webster," said Don, truthfully, "I can hardly think anything else. I am afraid that if my old friend, Peter Piper, were here, he'd say I was climbing Jacob's ladder when I ought to be fighting my battles on solid ground of some kind."

"Well, I have a bit of solid ground for you," said Bert.

"What is it?" asked Don anxiously, beginning to feel that Bert had important news for him.

"This afternoon I had to go into a bookstore to get some books to help fill out one of our orders, and there in the window was a notice—'Boy Wanted.' So, as soon as I got the books, I asked about the notice, and said I knew a boy who might possibly suit them. Wickworth & Co. know me so well that they began to ask questions about you. I simply answered their questions without plastering on the praises. At the end I did venture to tell them about Webster shaking hands with you; it was a chance shot but it went straight to

the mark. The younger Wickworth is a great Webster man. He was down to the Webster meeting, and stood close by the platform, saw you there, noticed how you listened, and saw the great man shake hands with you. He liked your appearance, and in the end they said I might bring you up, for it was more than likely that you would suit. But they said they would only pay board for the first six months. Then they wanted to know how much we charged; I said three dollars and a half a week—and you know that is our regular price for those who board below the attic. They thought the amount was reasonable. So, there you are, you see, with a margin of a whole dollar a week, that is, if you mind your ps and qs to-morrow, and get the place. Their store is only a short distance from ours, and we can go and come together."

Don was much elated at the prospects opening before him, but there was one thing that cast a cloud upon the affair, and he said: "Bert, you are an awful boy, sure enough. How could you keep an honest look on your face when you said my board was three dollars and a half a week?"

"That was straight business," was the prompt reply. "I wasn't going to let them know that you were stowed away in an attic. It is three dollars and a half; but we will give you one dollar and a half to keep the attic; nobody else will take it. You must have something to keep you slicked up; if you don't, you'll get kicked out; slouches won't pass muster in any kind of business. So, there is the whole thing as plain as a bee sting or a mosquito bite."

"Well, put that way, what you said about the board is right, and I'll not say anything to contradict you when I see them."

"Of course it's right—as right as a sermon—right for all concerned."

On the way to the attic Bert saw Nora, to whom he gave a passing hint of the news he was carrying to Don. She wanted to know all about it, and being unwilling to wait, rapped at the door for admittance.

"Have you really got a place for him, Bert?" she asked as soon as she had seated herself in the rocker.

"He is plumb up against the door of a place, and if he doesn't get inside it won't be because he doesn't deserve to get inside. It is as sure as anything can be in this uncertain old world." And Bert smiled upon his sister so cheerfully she felt that it was as good as settled.

Addressing herself to Don, she said earnestly: "Now you can get out of this horrid attic, and take a good square room down stairs, can't you?"

"Really, Nora, you are very con-sid-e-rate of your unworthy brother!" Bert interrupted with mock seriousness.

"But you have a front attic with two windows in it that give you a full view of the Square," Nora persisted, pluckily.

"Since you and your mother brightened this room up, I am as contented as a bird in its nest," said Don sincerely. "And being so near your brother, makes me doubly contented. I am no longer like a cat in a strange garret."

"If you are contented, I would rather have you near him," Nora said with much satisfaction.

"We are Two Boston Attic Phi-los-o-phers," drawled Bert with his usual prolonged emphasis upon the big word, "and we are going to maintain our lofty reputation by sticking to good, round common sense in spite of all the little or big girls of Boston."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BACKBONE OF THE BLACK ART.

Don knew something of Nature; of how sunshine, air, clouds, water, earth, and even rocks, are changed into potatoes, pumpkins, grass, grain, worms, birds, beasts, mankind—and womankind, also. He had gained many vague hints about these things from the various books with which he had become acquainted in his short life.

But it was precious little he knew about the book business; of how ideas, authors, printers, binders, publishers and the public get jumbled or joined together in the processes of book-making, bookselling and bookreading. He was now about to learn something of The Black Art, from the author's first dip into the inkstand to the publisher's last advertisement setting forth the author's unique genius and the publisher's supernatural enterprise in introducing him to a long suffering and justly exacting public. The very backbone of The Black Art was to be laid open to his view; that is to say, he was to become acquainted with the business of bookselling.

He had read somewhere of a venerable lady who tried to manage a refractory pig she had purchased in the market, and of the wonderful effects of a piece of cheese. The mouse having received the cheese, began to gnaw the rope; the rope began to hang the butcher; the butcher began to kill the ox; the ox began to drink the brook; the brook began to quench the fire; the fire began to burn the stick; and the stick began to beat the pig; and so, the pig went over the stile, enabling the

matron to reach her home in time to save her pudding which she had left boiling in the pot. Don was to learn that if the author gets his cheese and the publisher saves his pudding, it is a sure sign of the success of all the intermediate processes of the whole business.

The Wickworth firm was old and well established, but conservative in its methods and comparatively limited in its enterprise. The entire force consisted of the two brothers, the senior and the junior members of the firm, two general clerks, and a boy of all work.

The elder brother, quite well advanced in years, was smooth-faced, benevolent in appearance and a prominent member of the large denomination to which he belonged, and of which he was a conspicuous office-bearer. The junior member had been a colonel in the Mexican war. His black and somewhat neglected hair, and bristling and fiercely brushed beard were apt to give the impression that the chief object of his existence was to make people feel uncomfortable. In religious matters he was forward to make even his intimate friends think that he was a Philistine of the Philistines. In fine, the brothers were so different in appearance and in manners from each other that it was difficult to believe that they were the offspring of the same parents.

Bert introduced Don to the partners on the morning when the engagement was to begin, and Don was quickly turned over to the colonel for the preliminary examination. Contrary to the expectations he formed from the appearance of the colonel, he was questioned kindly, encouraged generously, and bidden to take up his shop duties immediately.

"A boy who has been so kindly noticed by Daniel Webster," said the colonel gravely, "ought to be able to commend himself favorably to a good many other people."

Don thereupon began his work with a light and resolute heart. He was to open and close the store, clean up and dust down, pack and unpack boxes of books, wait upon customers as opportunity offered, and do the outside errands of the firm.

These outside errands formed the most important part of his duties. If books in stock were not sufficient to meet orders upon the firm, he was to go among the other stores, and in accordance with the courtesies of the trade, pick them up wherever he could find them. This required accuracy and dispatch, but it was congenial because it involved trust and at the same time outdoor change.

While making his first rounds in this outside department of duty he was at once recognized as a newcomer and an inexperienced hand. He was accordingly subjected to occasional tricks and chaffing by the boys who had already passed their novitiate in the temples of The Black Art. Having been forewarned by Bert that such would be his fate, he met his tormentors with unflinching good nature and gave as good as he got.

There was only one instance in which he lost his temper, and this was in Phillips & Sampson's store, where a very opprobrious epithet was applied to him one morning by a young underling of the store force. Don was not only described as verdant, but as something a good deal worse. Laying the books he had under his arms upon the counter, and turning to his tormentor, he said: "I will confess that I am green as compared with fellows of your stripe, but I am going to teach you that in speaking so disrespectfully to me, you are far greener than I." And he seized him and shook him till the victim was ready to cry quits.

It happened that one of the proprietors overheard the epithet, though it was spoken in an undertone; and Don see-

ing that he was present, said: "I beg your pardon, sir; but I draw the line of jest at the term used by your clerk, and if I had him in some other place he would not get off as easy as he has."

"It served him right," said the proprietor; "and no apology is necessary from you; that should come from him."

The incident soon went the rounds of the stores, and thenceforth Don was exempted from annoyance.

Deacon Wickworth having heard of the episode, called Don into the counting room and reproved him for letting his temper get the better of his business relations.

The colonel followed him to the business room, and with twinkling eyes, said: "This is one of the things about which my brother and I differ. Without questioning his motives or lessening your respect for him, I desire to say, that I am glad you shook that whelp, but I am sorry that you didn't shake him out of his boots and whip him besides." Doubtless the colonel's soldierly blood and experiences were responsible for his belligerent regrets.

The clerks of the store had been disposed to sneer at Don because of the somewhat rustic suit of clothes he still wore, and they had also been inclined to attribute his belligerency to his rusticity; but now that the colonel had applauded him for enforcing due respect for his rights, they treated him as one of themselves.

Bert soon heard of the incident through an acquaintance at the store where it occurred, and lost no time in telling it to his mother and Nora. As in duty bound, the mother while regretting the affront, also regretted the violent resentment provoked by it. Nora, however, clapped her hands, girl-like, and with sanguinary fierceness, very similar to that of the colonel, declared that she was sorry that Don had not torn

the very coat from his insulter's back. This was such an unspeakably naughty wish for a young and gentle girl, that her mother began to reprove her with great severity.

"Why, mother," Nora interrupted, "what would you do if you were called by an awful bad name?"

"I'd let it pass without notice; mere names can't change the nature of the person to whom they are given."

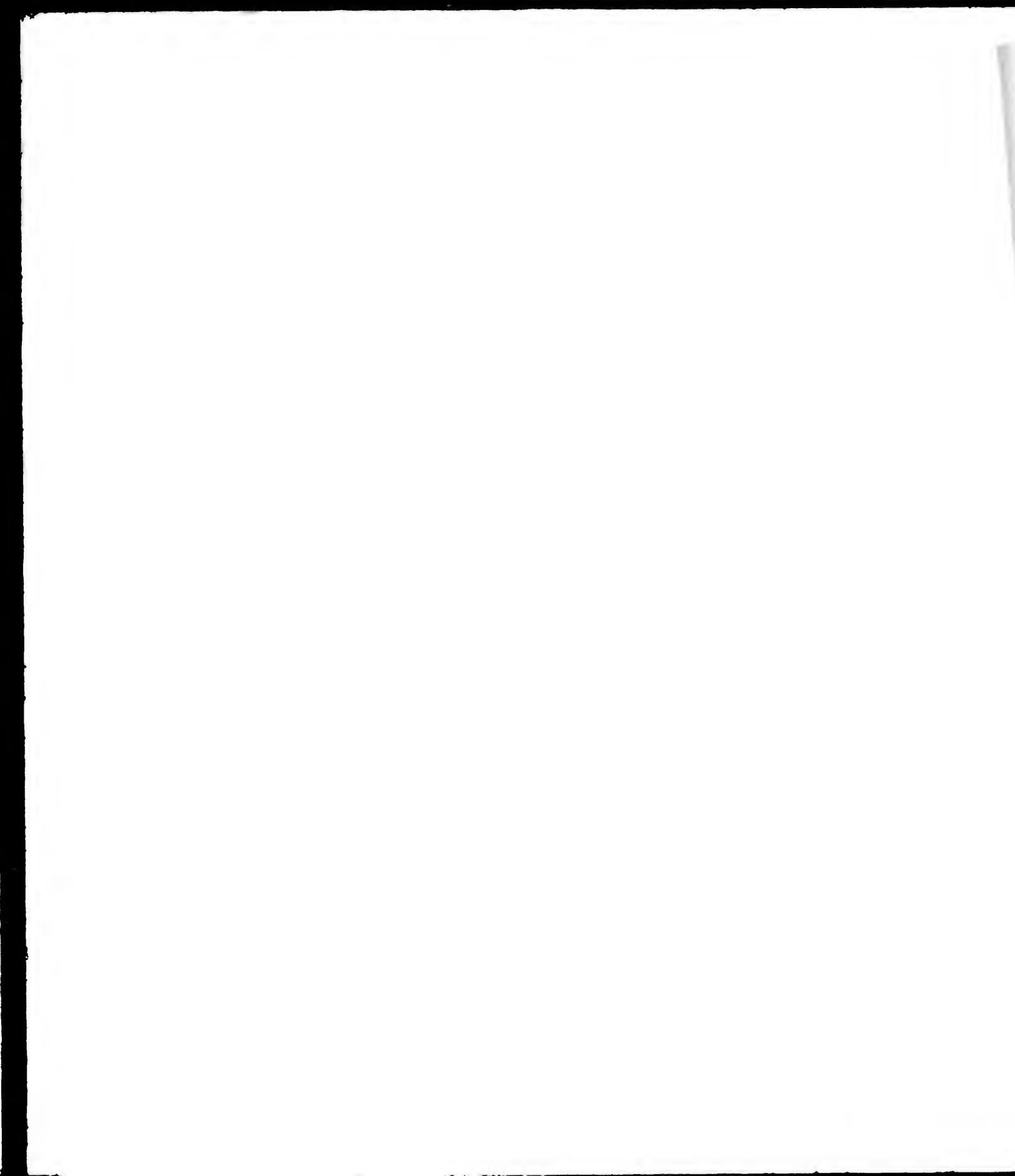
"But if they were not right they would stir you up all the same, said Bert. "And though they might not set your arms going, as they did in Don's case, they'd set your pale face flaming like dry kindling."

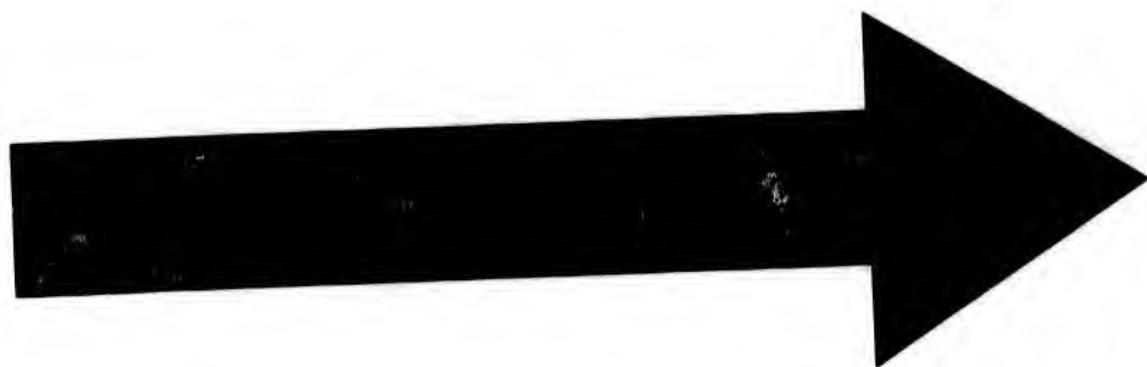
"And I'd scratch the eyes out of anyone that insulted me!" exclaimed Nora, indignantly. Bert and Nora being in the majority, the mother without acquiescing in their opinions or sympathizing with their feelings, remained discreetly silent.

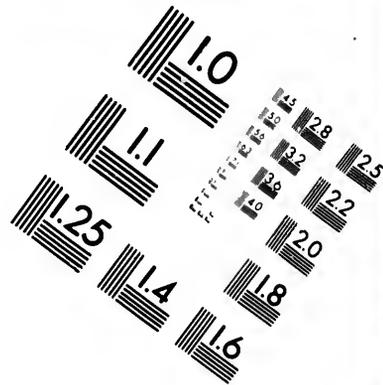
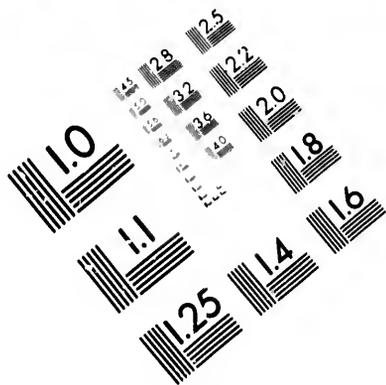
When the boys were in the front attic after tea, Bert said: "I overheard some of the folks in our store talking about you to-day. Mr. Phillips, who saw you shake that Bob Larkins, was telling Mr. Ticknor and Oliver Wendell Holmes about the fracas. He said you shook Larkins as a terrior shakes a rât, and then apologized to the house as though you were Sir Charles Grandison. The little doctor got his face all screwed out of shape he laughed so heartily; and he said that if Russell Lowell got hold of the story he'd make a whole Bigelow Paper out of it."

"Aren't you stretching things a bit?" asked Don, coloring like a peach. "Business men and authors can hardly be interested in such things as boys' squabbles."

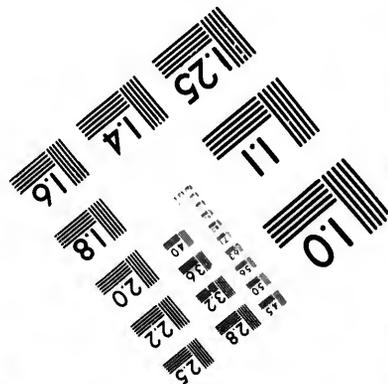
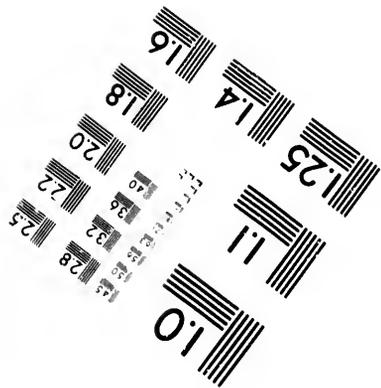
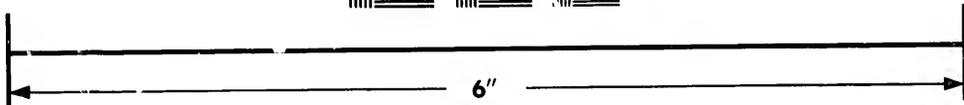
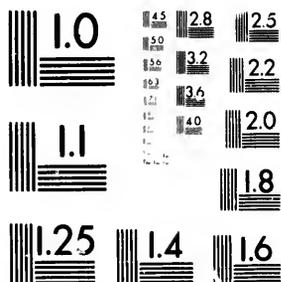
"Don't deceive yourself about that! If Daniel Webster himself were to hear how his boy-listener got turned into a clothes-shaker he'd laugh in spite of all his statesmanship and dignity. Every man is but the ghost of a boy, and though he







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should grow as gray and as cold as a cloud, the stories of boy-scrapes will set the ghost to grinning like a comic mask. I'm nothing but a boy, yet I keep my eyes and ears open to men, and I know how men talk over their boy-times to one another, and how they laugh about boy-scrapes. I haven't been at Ticknor & Fields' for nothing, nor even for five dollars a week only."

Bert not only spoke precociously, but he looked so prematurely knowing that Don was slightly overawed, as was expressed when he said: "Look here, Bert! You talk about men being but the ghosts of boys; but I solemnly believe that you are an old man masquerading in a boy's skin; and sometimes you make me feel as though you were never a real downright boy, such as we have in the country."

"I wish from the bottom of my heart that I had been born in the country," Bert replied with a sigh; "it would have been something to remember. If you had been born and brought up in a city among the bricks and stones and the rattle of pavements and the everlasting rush of people, without a chance to see the country from one year's end to another, you wouldn't wonder at my carrying such a wrinkled old soul in such a young body. You'd feel as if you had been put in pickle in the days of Noah and had never had a chance to get out of it."

Thinking that he had touched a tender chord with too rough a hand, Don began to explain and to qualify his meaning, but was immediately interrupted with: "Oh, you need not be at the trouble of taking your shoes off, now that you have so effectually kicked me with them on. True, you made me feel bad, but it is such a goodish kind of badishness that I should not object to more of it. You may let the blood out of my veins if you will only refill them with some of the fresh stuff that runs in your own."

Then abruptly changing the subject, he asked: "How do you like Wickworth and company?"

"Quite well; or, to be perfectly honest, I like the colonel first rate, and the deacon second rate. But we ought not to discuss the characters of the people for whom we work—ought we?"

Bert looked at him seriously for a moment, and then broke into a laugh. "It is easy to see," he said, "that your conscience was brought up in a country garden, where there was plenty of room and soil; but you may as well understand first as at last that mine sprung up through cracks in the pavement and that consequently it is rather weak and stunted. Yet, right or wrong, I will say this; in our attic we have the liberty to say what we please about our employers. Why shouldn't we discuss them behind their backs, when they would as good as cuss us to our faces if we should happen to let one of their smallest pins drop out of place? When we went into service we expected to serve as lightning rods for every thunder storm that might occur in the tenper of our masters. And, besides, 'that careless boy' is the scapegrace upon whose back are placed all the sins of omission and commission that properly belong to the other understrappers of the establishment. Our attic is our kingdom, where we propose to reign over our tongues like emperors. If you were to tell the truth about the colonel and the deacon, you would admit that in their cases, as well as in some others, appearances are very deceiving."

"Yes," Don replied, relaxing in his scruples, "the smooth, benevolent face of the deacon made me think that he was good enough for a whole steeple, while the rough face and manners of the colonel made me think that he was ugly enough for a whipping post."

"Exactly; the sugar tag is on the deacon and the acid tag on the colonel, when it ought, by good rights, to be just the other way. Somebody made a big blunder when those two packages of humanity were done up. I never see them without asking as Tom Hood makes his bachelor ask in *The Bachelor's Dream* at the end of every verse:

What d' ye think of that, my cat?
What d' ye think of that, my dog?"

"I am afraid," said Don, "that the remembrance of what you have said may sometimes take me unawares and tickle me into laughing at them under their very noses."

"If the deacon were to see you smiling, he would freeze you at a glance, but if the colonel should happen to catch you at it, he would take it for granted that your thoughts were worth laughing at, and would smile to see you smile. There is more fun in him than you would think. I was over there one day for books. He took them from the shelf and slammed them upon the counter as if he were firing hot shot at the Mexicans. I laughed aloud at his seeming ugliness, and then asked his pardon for my impudence; and I was in such a hurry to do it, too, that the ludicrousness of it set him to shaking all over. Seeing how his mirth contradicted his slamming of the books, I giggled like a girl, and to save myself I cut and run as fast as I could go."

"I notice that he has a habit of slamming books about," said Don; "and he does it sometimes when there isn't a soul standing near him. What do you suppose makes him do it?"

"In the first place a book is as good as a door for a slam when you don't want to say damn right out; and in the second place, when you catch him at that sort of thing, it is more than likely that he has been having some kind of a battle with his brother. It is common talk among the book stores that

he and his brother do not agree over well about anything. You, however, should not trouble yourself about their differences, for they do not concern you. Yet allow me to give you this bit of advice; when the deacon is around, keep your face as tight as the face of a base ball, but when the colonel is near you can let it do as it pleases. If both should happen to be by, you can look base ball on one side, and Don Donalds on the other side. If your conscience should trouble you for being doublefaced, you can easily pacify it by pleading necessity."

"There is an easier way than that," replied Don seriously, "and that is to do my duty to the best of my ability and then leave my face to look out for itself. I detest hypocrisy of any kind."

"Yes; that is just the danger of it. You hate hypocrisy so much, and, at the same time have such a tell-tale countenance that some of these days your contempt for the deacon will blaze into your face and then there will be the deuce to pay, for he is suspicious as well as vindictive. So, for your own good, it will be best for you to cultivate, or, rather, to sew on a good leather base ball face over the threads and yarns of your heart. And by the way, I need to take some of my own advice, for I do not always practice in the store what I am preaching here in the attic. I am naturally inclined to sulk if things do not suit me, and although I have the best of employers, I am awfully sulky some days. It is then that I get my worst knocks. And it is not to be wondered at either, for a sulky face is the most impudent and insulting show that one can make while on duty."

"Suppose we give one night a week to the study of this face business?" said Don, quite soberly. "Our teachers used to drill us in facial expression whenever we had anything to

declaim; we can go a little further, and drill ourselves in facial repose. Such an exercise as this would help us to guard ourselves from having our feelings known to everybody that chooses to poke his glances at us when we are supposed to be out of humor."

"I agree to that, and you shall be the teacher; for while you are laughing at me in your sleeves you are keeping as sober as if you were a law book bound in sheep. You are better at face-keeping than I supposed you could be."

"How, then, did you know that I was laughing in my sleeves, as you say?"

"Because the twinkles were leaking out of the corners of your eyes; "we'll have to discipline them, too, if our lessons are to do us any good. But it strikes me that our conversation has taken a queer turn; we began by criticising our employers, and end by criticising ourselves."

"That is a good place to end at, but it would be still better if we were to begin there and keep there most of the time," said Don, and so suggestively withal, that Bert deemed it advisable to change the subject.

CHAPTER IX.

PAYING FOR A DISAPPOINTMENT.

One evening Bert entered Don's attic with an evening paper in his hand, and a great project in his head. "I have hit it at last," he said mysteriously.

"A fortune, I hope, for there is nothing too good for you," said Don, sympathetically responding to Bert's look and manner.

"No, there is no such thing as a fortune for a North Square gamin, but it is something that will answer equally well for one day at least. You know that there is to be a great railroad celebration in Boston next week, and this paper says that all business will be suspended for the day."

"And that means a holiday for us," Don said quickly. "What shall we do with it? Spend the day playing ball at the foot of Boston Common? Or shall we play ball during the forenoon and fish from the end of the wharf during the rest of the day?"

"No, sir!" said Bert, with a vigorous toss of his head, and a touch of scorn in his face; "that sort of thing got played out with me long, l-o-n-g ago. I'm sick of Boston Common and its everlasting sameness; and unless you take a rocking chair with you, it is too hard work sitting on an oak plank waiting for a bite that may never come."

"Then we will run about the town after the bands, the soldiers, societies and the speakers and big men; that will be better still," said Don.

"I have had so much of that, that if they were to join England and the United States together by rail, instead of Canada and Boston, and were to bring together all the soldiers, drums and big men of the two countries, I wouldn't give a peanut for the show. I am going to compensate myself for the greatest disappointment of my life by celebrating the day according to my own notions, and not according to the notions of the city fathers or the city children either." And Bert spoke so slowly and solemnly that Don was unable to decide whether he was in earnest or in jest.

"What was your disappointment?" he asked by way of getting at his friend's purpose.

"I told you not long since, that I was born and brought up in Boston—and I suppose I ought to be proud of it to my dying day—but I forgot to tell you that when I was one year old, my mother took me with her when she made a voyage around the world with father while he was captain of the ship Fleetwood. Now, if there is anything under the sun that is more provoking than any other thing, it is to discover that you have travelled all over creation without knowing or enjoying the trip. I awoke the other night and thought the whole matter out, and I concluded that that trip was the greatest disappointment of my life.

Don began to laugh, and the more he looked at Bert, and saw how he kept his face, the more he laughed.

"What are you going to do about it? How can you compensate for it?" Don asked, with difficulty restraining another outburst of mirth.

"I am going to hire a sailboat on railroad day and make a trip with Nora down the harbor and into the country. I never did such a thing before, and I never expect to do it again."

"But if you have never managed a boat, you cannot do it

now; it would be foolhardy to attempt it." Don was becoming alarmed.

"I don't propose to do the managing; I suppose from what I have heard you say about handling boats, that you know all about them. I am going to find the boat and you are to do the managing. How does that strike you?"

Don clapped his hands applaudingly, and promptly accepted the proposed burden. "But," said he, "your mother ought to be included in the party; an outing will do her good."

"I have spoken to her," Bert replied, "but since father's death she hates the sea so much she doesn't like even to look upon it. She believes that you have been accustomed to boats, and notwithstanding her dislike for salt water, is willing that Nora should accompany us. Nora is delighted, and I do not wonder, for she has been as much caged as I have. Boston Common is about all she knows of the outer world. Now you can begin to give your orders as soon as you please, for though you are green to the city, I am greener still so far as the water or the country is concerned."

"There is little ordering to be done," said Don; "all we need is to secure a boat as early as possible, because boats will probably be in demand on that holiday. We can go to the boat basin to-morrow night and make our selection. I may add, that it will be well to provide an ample lunch, for as soon as your appetite finds that you are on salt water, it will begin to make larger demands than usual. To prevent disappointment, I must warn you beforehand that everything depends upon the weather; we shall not start unless all the signs promise good weather for the day. With Nora to care for, we shall not even risk discomfort."

"I don't believe that the Lord takes much stock in railroads or in railroad celebrations," Bert began, "and if the rain took

a notion to come down on that day, I don't believe that he'd prevent it for the railroad's sake. But if he knew that a girl and two boys were praying for good weather so that they might get out of prison for a few hours, I think he'd tell the clouds to steer clear of Boston for their sakes. At any rate all three of us ought to pray hard for a favoring sky. But even in case there shouldn't be a cloud in sight when we start, wouldn't it be prudent to have a pair of umbrellas with us?"

"Oh, don't make light of sacred things!" Don exclaimed in a shocked way.

"I am not making light of them; I am only putting in my heaviest licks to get them to be on our side," Bert protested. "When one is trying to pay himself for the greatest disappointment of his life, joking is out of the question. I shall ask mother to pray for us, for she has lots of religious gumption. If there should be anything crooked about our prayers, hers would be straight enough to make up for them, even though she should bring the clouds down to the surface of the water on Celebration Day."

Don was a good judge of boats, and he selected a trim, staunch little craft that carried a jib and mainsail with sheets and halliards running aft, where he could handle them without moving from the tiller. Bert would be of no service as a sailor, but with the ropes under his own hand, Don, in case of head wind could tack as he pleased, and, should a squall spring up, he could drop his sails in an instant.

The anxiously anticipated day came like the smile of God; a cloudless, balmy day with just wind enough to foster the impression that the Infinite Father of all was breathing peacefully and paternally upon a short-sighted and sorrowing world, and wooing it to think of that better country in which "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall

be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

Don looked his boat over with an experienced eye, and seeing that everything was snug and ship-shape, he hoisted his sails and swung out into the stream among the numerous little craft that gaily floated around him, with a confidence and skill that commanded Bert's unbounded admiration and respect. Nora's happiness was so great that, finding no words with which to express her pleasure, she sat as still as a brooding bird.

Only once did Bert become alarmed. Don was running the boat close into the wind. Dead ahead of him there was a crowded excursion steamer with scores of flags floating in the bright sun.

"She'll run us down," Bert shrieked at the top of his voice.

"Not a bit of it," said Don calmly; "I have the weather gage and she will recognize that I have the right of way."

"But a big craft like that won't mind such a shell of a thing as we are in. For Heaven's sake, Don, get out of her way!"

But Don, unmoved, kept his course, and when the steamer began to draw near she swung from her straight wake making a graceful curve, which left the boat a safe distance to windward. The man at the wheel knew that the little craft was sovereign in her rights, and he changed his direction as a matter of course, while the gaily dressed passengers waved their handkerchiefs and cheered at the young voyagers in the boat.

"Well, I declare!" Bert exclaimed, wiping the perspiration from his face, "if that's the way the weather gage works, why don't they land some of it and apply it to the big things that are always running over the small things?"

"There is lots of it on shore already," said Don, in a matter of fact way. "For instance, if you were pulling a hand-cart in the street and were on the right of it, the most aristocratic carriage that goes would have to give you the right of way; and it is the same in a hundred other cases. But for this respect for the undoubted rights of others the world would be a good deal worse than it is."

"I'll stick up for the weather gage all the rest of my days," said Bert. "But suppose that the steamer had not seen us?" he suddenly asked, after a pause.

"That is not a supposable case," Don replied; "she had her lookout at the fore, and it was his duty to see everything ahead of him; besides, the pilot himself steered with his eyes open. If I had steered any closer to the wind, I should have lost my headway altogether. The steamer knew that so far as we were concerned it was our duty to keep our course, and that is why she changed hers."

"Yet I was almost frightened to death," Bert said sheepishly. Addressing himself to his sister, he added: "Weren't you scared?"

"No; of course I wasn't," she replied truthfully; "and I wondered why you made such a fuss."

"That was because you didn't know enough to be scared, and that is the way it generally is with you females."

"Well, I would rather be ignorant than frightened. I am enjoying this sail altogether too much to spoil it by borrowing trouble. When Don begins to show the white feather, I will show mine to keep him company."

"Well, I think you are about right after all, little Miss Coolhead."

Then turning to Don, Bert said: "The outdoors you have lived in is a good deal wider than the indoors which has been

the prison-house of the most of my life, and you show it in almost everything you do or say. Boston may be the hub of the universe, as Oliver Wendell Holmes says, but I am inclined to think that she is only a fly on the real hub. Two things are becoming very plain to me; one is, that I have been raised in Boston, and the other is, that you have been raised in the universe. During the first of our acquaintance, I thought you very verdant, but I will never again call you green; never!"

Don smiled contentedly, but as the wind was freshening and the boat was careening to the breeze, he confined his energies and watchfulness to the management of the little craft.

As they sailed further and further away from the city, and passed the islands in the outer harbor, Bert suddenly realized that a vast and pregnant silence was taking the place of the rasping and petty tumult of the city. Drawing a long breath of satisfaction he reverently said: "If this stillness keeps on growing at this rate it will soon be still enough to hear God."

Don recalled the hours he had spent in the still glades of the wilderness, and responding to Bert's feelings, he replied: "Perhaps you are hearing Him already?"

Just then a heavy battery of guns fired a salute in honor of the Governor-General of Canada, and Bert was so annoyed by the reverberations that he said reflectively: "We shall not hear God till we get beyond the sound of those guns."

In preparation for the trip Don had studied a map of the surroundings of Boston. Having gone as far as he thought it was safe, he ran the boat into a little sandy bay and tied up to a small wharf. Thence they wandered over the white beach picking up shells and other marine curiosities. Then they passed into a lane that led to the upland farms, gathering many-hued pebbles as they went. Seeing a wide-spreading

apple-tree within a fence close by a farm house, they asked permission of the farmer to eat their dinner in the shade.

"Of course," said the farmer, cordially, "that apple tree is just longing for someone to get under its shade. And speaking to a rosy-faced girl of about twelve, he added, smilingly: "Here, Doxy, get a half gallon of milk for these youngsters."

While the three were enjoying the rich fresh milk under the tree, Nora said: "We never get such milk as this in the city."

"No," Bert replied, "it gets so tired on the way to the city that by the time it comes to the table it is too weak for anything."

But for his ingrained courtesy Don would have assented heartily to the remark, for all the milk he had seen since his arrival among North Square boarding houses, so nearly resembled the color of the sky, that fearing it was treated to doses of washing bluing, he abstained from it altogether.

"Why, you drink this milk, but you don't take any at home," said Nora innocently.

"I am partial to cows," Don replied evasively, "and as this milk must be quite near to them, I drink it for their sakes."

Nora looked at him so sharply, and blushed so vividly, that he repented at once, and immediately proposed that they should go into the woods after dinner.

When they asked the farmer's permission to go into the wood-lot and gather ferns, he said: "Gather anything you please; take a cart load of ferns if you can find them. You are so polite and civil I am glad to see you enjoy yourselves."

When they returned from the lot he invited them into the house, where the inmates brought them cool well water to cleanse the soil from their hands, and Doxy gave them large bunches of late flowers to take with them on their return.

The wind being fair and strong the boat sped back to the city like a bird on wing, and Bert after a prolonged silence said: "This is the only whole day I have spent out of Boston since I was two years old. You may talk about your Webster day as the greatest day of your life, but this has been my greatest day, and very much of it I owe to your knowledge of the water and the country. Have you enjoyed it?"

"Yes," Don replied, "it has been like being home again; and I have enjoyed it doubly because you and Nora were so happy."

When the spoils of the day were arrayed upon the table before the little mother, accompanied by the voluble comments of her children the cloud of sadness and anxiety which was almost habitual with her, disappeared entirely, so that for the time being she looked as sunny as the children themselves.

"I didn't see a single keep-your-hands-off, nor a single keep-off-the-grass sign while we were ashore," said Nora; "and we have been so near Heaven all day long that we almost tumbled in."

CHAPTER X.

OLD FAILINGS REVIVED.

The wholesome drudgery of the store, and the not unhealthy limitations of the attic had a tendency to keep Don quite near the earth. He was compelled to sew on his own buttons, mend his socks, repair his garments and contrive to make his dollar margin cover the unexpected incidentals that continually intruded themselves upon his calculations. He was not only learning the value of small things, but the sacredness of common obligations, as well. He paid his indebtedness to Bert, and was no less scrupulous in meeting his weekly obligations to Mrs. Williams, for he knew that she, too, was obliged to manage closely in order to make her income meet her necessary expenditures.

Yet, practical and commonplace as were his surroundings, his imagination refused to be hobbled, and his dreaming machine was seldom out of repair. Several circumstances combined to revive his old failing to such an extent as to make it difficult for him to keep in thorough touch with everyday life.

Colonel Wickworth was a great admirer of General Winfield Scott. Well he might be, for it was under his command that he took part in the battles of Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Cherubusco, Chapultepec and Mexico; and he was with the giant general when he captured Santa Anna, the wooden-legged chief of the Mexican forces, and president of the Mexican Republic.

The colonel was fond of recounting adventures, and when business was slack he was not above entertaining the clerks with stories of his experiences during the Mexican campaign. These stories, coming as they did from a living hero, so stimulated Don that when he returned to his attic he repeated them to Bert, and dreamed of them so vividly that, not infrequently, he engaged in mortal conflicts with his bedclothes.

One evening he entered Bert's room with far more consequence than he had ever assumed as Grand Keyman of The Lady of the Lake Club, and was no sooner seated than he said with evident exultation: "A fine carriage with a liveried coachman drove up to our curb this afternoon and landed two men for our store. When I opened the door for them, one of them, a magnificent giant of a fellow, asked for Colonel Wickworth. When I escorted them to the counting room they made a sensation. The big man was General Winfield Scott, and the other was General Caleb Cushing. You are always boasting of the big writers who go to your store; now what do you say to Scott and Cushing for big fish?"

"Say!" was the unabashed answer; "I say that the pen is mightier than the sword. And when the fame of your generals goes with the glitter of their swords and fades with the gilding of their shoulder straps, the names of our authors will still be shining like the stars. But I must congratulate you on having seen two great men; it is something to remember and to be proud of."

"The idea of being under the same roof with them nearly lifted me from my feet. I don't believe that you are half the hero worshipper that I am. I'll admit that your pen-men are greater than my warriors, but the sight of them doesn't stir the blood like the sight of such a man as General Scott, whose deeds have been told to you by one who was a witness of them."

"Well, I will frankly admit, that I should like to have been in your store when those two men were there, for I always feel as if great men are much greater than anything that can be written about them. I am glad for the colonel's sake, that they called upon him. Did they stay long?"

"No; they soon took the colonel with them, and all three went away looking very much pleased. It must be a great thing for old comrades in arms to get together again. It means another treat for us at the store, for the colonel will be sure to have some new incidents to tell the first chance he can get."

Bert was obtaining a new insight into Don's character, and respecting his hero worship tendencies, and hoping to afford him a new pleasure, he said: "Don, suppose that we go to Cambridge next Sunday and take a look at Longfellow's house? Besides being the home of our greatest poet, you know it was Washington's Headquarters during the revolutionary war."

"That would be a delightful thing to do if it were right," Don replied.

"Right!" exclaimed Bert, with a start, he not having yet learned the depth of his chum's old fashioned Sunday-keeping notions. "You don't mean to intimate that while it is right for us to go up to the Common on Sunday afternoon, it would be wrong for us to go to Cambridge because it is a little more distant than the Common? We have no other day for going, and seeing that we propose to make it a patriotic pilgrimage, I do not believe that God will split our heads for going. Going will be as good as a sermon for you."

After some hesitation and no little conflict between his desires and his convictions, Don consented to the proposal. They reached Cambridge just as the morning congregations

came out of the churches. The streets were filled with people, the sight of whom revived Don's scruples with such force that he said to his companion: "I can't stand this! Let's take an alley and get out of the crowd. The dust on our shoes and trousers will make them think that we are a pair of regular Sabbath-breakers."

"You poor, innocent, white-breasted bird! Hasn't your conscience grown its skin yet?" Bert exclaimed, with some annoyance. "We have no more reason to be ashamed of ourselves than the people have for returning from the churches. There is small danger of you falling into the bottomless pit until you become a good deal wickeder than you are now. Come along." And he pushed ahead so aggressively that there was no alternative but for Don to follow.

Don's uncomfortable feelings were dissipated when he reached the residence of the poet, an old, wooden-roomy house, destitute of all architectural pretension, yet so grandly shaded by elms and so beautifully fringed with shrubbery it made an ideal poet's nest. While the boy-pilgrims stood outside of the grounds reverently regarding the place made sacred by so many noble associations, the poet came down one of the walks bareheaded, and, recognizing them, shook hands with them and cordially invited them to roam over the place at their will.

Longfellow was below medium height, yet he was so broad shouldered that he was commanding in his physical appearance. He had a strikingly beautiful face, enlivened by deep dark eyes which glimmered beneath his high brow and profusion of dark hair like lights from a great depth.

Bert explained their mission and offered excuses for taking Sunday to execute it. "What other day could you take?" said the poet in his low melodious tones, and showing his sympathy with their desires. "Shop boys like you have scant time for

pilgrimages on week days. You are to be commended for coming to see the house made celebrated by the presence of Washington. Come with me and I will show you where he planned the campaigns that led to the success of the revolution and gave birth to a new nation."

Although they protested against intruding upon his privacy he led them into the house and in the most unconstrained way showed them Washington's room, and the relics connected with his stay under the roof. Not content with showing them over the house and more particularly through his study, he pressed them to remain for luncheon. But seeing that they were embarrassed, and learning that they had their lunch with them and that they had set their hearts upon eating it beneath the shade of the Washington Elm, he put on his hat and showed them over the entire grounds.

His Evangeline was then fresh in the mind of the public. Bert had a much prized copy of the poem which had been presented to him by the poet himself not long before the time of their visit. The scene of the story being laid in Nova Scotia, Don had read it with great avidity, a fact which Bert made known to the poet with no little pride.

Smiling with unaffected interest, Longfellow said: "Then I have been entertaining an angel unawares—two of them in fact. Perhaps I can learn something more about the wonderful peninsula which has already engrossed so much of my attention. There at the foot of that elm is a seat where I have thought out not a few of my poems; let us sit there while we talk of Nova Scotia."

He was acquainted with the personal history of Constance La Tour, and her reckless and eccentric husband, and soon discovered that Don knew much of the locality where they spent a portion of their lives. With the eagerness of a child listen-

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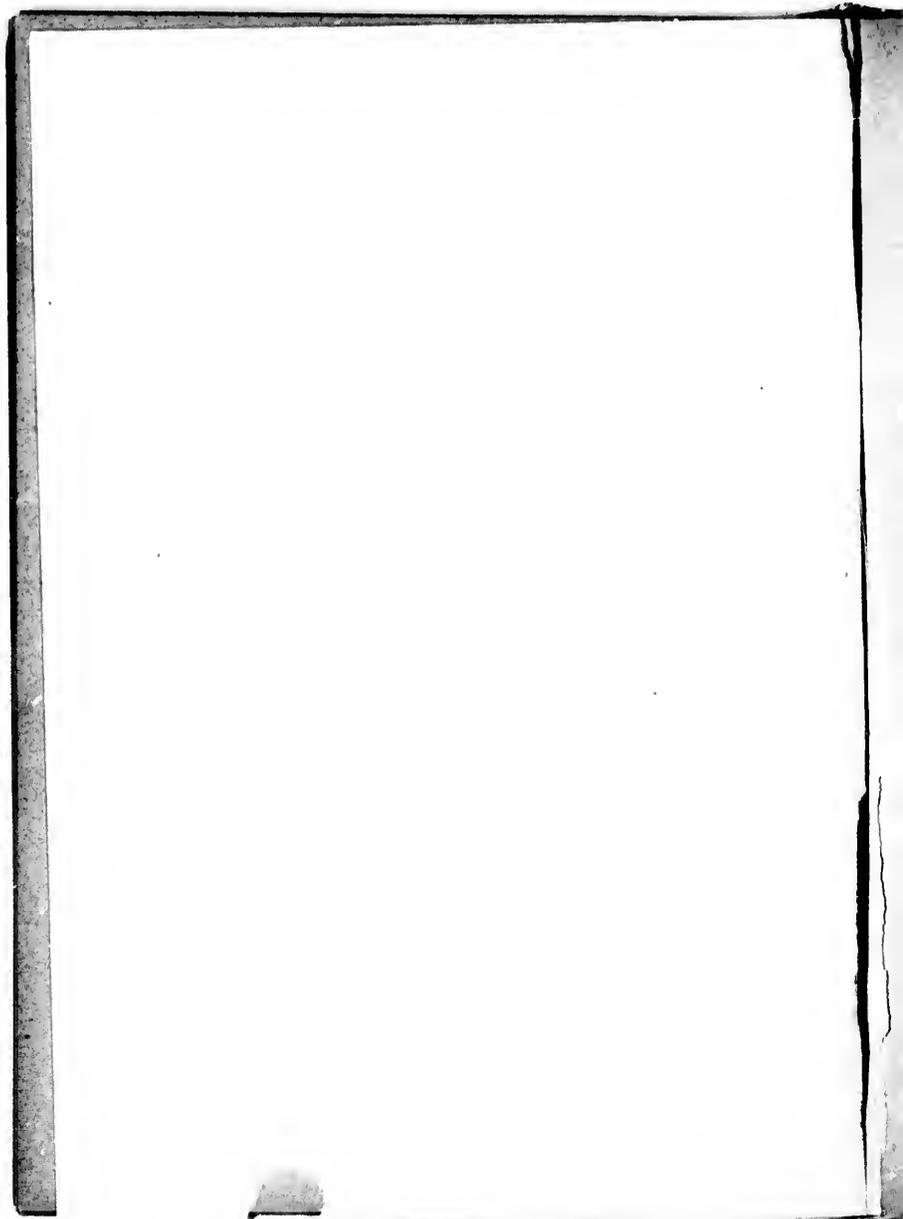
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ing to a fairy story, he listened to the description Don gave of Port La Tour and the surrounding scenery.

"And so you have been a resident of Shelburne County?" he said toward the close, "and you have doubtless seen Shelburne, the famous old shire town which has such a strangely pathetic origin and history, The Ten Thousand Tory Refugees who fled from the young United States and carried with them a thousand slaves and expended millions of money with the intention of founding the metropolis of the new empire, were a sadly disappointed people when, at the end of two years they abandoned their little city to desolation, and, impoverished and wretched, returned to their native land. Some day some author will acquire fame by doing justice to a story which, in many respects is more touching and eventful than the story of Evangeline. Tell me how Shelburne looked when you were last there?"

By asking many leading questions, he elicited from Don an account of the long nine-mile landlocked harbor, and of the wild country adjacent to it. And he was almost incredulous when told that only a few of the old brick buildings remained, and that even those were unoccupied and rapidly going to decay. He was scarcely prepared to believe that such a romantic beginning could end in such a bleak reality.

While on the way back to Boston, Don said with considerable feeling: "Well, I shall never forget the pilgrimage to Longfellow's house; I could not have been better pleased if I had been to Abbotsford and had seen Sir Walter Scott himself."

Bert was gratified to hear him speak with so much satisfaction, but unable to restrain his native impishness, said: "To make up for our wickedness, we shall have to go to Father Taylor's this evening and get him to shrive our souls; that is, if your conscience still troubles you."

"We will go to the Mariners' Bethel to hear Father Taylor, but Cambridge has made no wounds of conscience that will need doctoring by him. It would be just like him to pat us on the back and call us good boys for going to see the poet. Although he is as eccentric as old Peter Piper, he is as gentle and as sensible as Longfellow himself."

Not long after the Cambridge pilgrimage, Don had another experience which tended to exalt him to the upper regions. The arrival of the Swedish singer, Jenny Lind, who was then at the height of her popularity, produced scenes of enthusiasm in the country that have been rarely equalled. In the course of her professional tour she visited Boston. She reached the city in a driving rain storm, notwithstanding which, her innumerable admirers took the horses from her coach and drew her from the depot to her hotel. From the Wickworth store Don saw the crowd fill the street from curb to curb and as far up and down its length as the eye could see. The colonel, unable to restrain his enthusiasm, stepped to the door and shouted with the rest till he was hoarse, and his example encouraged Don to join in the tumult to the full measure of his noise-making power.

As in New York, so in Boston, the first choice of tickets rose to upwards of five hundred dollars for a single ticket. This was not, however, so much a mark of appreciation as it was a desire for notoriety on the part of the purchaser, who belonged to that class of advertisers who would post their bills on the throne of the Almighty if they could get near enough to do it. Mid all the excitement P. T. Barnum, the Beelzebub of advertisers, under whose auspices Miss Lind came to this country, smiled serenely, and coolly measured the worth of the prevailing epidemic by the number of dollars it added to his already large fortune.

When Bert reached the attic on the evening of the concert, he was as insane as everybody else and he proposed that Don and he should join the multitude of people that would be sure to gather around Fitchburg Hall, where the concert was to be given.

"If we cannot afford to pay five hundred dollars for a ticket we may be able to steal a few notes of her singing," said he, "if we can get near enough to the hall to catch what comes through the windows."

When they reached the hall the streets were packed with a struggling mass of humanity, but notwithstanding this the boys managed at no small risk of their limbs to get within a few steps of the great railway hall. Their wrath waxed hot when they found that Barnum, in order to prevent Jenny Lind from being heard in the streets, had ordered that every window in the building should be kept closed. Many in the crowd shared in their indignation and four young men standing near Don and Bert picked missiles from the street and showered them through the windows. The rash act would have produced a serious panic within the building had not Jenny Lind, with great presence of mind, counteracted the terror by beginning one of her most captivating songs. But the mischief makers had accomplished their aim, for through the broken windows her singing came clear and strong to the infinite delight of the outsiders, who applauded and encored her with as much enthusiasm as those within the hall.

Bert recounted the incident with great satisfaction to his mother. "When," said he, "Barnum becomes so selfish and mean that he is ready to smother an audience in foul air for the sake of preventing the music from leaking out of the building, it is time for Boston people to show what sort of stuff they are made of. The fellows who broke those windows

must have been descendents of those who threw the tea into the harbor. But you ought to have heard her sing! No one can sing like that unless she has a good deal of the angel in her."

Father Taylor had been signally kind to Swedish sailors, and Jenny Lind had become aware of the fact. She showed her gratitude for his attention to her countrymen by sending a liberal contribution for his work, and by attending his service the Sunday morning following the concert. The Mariners' Bethel was but a few steps from the widow's dwelling, and Don, in company with the family, was present. It having become known before the close of the service that Jenny Lind was among the worshippers, several Swedes, when the congregation was dismissed, pressed forward to pay their respects to their distinguished countrywoman. The example became contagious, and among the first to shake hands with her were Don and Bert, who were smilingly received, and graciously commended for being in the House of God.

Although Jenny Lind would not be called a beautiful woman, Bert, on returning to the house, had much to say about her golden hair and deep blue eyes, her pretty lips and pearly teeth, her fresh complexion and graceful bearing. Don was chiefly impressed by her amiability, and with an ardor that equalled Bert's, he declared that she looked like an angel who was not more than twenty-four hours from Heaven.

Such praises as these were altogether too strong for Nora's patience, and pouting her lips, she said with a touch of feminine jealousy: "Then why does she let Barnum make such an elephant of her?"

With such a little Miss Daniel as this come to judgment there was nothing more to be said in her presence, and the boys fled to their attic, where they could worship their new divinity to their hearts' content.

CHAPTER XI.

DEEP WATER SOUNDINGS.

Colonel Wickwort^h was a bachelor. That a man of means, old enough to know his mind, and one who had worn shoulder straps upon real battlefields, should be single, was one of the things that Don could not satisfactorily fathom. True, the colonel was as homely as a ram's horn, but Don knew that that of itself was no bar to matrimony, for he had known instances where the homeliest of men had taken their pick from the handsomest of women. As for himself, he loved the colonel, not for his looks, but for his qualities, and he saw no reason why some of the surplus female population of Boston should not exercise the same discrimination.

He knew that the colonel, so far from being in favor of the abolition of the gentle sex, had in his hearing expressed his profound respect and admiration for all womankind, including Eve, notwithstanding she had been so long dead. He was, indeed, a firm believer in matrimony, and believed with Solomon that he who findeth a wife, finds a good thing. Don had also heard the colonel say that families were good "things," and he thought that, notwithstanding boys and girls were so common, they were the most wonderful "things" under the sun.

Boys and girls who knew the colonel knew that he was a perfect love of a man. The colonel's young relatives not infrequently dropped into the store just for the sake of getting a

look at him; and one mite of a niece, after receiving a box of bon-bons from the ex-soldier, testified in confidence to Don that her dear old uncle was as good as anybody that ever went to Heaven, or came from it, either, for that matter.

Then, why was he single? Ah, Don, you would have saved yourself needless worry if you had said: "He remains single because he doesn't want to become double." That would have been the simplest solution.

Colonel Wickworth had become much attached to Don, and he showed his liking by giving him tickets to concerts, lectures, first class theatrical entertainments, and—circuses, also. Liking Bert almost as well as he did Don, it invariably happened that, although he kept himself single, he made his tickets double so that the juvenile Damon might have the company of his juvenile Pythias. The colonel's wits were as bright as his sword, and he knew that these two birds of a feather would be happiest together.

The colonel was an intimate friend and a faithful parishioner of Theodore Parker, at that time the most celebrated preacher in Boston, or New England. It must, however, be confessed that one reason why the colonel stuck to this preacher was because the preacher obstinately stuck to himself. That is to say, he would not let other people do his thinking for him, nor cut his thread to suit their stitches instead of his own, and consequently he was the best abused man of his day.

Desiring that Don should sharpen his wits by rubbing them on Parker's whetstone, one Saturday afternoon he said to him: "If you and Bert will come to my church to-morrow morning, you shall sit with me, and after service I will introduce you to the greatest man in the United States."

It so happened that the fame of this preacher had reached to Barrington itself, notwithstanding it was so far from the

maddening haunts of men—so remote from Boston, that nest of notions, and "hub of the universe." Even Peter Piper had heard so much about the man and his heresies that the barest mention of his name stirred all his pickled peppers to their profoundest depths.

Don's father not only preached in favor of what he believed, but also against what he didn't believe, and with the oddest effect sometimes. For instance: He once denounced card playing with so much graphic detail that Don and one of his companions straightway bought a pack of cards and hiding themselves in a hay mow tried to solve the mystery of the iniquity hidden in the game. But so many compunctions interfered with their use of the forbidden fruit that, becoming afraid of the pasteboards they concealed them in the long grass growing at the foot of a headstone in the village graveyard. Here the sexton found them while digging a grave near by, and his horror was intensified by the knowledge of the fact that the man whose remains crumbled beneath the sod, was, during his mortal life, the latter part of it at least, a confirmed card-player. The sexton burned the pack to ashes and scattered the ashes to the wind. Don's father was informed of the finding, and as he was ignorant of the offenders, he aimed another columbiad of a sermon against the particular devils that went about in pasteboard suits and disguises.

The denunciation of Theodore Parker from the village pulpits made Don familiar with his name and his particular fame, and begot a strong desire to hear and see him. He scarcely knew what a heretic was, yet, having read Fox's Book of Martyrs when he was lying sick of the scarlet fever, he had the impression that heretics made good kindling wood for those who kept themselves warm by making it hot for others.

When, therefore, the colonel invited him to hear Parker,

he was eager to improve his opportunity. The distance between him and his father's pulpit was equivalent to the concealment afforded by a barn and a mow of hay. He wanted to drop his lead into the sea of Parkerism for the sake of finding where the bottom was.

The Maconion congregation astonished him; it was immense, and was composed chiefly of young men. Parker astonished him also. He almost expected to see horns surmounting his high brow and peeping above his blue eyes from among the blonde hair that thickly covered his stately head. Although the speaker's voice was so richly melodious, and his words so glowingly eloquent and pervasively sympathetic, Don vigilantly watched for something wicked. He was fain to confess, however, that this devil, at least, had been painted blacker than he really was. His prayers were not alien to the Lord's Prayer, nor his sentiments, to the Sermon on the Mount. Yet notwithstanding the flash of glittering wings which took the place of diabolical horns, Don grew uneasy to think that he was getting in such an awful place as the Maconion and listening to such an awful man as Parker was reputed to be.

Being as good as his word the colonel introduced the two boys to his pastor and friend at the close of the service. And to the utter confusion of all of Don's preconceived notions and opinions of the man, Theodore Parker insistently invited the boys to visit his home for the purpose of enjoying a sight of his great library of rare works, and still more valuable collection of curios and famous works of art. That invitation the boys subsequently accepted to their great satisfaction and profit.

An immediate reckoning, however, followed upon their morning's misdemeanor. When they reached home, Nora,

who had almost tearfully protested against the sin of going to hear such a heretic, met them with withering reproaches which, during their absence she had carefully and piously framed in exact scriptural phraseology for greater effect. Being an orthodox little soul, she believed that no one could come in contact with pitch without being defiled. She felt convinced that the boys had been actually bathing in a sea of pitch and that, therefore, to use the words used concerning Noah's Ark, they were "pitched both within and without."

Instead of being cast down by her onslaught, the boys began to praise the preaching of the man against whose influence she had warned them with so much zeal. Not content with this, they declared that they would take her with them to the same place on the following Sunday and allow her to judge of the preaching for herself. She was so visibly agitated by this hardness of heart, which served to confirm her worst apprehensions, that Bert caught her in his arms and vainly attempted to kiss away her tears and her fears.

The distress of the little saint was so unequivocally manifested that it aroused Don's conscience as effectually as it was aroused on the occasion of his first and—last game of cards. He could not, however, hide his transgression as easily as he hid the cards, and therefore he did the next best thing, he hid himself in his attic, where Bert soon joined him, glad to escape from Nora's accusing eyes and tongue.

"That sister of mine is a nuisance!" said Bert, although there was not enough annoyance revealed in his manner to give the proper emphasis to his words. "She would make a regular John the Baptist of me before I could say Jack Robinson, if I would let her. I don't believe it's right for a mere gallon of a girl to be carting around a barreelfull of goodness. She's got it into her head that Parker is a Philistine of the

Philistines—a regular giant of pulpit wickedness. And, though her heart is naturally as tender as a ripe peach, I believe she'd pray Parker into his grave before to-morrow night if she could."

"She is a brick, or rather what Saint Pau! would call a 'lively stone,'" said Don, sharply, in her defense; "and if I were a man, and she were a woman, and I knew how to make love, I would ask her to marry me before I went to sleep."

"Marry you!" exclaimed Bert, at the same time laughing at the blush that mantled Don's cheek at the mere mention of love. "Marry you! A precious team you would make; you, with your scruples of conscience, and she, with her piles of bigotry."

A tap at the door interrupting further comment, Bert admitted Nora, remarking pertinently: "Mention the angels and you will hear the rustling of their wings."

"That doesn't apply to me," she replied penitently, yet not daring to say the other half of the proverb lest the mentioning involved should provoke some fresh freak of mischief.

She had Saturday's paper with her, and from it read a notice of a public meeting to be held in Faneuil Hall on Monday evening. Boston was in a ferment over city corruptions which were aided and indirectly abetted by the city fathers. The notice called for the friends of municipal righteousness to assemble in force for the voicing of their indignation. This little wisp of a woman—meaning Nora—had a penchant for righteous indignation of any kind, and glad to find something that would serve as a compromise between her and the boys, she smilingly said: "I will forgive you for going to the Maenion this morning if you will go to Faneuil Hall to-morrow night. I know that you will go, for the paper says that Alder-

man Lammels—the man you hate so much—declares that he will be on hand with a crowd to break up the meeting.”

Bert clapped his hands, saying: “Our forgiveness is already assured, for Don and I made up our minds last night that we would go to that meeting to see the fun.”

“The fun!” she exclaimed indignantly; “if that is all you go for you would better stay at home.”

“We are going for righteousness sake,” said Don, more diplomatically.

“That sounds better. You care more for the right than you do for the fun, while Bert is just the other way,” she said, at the same time beaming her approval upon Don so warmly that he became roundly ashamed because his motives did not reach to the height of his words.

Don had long desired to see the inside of the Cradle of Liberty, as Faneuil Hall is called, because of its connection with the exciting events of the nation’s earliest history, and because in it were first heard so many of the inspiring sentiments which subsequently became embodied in the nation’s destiny. He now had an opportunity of seeing the hall when it was filled with a characteristic Boston public meeting. The fact that Colonel Wickworth was already named as the chairman of the meeting increased the boys’ interest in the proposed gathering. With an old soldier in the chair there would be little danger to be apprehended from rowdies on the floor.

When Peter Faneuil gave the hall that bears his name to Boston, it was intended that the lower part should be used as a market for meats for the body, and the upper for meats for the mind. The two objects have never been lost sight of, and consequently the building, though large, is a two-storied piece of architecture so severely square and plain that nobody would ever think of going into ecstasies over it.

The interior is as plain as the exterior, with galleries extending around three sides, and supported by pillars that are more substantial than beautiful. The main floor provides only for standing room, although ascending tiers at the sides enable occupants to look over one another's heads.

On entering the hall, which was then about two-thirds full, Don immediately became interested in the numerous old portraits hanging upon the wall in the rear of the platform. They said as plainly as paint and oil could make them say it: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

When the colonel mounted the platform he saw the boys standing at the foot, and immediately ordered them to seats back of his chair, where they would be safe from the crush of the crowd which by this time had packed the hall to overflowing.

When Marshal Tukey, the speaker and hero of the evening, arose to speak, the tumult that greeted him indicated strongly and violently opposing forces.

The speaker was a "character." Once a great gambler and a notoriously fast man, he had turned squarely from his evil ways and had so commended himself to the confidence of the public that he became the city marshal. Having been a great rogue himself, he was well versed in the art of catching rogues, as the police authorities of all the great cities well knew. But his zeal for rogue-catching outran the support of the city fathers who, while they admitted that law was designed for the suppression of crime, were not willing to assume the responsibility of executing it. Hence Tukey was discharged, and consequently righteous Boston—including many sinners—was up in arms, and Tukey was there in Faneuil Hall to inflame their righteousness to greater intensity by making hot revelations of official corruptions.

Tall and erect, thin and lithe, with the eye of an eagle and the nose of a Roman, and a smooth face and a heavy dark poll; a notable figure and a portentous prophet, he stood the observed of all observers. At the first his velvety tones and suave bearing acted soothingly upon the conflicting elements in the assembly. But presently, when his charges rose to the character of an indictment, his voice rang with the resonance of a trumpet.

Lammels was there, according to his threat, and several other aldermen were with him backed up by the worst element that could be gathered from the quagmires of the population. They had nothing to fear from the police because, according to a preconceived plan, they were instructed to keep at a distance. Aware of the whole conspiracy, the colonel passed the word for the members of his old regiment, of whom there were not a few in the city, to be on hand for an emergency. The enemies of the meeting were massed in the rear of the hall; the veterans and the speaker's friends gathered in a compact mass around the platform and in the center of the hall.

At a moment when Tukey was describing the city government as the great red dragon with seven heads, ten horns and seven crowns, and was aggravating the comparison by speaking of the city as being in the possession of seven devils, meaning Lammels and six of his confederates, trouble came like a tornado.

Lammels shouted: "Down with Tukey! Clean out the platform!"

The colonel, now in his element, stepped forward and thundered: "Charge, boys! Down with the enemies of free speech!"

Electrified by the colonel's call, Don and Bert plunged from the platform to the floor by flying leaps, and the next

instant were battling by the side of the veterans in the very thickest of the fray. Getting near to Lammels, Don in front and Bert in the rear, one would punch him in his fat abdomen, while the other improved the opportunity to knock his hat over his eyes; the wedge of veterans the while steadily driving him and his forces toward the door with an impetus that would have pushed the wall out if it had struck it fairly.

The hall was now clear, and the speaking went on without further disturbance, although during the riot serious blows had been given and taken.

When the boys reached home they looked as though they had just been dropped from the talons of a western whirlwind.

"Here are your for-righteousness-sake champions," said Bert, dolefully rubbing his bruised shins and exhibiting the rents made in his and Don's garments during the riot.

"Good gracious, boys! What has happened to you?" exclaimed Nora, in alarm. "Did you fall into the hands of an Ann street mob on the way home?"

"No, not on the way home, but while we were in your confounded Faneuil Hall meeting!" Bert replied.

"We were rocked in The Cradle of Liberty, according to our contract with you," said Don. "But I can assure you that we didn't go to sleep while being rocked. If this is a specimen of the meetings you would send us to by way of squaring for going to hear Theodore Parker, I'll hear no more Parkers while the world stands."

"But it was just glorious!" Bert interrupted, reviving at the recollection of their victory. "We routed Lammels and his mob, horse, foot and dragoons, and then went to the platform and listened to Tukey to the finish."

When Don reached the store the next morning wearing a long scratch on the right side of his forehead, the colonel

grimly asked: "Well, my boy, how do you like our Boston School of Oratory?"

"The oratory is all right, but isn't the price of tuition rather high?" was the reply. "Do you always have a fight when you hold meetings in Fareuil Hall?"

"Not always; but we like to make a good job of it when liberty of speech is involved, just as we did last night. That was your first battle for freedom, and you deserve a shoulder strap—both you and Bert—for the way you lammed Lamfels." And the colonel turned away chuckling deeply.

CHAPTER XII.

ADRIFT AGAIN.

Miss Arabella Belinda Agincourt, whom Don so madly worshipped for a week, did not mean to be either a Medusa or a Pandora. That is to say, she did not mean to adopt the methods of these fabled goddesses of mythology, such as wearing serpents on her head or gossiping about with a box of evils in her hand. Nevertheless she proved a viper to Don's interests and a box of plagues to his reputation.

She was a near relative of the Wickworths, and occasionally made a visit—a friendly call to their counting room. She seldom took much notice of Don, save to talk about him behind his back to both the deacon and the colonel. There was nothing designedly malicious about her tittle-tattle, although she was always more or less contemptuous in her allusions to him. Her invidious remarks were based entirely upon the fact that he had descended from the glories of the Covert boarding house and had condescended to accept shelter under the widow's roof. To every depth there is a lower deep. There were not a few whose noses grew tip-tilted at the mention of the Covert domicile, and it was doubtless by way of self compensation that the venerably beauteous maid turned up her nose at Mrs. William's boarding house.

Dispositions like hers are tinder boxes or lucifer matches—parlor or otherwise—of dire possibilities. More accurately

speaking, they are like old rags which manifest an inscrutable tendency to spontaneous combustion, and all the consequences connected therewith.

From the vantage ground of her third story windows she commanded a full view of the Square; nor was she above observing, so far as she could, what was going on in the neighboring buildings. She was descended from Eve, and why should she not indulge her curiosity, especially when she had so much spare time on hand? The widow's house was within range, and using her opera glass one Sunday she saw Don leaning over the edge of one of the front attic windows of the premises. She saw him several times afterward in the same position, and therefore concluded that he boarded as an attic boarder. She did not intend to commit an Irish bull, yet she virtually said to herself: "The higher he goes the lower he gets."

In one of her visits at the Wickworth counting room she made it her business to say: "Your Donalds boy cannot be of much account, for I have discovered that he lives in an attic."

"I do not see how that can be, for I pay three dollars and a half a week for his board, and that amount ought to secure decent quarters for him," said the deacon, much surprised.

"Then you are being deceived," said Miss Agincourt severely; "the widow certainly would not have the brass to charge him that amount. At our place those who occupy the attics are charged only three-quarter prices." When she left the counting room, to make her insinuations more effective, she cautioned her uncle against being imposed upon by an unprincipled stripling, and went her way flattering herself that she had done a very laudable stroke of business.

The deacon's high regard for morals led him to lament the sad degeneracy of the modern boy; and his equally high

regard for his own interests made him chuckle to think that he should be able to make a weekly saving on Don's board bill.

On Saturday night he bluntly asked: "Don, what do you pay for board?"

Don frankly said that he was paying two dollars and a half, and he supposed that, as a matter of course, his management of his finances would be seen in its true light and meet with the approval of his employer.

The boy was thunderstruck when the deacon coolly handed him two dollars and a half, at the same time saying that thereafter only that amount would be allowed him for board, but his indignation was aroused when the deacon accused him of lying, and added insult to injury by reading him a long lecture on the evil and danger of falsehood. Don fearlessly defended himself and referred the deacon to the original conversation with Bert Williams by which the board question was settled without his having had any part in it, and he explained the plan of self denial and economy by which he had enabled himself to keep himself in decent condition for the store. The more he defended himself the more firmly convinced the deacon became of the total depravity of boys in general and of Don and Bert in particular.

Colonel Wickworth easily understood the whole arrangement, and maintained that Don ought to be commended and not condemned, and that he ought to continue to receive the amount that had been allowed him.

But there were Arabella's suspicions of deliberate conspiracy between the two boys, and the deacon referred to them as if they were facts sworn to and confirmed.

The colonel, becoming impatient at the mention of his niece's connection with the affair, said: "No weight should be given to Arabella's guesses; she has nothing to do but to

imagine evil of mankind, and it is a piece of cruel impertinence for her to peddle her conjectures to you for facts."

The elder Wickworth defended the niece, and the altercation began to wax warm; the deacon whined and the colonel swore. But finally the deacon, shedding his meekness, as a snake sheds its overworn and lack-lustre skin, plainly intimated that if the colonel could not assent to his chief management of the firm's affairs, he might get out of it as soon as he pleased.

During the wrangle Don's indignation increased to a white heat, and at the first interval in the war of words he faced the deacon squarely, saying: "I wouldn't remain in your employ for any consideration whatever." Suiting the action to the word, he left the counting room.

"Do you really mean to leave?" asked the colonel, following him to the outer room.

"Yes, sir," said Don firmly; "I am as good as called a liar and a thief by your brother, and I'd starve before I'd stay under the same roof with such a defamer. But you have been very kind to me and I am sorry to be deprived of your watch-care and instruction."

"I do not blame you for your decision; you could do no less," said the colonel. "If at any time you want a friend, come to me without delay or hesitation." And as he shook hands with Don he gave him a crisp ten dollar bill out of his own private resources.

Don felt as if the world had suddenly dropped from beneath his feet. He shut himself up in his attic, and, unmindful of the tea bell, sat like one in a dream. Bert entered to see why he did not go down. Don, too much humiliated to confide in his friend at that moment, pleaded lack of appetite, and was left alone.

Don felt as if he had been stripped of his character, and if he had been stripped of his clothing and turned naked upon the street he could not have felt worse. His honor and veracity had been as the apple of his eye, and hitherto they had never been assailed. His sensitive imagination became morbidly apprehensive, and he feared that the evil reputation fastened upon him by the deacon would follow him in his attempts to find another situation in Boston. He thought of returning home, but on second thought, disdained the expedient as treason to his courage. He was quickly impulsive in forming plans, too much so for his own good, and he resolved forthwith upon what he would do. He had fourteen dollars and he would start for some city in the West and begin anew. No sooner was this plan formed than hope smiled upon him again, and he was in a measure prevented from inflaming his wound by thinking too intently of it. In the midst of his projects there was a tap at his door. Bert and Nora entered, and immediately began to prepare his little attic table with food and delicacies drawn from the best supplies the house afforded.

Don protested against the trouble being taken on his account, yet, now that hope had reasserted itself, he availed himself of their kindness and ate the food with relish.

"What is the matter with you? Has anything happened?" Bert anxiously asked, beginning to see that Don's trouble, whatever it was, was mental rather than physical.

"I am adrift again," was the answer. Then in the midst of their exclamations, and in anticipation of their inquiries he told what had happened from the time of Miss Agincourt's appearance on the scene to his own disappearance from it.

"The miserable old busybody!" exclaimed Nora, fixing upon Miss Agincourt the blame of the whole misfortune.

"The hypocritical old punkinhead!" said Bert, laying all

the blame upon the deacon. Then suddenly recollecting his own participation in the three dollar and a half arrangement he was overwhelmed with confusion and self accusations, and expressed himself accordingly, and assumed most of the blame.

"It is all owing to my stupid blundering," he said remorsefully, "and I will see the deacon the first thing in the morning and make explanations that will more than satisfy him."

"It will be of no use," said Don, decidedly. "When a man dandles a suspicion as a woman does a baby, you might as well try to rob a woman of her baby as to try to remove the suspicion from the man's mind. Besides, the deacon mounted his pious, white horse as if he had put on the whole armor of righteousness, and right or wrong, when a man gets up in that style, nothing short of a cannon shot can bring him down again."

"I'll fire the shot that'll fetch him," Bert said quickly, confident in the justice of his cause.

"You haven't got a gun that's big enough for that. No explanations will avail with him. I gave him all that were needed. That whole transaction about the board bill was a fair and square transaction. Instead of calling me a deceiver and a liar, if he had had a soul in him big enough to put in the hollow of a hair, he would have commended me. And that is all there is to it. The colonel has a soul bigger than a steeple; he stood by me, and quarrelled with the deacon on my account, and gave me ten dollars out of his own pocket when I left the store. If he were at the head of the concern, there would have been no fuss. As it is, nothing will induce me to go back there again."

Bert saw that no praying to Don would remove the mountain, and he at once bethought himself of the next best measure of relief. "Well," he said, hopefully, "the colonel will recom-

mend you from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet, and if people get wind of the real facts of the case they'll be feathers in your cap, and a fool's cap for the deacon.

With the premature wisdom that is born of a too early experience of the harshness of the world, Don replied: "The colonel is my friend, yet, notwithstanding that, a blot has been put upon my name, and lies travel leagues before truth can put on its boots. 'A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.' And I am going somewhere else to see if I can't recover what I have lost."

"But you are making mountains out of molehills," objected Bert, practically, beginning to see that Don was over sensitive. "You haven't lost your good name, and, what is better, you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are in the right. It is that old blubber-belted whale that's in the wrong."

"And if that old maid Agincourt were here," added Nora, "she'd get enough of my tongue to make her think she had been licked by spanish flies." Then suddenly changing from her irate tones to her habitually persuasive voice, she said: "You won't leave us, will you?"

"Of course he won't," Bert answered. "Do you suppose that he would turn his back upon all our Boston gods and notions and go where there are only scrub people and notions and no excitements worth noticing?"

But Nora was not pleased with this reference to the attractions of Boston; they excluded all recognition of her own. What she most desired to know at this moment was, whether or no Don would weigh her in the scales and find her of sufficient weight to decide him against leaving the city. She looked her thoughts so plainly, that Don, now that separation was decided upon, experienced pangs he had not felt before.

"You have been such a good little angel to me, Nora," he said, "that it will be very hard for me to go away from you."

"But you won't go," she persisted.

"Yes," he replied with the simple directness that befitted the fixity of his purpose.

"Where are you going?" asked Bert, becoming thoroughly alarmed at the bare idea of losing his attic chum and tried street companion.

"Out West."

"Out thunderation!" Bert gasped in desperation. "Out to Chicago, I suppose, to see the Indian and the buffalo, and to prowl among the prairie dogs and wolves and rattle snakes. Out there! where people die by tornadoes and whirlwinds, or are frozen stiff by blizzards in the winter or are roasted to a crisp by a broiling sun in summer. There! where the men wear home-made trousers and the women have coal-scuttle bonnets, and where the school houses and churches are built of logs or mud, and Bibles, books and paintings are scarcer than hens' teeth. Go out there! where there isn't a solitary great man, nor so much as one famous woman, nor an idea that's big enough to cover the point of a pin, and where the best church members are worse than the worst sinners of the East, and Heaven is a million miles away, and the other place so close by that it crops out at the surface." And drawing partly from his prejudices against the West, and still more from his ignorance, and most of all, from the crude notions that so many Eastern people had of Western conditions, Bert said worse things than are here set down.

It so happened that Barry, the artist mentioned in a former chapter, having been in Chicago, had given Don quite accurate accounts of the West in general, and of Chicago in particular, so that the country boy was far better acquainted with the now

acknowledged metropolis of the West than was the Boston boy with all his superior advantages.

Supposing that Bert was indulging in mere sarcasm, Don cut the tirade short by saying: "No, Chicago is not in view yet; my out West only means Albany. From there I hope in the course of time to work my way beyond the Mississippi."

"Really?" Bert asked with a sinking heart.

"Yes, really, Bert. I shall start for Albany day after to-morrow."

Nora, now in tears, hastened down stairs for her mother, and presently brought her up to remonstrate with Don, who, however, was not to be moved from his purpose.

Bert immediately began to adjust himself to the inevitable, and on the following evening handed Don a note, saying by way of explanation: "I saw the colonel privately this afternoon. He says that you did right in determining not to remain in the store after what had taken place, but thinks that you are acting rashly in leaving Boston so hastily. He brought the note over to me just before I started for home, and I suppose that it contains a recommendation for which I asked."

The note embodied the substance of what had been said to Bert, and enclosed just such a testimonial as might be expected from the soldierly man who wrote it. At twelve o'clock on the succeeding day Don reluctantly parted from his North Square friends and boarded the cars for Albany.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP.

"I am disgusted with this shallow soil and barren surroundings," said a small tree to itself. And it pulled itself up by the roots, and, using them for legs, trotted off to another location. The sum of its experience was that it would have done better to have remained where it was and devoted itself to growing instead of to grumbling.

Don had made friends of the widow's family, and of Colonel Wickworth and Father Taylor as well, and this, too, by commending himself to them as trustworthy and true. This was a beginning, and by remaining where he was, he would have made other friends, and so, would gradually have grown in strength, and in the number of his opportunities also. In making so great a change for so small a cause, Don was throwing away his gains and incurring fresh risks. Little by little, or link by link, is the law of both progress and strength. We may run away from human nature in one place, but wherever we go we shall find a plenty of the same sort, and all the more certainly because we can never rid ourselves of ourselves.

After paying his railway fare, Don had seven dollars left with which to face the world again. Besides the baggage contained in his small sealskin trunk he carried an excess of pride, of sensitiveness, of impulse, of self confidence and of variableness. Possibly some of this surplus stuff was packed

in him at family headquarters, but doubtless it had been lugged about with unnecessary care. Pity it was that he had not by his side for handy use a grip-sack filled to the handles with a peck or so of forethought or precaution. Such a commodity might have saved him a peck of trouble.

When he arrived at Greenbush, opposite Albany, it was dark, and he was sound asleep in his seat and did not hear the conductor's order for passengers bound to Albany to take the forward cars. A rude shake aroused him, and after being told that the cars, already moving, were on their way to Troy, he was told to stir himself quickly and jump from the train. Not being accustomed to railway jumps he reached the ground in such a condition that when he came to himself he discovered that he was lying upon a wheelbarrow close to a hoarsely breathing locomotive in the Greenbush roundhouse. Two begrimed railway engineers stood looking down upon him. On attempting to rise, severe pain admonished him that it would be better for him to lie still.

"What has happened to me?" he asked in a faint voice.

"That is just what we should like to know ourselves," said one of the men grimly. We picked you up from the railway track where we found you to all appearance as dead as a rail. How long you had been there, we do not know. Can't you give us some account of yourself?"

Don related his story about jumping from the train by direction of the conductor.

"That's just like Bill Lummix!" exclaimed one of the men indignantly; "rather than stop a train to correct a mistake, he'd kill half a dozen blunderers. Are you much hurt?"

With difficulty Don sat upright and began to move himself a little to test his limbs. None of them were broken, but the right side of his face was badly cut, as was also the outside

of his right leg. And as for his garments, besides being clotted and stained with blood, they were badly torn.

Looking ruefully at his clothes by the aid of the lanterns of the two men, he said: "Judging from my clothes, I have had a pretty rough tumble. I think that I could stand up if I were to try hard, but I'd rather not attempt it, just yet."

The men were neither thick-headed nor hard-hearted, and the one who had just spoken said: "Let us fix you a bit; there is no need of trying to stand just yet." And they gathered several old jackets and coats and stuffed them in around him as well as they could.

Feeling faint, Don asked for a drink of water. One of the men brought his pail containing a night lunch, and gave him a drink of cold tea, which so revived Don that he began to stir himself a little.

"Have a bite," said the kind-hearted fellow, removing the top compartment of the pail and revealing sandwiches and pie in the lower part. Don was hungry as well as thirsty, but protested against robbing the man of his food.

"Oh, don't trouble yourself about that," was the hearty reply; "my mate Bob will share his pail with me if you can clean out this one."

Having eaten, Don sat up, though not without pain.

The man called Bob, who was waiting for a night freight to take his engine, said: "When we went to pick you up, we saw two fellows run away from you, and we thought that they had done you up for the sake of robbery. As it is, we are afraid that they have gone through your clothes. If you had any money with you, you had better see if you've got it now."

Alarmed at this suggestion, Don searched his pockets in vain for his pocket book, which contained his money, his trunk check, his trunk key and his certificates of character.

"Possibly it may have been shaken out of you where you fell, and though there is small chance of finding it, we will go and search with our lanterns," said Bob, moved by Don's distress.

But they returned as blank as they went, to Don's utter dismay. Seeing that he was trembling from head to feet at this new disaster, the men made inquiries as to whence he came, who he was, and where he was going, and what for. They did what they could to allay his fears, and afforded him some slight comfort by telling him to stay where he was till morning.

Hearing the whistle of his train in the distance, Bob and the other man, his temporary fireman, mounted the cab of his engine. Before his engine moved several men had gathered around Don, and Bob shouted to them as his engine began to move: "Say, you fellows, look after that wheelbarrow chap kindly; he's no dead-beat. Give him this dollar for a send-off in the morning, and make it two or three if you can." As the engine went out the dollar fell upon the cinders, followed by a half dollar sent by the fireman to keep it company.

The foreman of the roundhouse picked the money up and handed it to Don, adding another fifty cents supplemented by several dimes and quarters chipped in by the other men. Don felt like crying, but somehow the kindness of the apparently rough fellows heartened him so much that he said: "I guess I'm on the road to Jericho fast enough, but it's plain that I haven't fallen among thieves in this roundhouse, but among good Samaritans."

One of the turntable men, ignorant of the Bible, supposing that Don referred to his destination, said: "The Boston and Albany don't go to no Jericho. You must have got on the wrong road."

"Oh, get out!" said another one; "don't you know enough to know that this lad is a sort of a Scripture fellow, and that he's talking Bible at us?"

"How should I know?" was the reply; "this road gives us such a small chance to see the inside of a church or to know Sunday when it comes around that there's no more Bible for us than there is for the wind or for running water. But I can tell him that though he'll find no thieves among this gang of sinners, he'll find 'em thick enough outside of the roundhouse, and that's cos we're so near Albany and the State House."

In the little intervals of time that the men had to themselves, they washed the blood from Don's face and leg. And what was still better, as some of them kept needles, thread and buttons for personal emergencies, they sewed up the rents in his garments as best they could, and supplied the places of several buttons that were missing. Don's hat was among his losses, and its place was supplied by a soft hat which looked as though it had been run over by a lightning express.

Observing that Don was scrutinizing the inside of the hat with some care, the man who gave it to him said with a hearty laugh: "You needn't look for any population there, my lad; it is Bob Flanger's hat, and he keeps a head on him that is cleaner than a peach-blossom. He's everlastingly soaking his head under the hydrant, and that's as fatal to head-tramps as the gallows is to them that's hung on it."

"If I ever get rich I'll hang this hat in the best place in my library in remembrance of Bob and the rest of you," said Don gratefully, and withal relieved to know that it belonged to the sturdy engineer.

"Rich!" exclaimed one of the men rather thoughtlessly; "if such a banged-up looking fellow as you ever gets to piling

money into a bank, it'll be because creation has got turned 'tother end foremost."

"Oh, shut off your steam, Black!" impatiently exclaimed the man who brought the hat; "can't you see that you are talking to a respectable kid, and not to a young bummer?"

"When will Bob, as you call him, come back?" Don asked, feeling a desire to see him again before he left the roundhouse.

"There is no telling anything about that," replied Jake Cullum, the hat-man. "His turn is to Chicago and back, and when a man goes out of this roundhouse we are sure of nothing till his engine's nose comes puffing in again. 'Engineers don't most always die in their beds,' you know." And Jake used this bit of railroad slang with so much significance that his meaning was far more impressive than if it had been dressed up in a tailor-made suit.

When Don began to grow sleepy the men put two wheelbarrows together and filling them with clean cotton waste, made him a bed that he could lie in with some comfort. Covering him with coats they left him to his slumbers, but at no time of the night was he lost sight of altogether. Every fresh gang of men that came in took an interest in the boy as soon as they were informed of his mishap and of Bob's care for him. The grim monsters of the road, fifteen or twenty in all, were alive with fire and steam, and incessantly and harshly noisy, but Nature held Don so closely to her breast that he slept soundly till dawn. His awaking, however, seemed like a hideous nightmare, and it was some time before his confused faculties could disentangle him from his illusion.

Although still stiff and sore, he was able to move about, and after eating a sandwich given to him by one of the men, he took a look at himself in a piece of mirror that was fastened to the wall. His face being black and blue, and one eye

almost closed, he could scarcely recognize himself. His first thought was to go over the river to Albany and get access to his clothing, but being without either check or key, he at once realized that the trunk might as well be in Boston for any good it might do him.

"What shall I do about my trunk?" he asked of Jake Cullum, who still kept a kindly watch over him, "now that I have lost my check and key with my pocket book?"

"Well, youngster, you've got me under a dead engine—pinned out of sight;" and Jake scratched his head in vain for a solution of the difficulty. Presently brightening, he said: "You of course know the contents of the trunk and can describe them to the baggage master; that may help you a little; but I guess I'll have to go over with you and swear that your story about jumping from the train and all that, is true. So, come along, for I have only an hour before my engine goes out." He was but a fireman, yet his heart was in the right place.

Arriving at the baggage room, Don had no sooner stated his predicament than an underling of the room, glancing at his face and clothing, positively refused to take any further notice of him. It was in vain that the fireman backed up his claims as well as he knew how; he was not known to the baggageman, and the two were accused of being pals trying to play a transparent confidence game.

Presently his majesty, the chief baggage master, made his appearance, and Don attempted an appeal to him, but the underling immediately made his own representation of the case and Don and Jake were told that if they did not leave the premises forthwith a policeman would be called.

"You might as well run your head under a locomotive as to run afoul of a baggage man without your check," said Jake

with a tall oath. "I can do no more for you, and must go back to the roundhouse. It's my opinion that they'll forget all about you in ten minutes, so that, if in half an hour, the fellows who stole your pocket book should come around with the check, they'll get the trunk without any questions being asked. Good by, and may the Lord have mercy on your soul while you're in this town." Jake spoke with the bitterness of the laboring man who instinctively feels that an unfortunate is a snowball rolling down an inclined plane adding to his misfortunes with every turn he makes.

Don tried to obtain access to the higher officials, whose offices were in the same building, but his bruised and tattered appearance was invincibly against him, and he might as well have attempted to board the moon with a view of going to some land where the truth is known by reading the heart direct.

Beginning to suffer hunger, he attempted to enter a restaurant, but was no sooner seen than he tumbled into the street. He was similarly treated in several other places, which he tried one after another. Drifting down toward the river docks in a dazed condition, he approached a street stand kept by an old Irish woman. She saw so many battered specimens of humanity every day that she took scant notice of Don's disordered person, although she made sure that the worth of his purchases dropped into her wrinkled palm before the purchases passed into his possession.

*When Jonah and his old sermons, after proving such an indigestible problem to the whale, were vomited up on dry land again, he must have presented a very disreputable appearance. And the question is, how did he manage to work himself back into respectable society? But we came near forgetting that Jonah, though coming from a sea of trouble in his

half digested suit of clothes, was far superior to the rich sinners of Ninevah who were clothed in fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. And it is not far to say that even in this day of multi-millionaires some who are looked down upon because of the inferior appearance they make are infinitely superior to some who are looked up to because of their wealth and liveried turnouts.

All that day—a long, long day—Don, so far as his thoughts and his experiences were concerned, like the early martyrs, “wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and in caves of the earth.” When he was again refused lodging-house shelter as night came on, he felt as lonely and as much abandoned of God and man as if he were cast into the midst of the Sahara desert with only the lions for companions.

Exhausted by his wanderings, with every bruise shooting flames of pain, and every thought racking him more than his bruises, he went up State street toward the center of the city. Here the Capitol building—not the twenty-five million one that now crowns the capitoline hill—but the old one—attracted his attention. He ascended the steps and took shelter among the shadows of the portico, where, overcome, he sat down to rest in the obscurest corner he could find. Presently he lay prone upon the flagging and fell into a troubled slumber which lasted till the morning.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW A CITY BECOMES A THORN BUSH.

To the wretched and unfortunate one day is as like to another as one thorn is like all others that grow upon the same bush. And in the nature of the case, although a city may be the best of cities as cities go, to the unfortunate it is a hedge of thorns through which it is impossible to pass without being wounded at almost every step. Albany is as near Heaven as any other American city to such as have the means and disposition to avail themselves of its great advantages, but on the other hand it is just as near to Tophet as any other city to such as have fallen beneath the wheels of fate.

Although Albany is beautiful for situation and the joy of many people, it became a mortal terror to Don. While the contributions of the roundhouse philanthropists lasted he could appease his hunger by dining cheaply and unmolested at the apple stands, after washing himself in the free and friendly waters of the Hudson. But when he went the rounds seeking employment his appearance was so much against him, he was not merely the subject of simple negatives, but the victim of positive scorn and cruelty as well. The constant dropping of water will wear away a stone, and the constant dripping of unkindness wore deep channels through Don's grit and resolution. Many a soul has been undermined for time and for eternity by such experiences as he passed through, and many

a crime owes its origin to the dogged sullenness which has been begotten between the upper and nether millstones of dire necessity. Some who shine in society would have reached the gallows by the road in which Don found himself, just as some who are in the pit and the miry clay may find themselves in honorable eminence if but a ladder is put down for their assistance.

The light of day brought little comfort to Don, but the nights were times of terror to him. It might have been written of him as it was written of Abraham at a crucial period of his life: "And lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him." For Abraham's darkness there was the mitigation of a smoking furnace and a burning lamp. For Don there was apparently nothing—but darkness piled on darkness when the sun went down.

Don knew what camping out meant. With a blanket between him and the soft moss, and a campfire burning at his feet a-night in the woods far from the haunts of men was a delight. The picturesque underbrush of the forest; the stream purling over the rocks; the high pines singing musically overhead; the twitter of the wild bird; the barking of the squirrel; the answering echo of the fox; or the defiant hoot of the owl; all these but gave zest to the pleasure of camping out in the wilderness. Slumber came like soft-footed peace among such scenes as these; and if the fairy webs of dreams were woven through the corridors of the brain they were the webs of the beautiful wonderland.

But this camping out in a city was another thing. While the gas-lights flickered fitfully, and the sounds of footsteps diminished and the roll of carriages well nigh ceased altogether, Don moved about like a lost spirit seeking rest and finding none. He took furtive glances at shadowed recesses

and dark holes in quest of some spot that would be likely to escape the watchman's eye. When such a place was discovered it required no small degree of strategy to get into it without being observed. Once in, the rats were sure to dispute the occupation with the newcomer. Or a homeless dog, seeking the same place, would sniff at the occupant, and finding that he was only a fellow unfortunate, would quietly settle down beside him and with timely growls or ominous snaps, keep the rats from becoming too familiar or intrusive.

One night Don took refuge in the dark portico of one of the largest and oldest church buildings in the city. While lying there, with his head resting upon one arm for a pillow, he recalled the words which he had heard so often at home: "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also." The words were like a strain of distant music hovering soft and sweet upon the air; but instead of coming nearer and nearer, it receded farther and farther away. Don was troubled; there was no question as to that, for the tears were raining wormwood drops upon his sleeve. Nor could he help being troubled; the waves had gone over him, and the sound of many waters put far from him any consolation he might have, under other circumstances, found in the text.

Why did not the Recording Angel whisper in his ear that, one day he should stand in the pulpit of that same church and preach from that same text with a pertinency and power that would carry the great audience with him from the first to the last words of the sermon. Perhaps he understood that Ear Gate was in a measure barricaded from within to all messages

of hope. Perhaps the Angel was too busy recording the vices and the virtues of humanity—too busy trying to reconcile the discrepancies of the balance sheet to notice how sadly in need of encouragement Don stood. Perhaps the Angel's work was so exclusively historical that he had not attained the gift of prophecy. Probably, in any event, it was better under the circumstances that the lad should see through a glass darkly, for a too dazzling light is totally blinding to eyes that are not strong.

When the day broke and while Don was cautiously making his way down to the street for another day's start in the world, his eyes happened upon the tin directory of the church. Among the things he saw on the directory were the name and the address of the pastor, "The Rev. John Paul Lovejoy." That was a name to conjure with, and he determined to seek the owner of it before another night came. "Possibly," he thought to himself, "The Rev. John Paul Lovejoy may be able to tell me what to do; or he may put me in the way of getting work. I know that I am a hard looking customer, but a minister ought to know that bad appearances may sometimes be just as deceitful as good appearances."

Inspired by hope, he breakfasted on a sandwich and then went down to the river to make his toilet preparatory to his important call. It never occurred to him that the forenoon might be an unpropitious time for calling on a minister. So far as the habits of his own father were concerned, there was no distinction in times. The village minister's rule was—"The man who wants to see me is the man I am placed here to see."

Don went to the residence of The Rev. John Paul Lovejoy and rang the bell boldly. A tidy German girl answered, but the moment she saw him she made an almost involuntary movement to close the door in his face. A second glance at

the caller arrested her movement, and she inquired his business, after noticing that the lad was moistening his lips as if trying to find his words.

"I am in great trouble and want to see the minister, if you please," he at length managed to say with simple directness.

"The dominie is in his study busy with his sermon, and his order is that he is not to be disturbed in the forenoon unless it is absolutely necessary." And the girl spoke her lesson as one who had learned it well enough to be in little danger of forgetting it.

"It is necessary for me to see him," said Don, thinking only of his own urgent side of the case.

Something in the caller's manner and tone appealed to both the respect and sympathy of the girl, and she said without further hesitation: "If you will wait, I will go and see what he says, though I am afraid that he will be displeased. The dominie is quite particular."

"The dominie! Why does she call him that?" said Don to himself while waiting outside the closed door. He had never heard the word used except as a Latin title for The Lord, and it struck him as being little less than blasphemous to apply it to a minister. While he was musing the minister himself came to the door with pen in hand and the ink still wet upon its point. He stood in velvet slippers, had on a long silk dressing gown, wore spotless linen, a wide white choker, and gold-rimmed eye glasses, and altogether, presented an appearance of dignity which might have made one who was extremely ignorant of heavenly things believe that he was the Lord himself.

As soon as The Rev. John Paul Lovejoy cast eye upon Don, he frowned ominously, and curtly asked: "Your business?"

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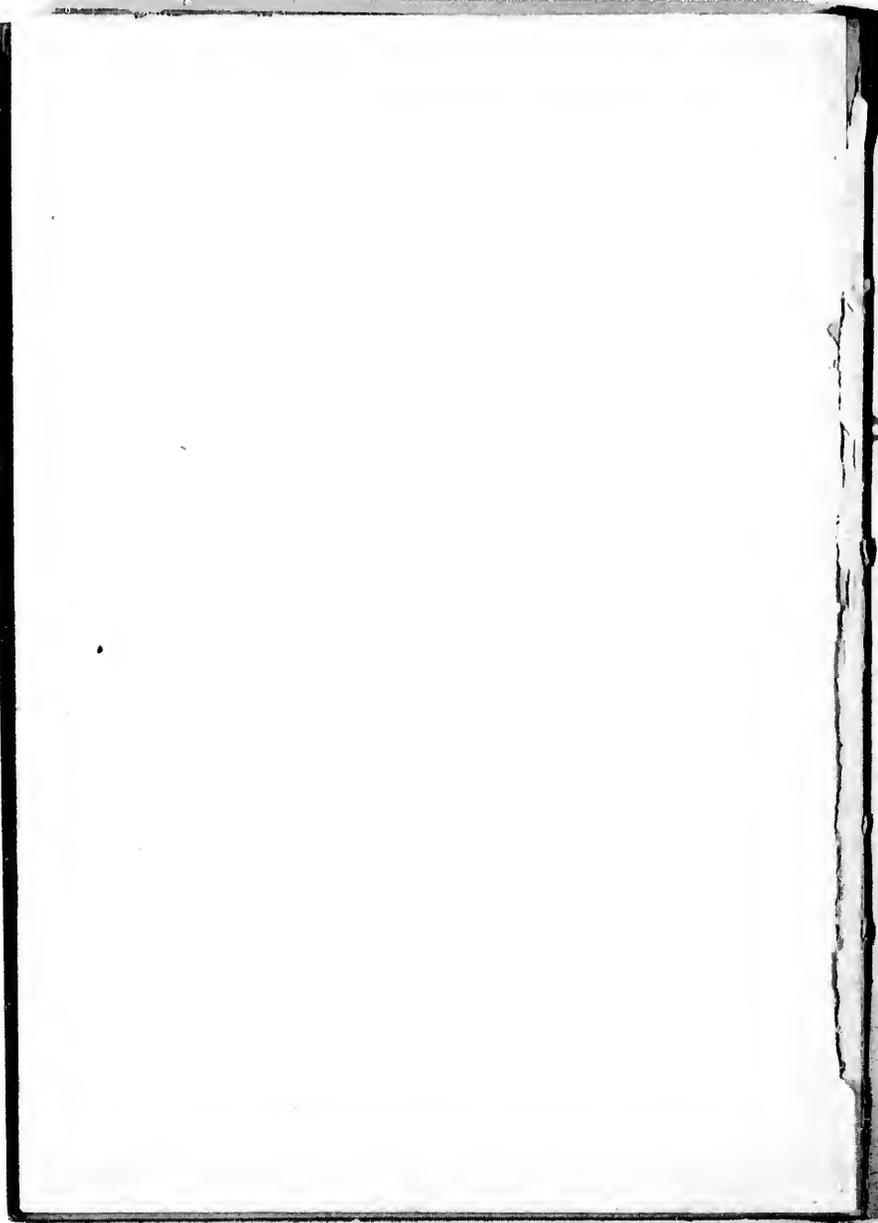
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"I am in trouble," Don began.

"Oh, yes—of course," the minister interrupted tartly; "the unfortunate are as plentiful as paving stones. I have no time to listen to you; but here is a dime."

Don put his hands behind him and drew back, saying: "I did not come for money, but for advice." Before the words were fully spoken, the minister turned and closed the door with an emphatic bang. After blistering the serving girl for calling him down to see such a beggar, he returned to the sermon which he was to preach before The City Charitable Society from the text: "And now, abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

The Rev. John Paul Lovejoy, D. D., was an able, popular preacher and much sought after for great occasions. In his sermon he intended to magnify corporate charity, and to deprecate private alms-giving as the bane of modern society. He was so intent upon this that he left no private path in which one might walk as a messenger of God to the poor and needy. His opinions were graded more from the door view of annoyance from necessitous cases, than from the view of God, the pitiful Father of both the rich and the poor. Yet he was not without his benevolent moments, for his somewhat bold signature figured largely in the advertisements of men who manufactured cures for corns, indigestion, flatulency, colic, ministerial hysterics, loss of brain power and other ills "too numerous to mention." Freely he had received and freely he had given—of the influence of his illustrious name to help the benevolent patent medicine venders to the rewards they so eminently deserved. Over his study door hung the motto—the words of J. Martineau: "To get good, is animal; to do good, is human; to be good, is divine."

When Don went down the parsonage steps he felt as

though his heart had descended to zero. "The slippered, sleek, begowned old pharisee," he said to himself, "he ought to go over to the Greenbush roundhouse and take a few lessons in Christianity from the engineers, firemen and turntable men! Could he not afford to give me ten words of kindness? Ten cents! That's about the size of The Reverend John Paul Lovejoy, D. D. Thank Heaven, my father was not cut out of the goods that fellow is made of."

He remembered the evening that he and Bert spent in Theodore Parker's study by special invitation. And he remembered that while they were there, several unfortunate people were admitted to the study, and that instead of being brushed aside like vermin, they were treated as though they were angels in disguise. The monster of heresy exemplified the beauties of charity, and the paragon of orthodoxy illustrated the ugliness of suspicion. Don was almost ready to become a heretic again. But as heresy is fanned to its highest by opposition and as there was no one to oppose him, he let his thoughts run in the grooves that had been channeled out by the forefathers.

His thoughts were diverted from the blank reception he had experienced by a discovery which was far more aggravating than the contempt he had been made the subject of at the hands of a "dominie."

In passing up one of the by streets he stopped to look into the show window of a pawn broker's shop. The first objects that his eyes rested upon were his nine books, his Bible, his flute and the very garments he so much needed to improve his appearance while making the rounds in search of work. The thieves who robbed him while he lay unconscious on the railroad track had used the check for the trunk, and had then

disposed of the contents to the Jew, who now had them ticketed for sale.

Without thinking of the difficulty in the way of regaining his things, Don hastened into the shop and demanded to know how they came into the possession of the Jew.

"It ish none of your pizzness," was the defiant reply, given after the Jew had surveyed Don from head to feet.

"It is my business; they were stolen from me," said Don, angrily.

"You vas get out of this, or I vill put you out," threatened the Jew, advancing upon him as if to lay hands upon him.

Seeing that he had made a mistake in his approaches, Don left the shop, and although he thought he had little to hope for from a policeman, he spoke to one who was passing and informed him of his discovery, and the circumstances leading to the loss of the trunk. Impressed by the straightforward account given, the officer turned back and went with him to the Jew's window.

But the Jew had seen Don conversing with the officer, and, surmising his purpose, he gave orders to have the things removed and concealed. Don was confounded by their disappearance. The officer, who was well acquainted with the tricks of this branch of business, said: "You should have come to me first; he has taken advantage of the warning you gave to put your things out of sight. Nothing but a search warrant would be available now, and even that might fail. Besides, in a case like this, no law can be set in motion without money, and I judge from your appearance and from your story that you have nothing to throw away on law officers and methods."

"No, indeed; I see that I can do nothing," said Don despairingly.

The officer left him to battle with this new misfortune and disappointment as best he might. As he stood in front of the window aimless and miserable, the Jew came out and with a malicious leer said: "If you vas see something you like, I schall sell it to you cheap as dirt, you vas so very smart."

His victim moved on, feeling as though he had been stung by an adder, while the Jew, after watching him a moment, went inside and made merry at the clever way in which he had outwitted both the officer and the boy.

But a grim spirit of endurance was developing in Don. He remembered seeing the trees of the forest bending beneath the accumulations of repeated snow storms, and then resuming their native erectness when the load melted away, and he thought to himself: "In spite of these things, I'll not break yet awhile."

On Sunday he went into the humblest church edifice he could find in the hope of picking some crumb of comfort from the services. An usher met him as he entered, but instead of conducting him to a pew, he placed a chair for him against the back wall of the audience room. Don bowed his thanks with the formality of Chesterfield, and smiled in spite of the insult. The usher saw him smile, and, taking it as a proof of depravity, regretted that he had not directed the unwelcome visitor to go away till his bruised face looked less pugilistic and his clothes less like the rags of a vagabond. The elephant is a gigantic beast, yet it is thrown into mortal terror at the sight of a mouse; society is a mighty creature, yet the too near approach of a soul that is not clothed according to the fashion plates throws it into spasms.

The minister, an aged gentle-looking man, won Don's heart, and for a moment he wished that he could unburden himself to him. His experience with The Reverend John Paul

Lovejoy, D. D., alias The Rev. Theophilus Thistle, the thistle sister, came to mind with such depressing force, that he repressed the desire, and although the service was as balm to his wounds, he went out determined to bear his own burden until such time as God himself should see fit to cut the bands which bound it to his back.

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CHAPTER XV.

SPIRITS IN PRISON.

That night Don slept under a hedge in the public park. In the morning he put himself upon an allowance of one sandwich a day; half of it to be eaten for breakfast and the other half for dinner and supper, for the roundhouse fund was reduced to thirty-six cents.

"What shall I do when my money is gone?" Don asked the question with fear and trembling. And this very question is daily asked by tens of thousands with feelings bordering on agony and despair. The inability to ignore a dread uncertainty is the fountain head of much of the bitterness that wells up from the heart of humanity. Wrong itself is oftentimes but the outburst of the suffering produced by this uncertainty.

By ten o'clock the clouds with which the day began poured down floods which carried the filth of the city in roaring streams into the Hudson river. The rain continued the rest of the day and well along toward midnight. In spite of all he could do Don became drenched to the skin and chilled to the bone. Becoming desperate, he asked a policeman to direct him to some station where he would be allowed to remain during the night. The policeman had not been able to make any arrests during the day as trophies of his vigilance, and he gladly took his applicant in charge as prisoner and led him away. A few minutes after, Don, now thoroughly alarmed,

was arraigned before the station desk and recorded upon the police blotter under headings which described him as a vagrant, suspicious character, and as one who should be sent to the workhouse.

He was led up stairs and locked in a narrow cell to which mice, roaches and rats had been accustomed to have free access in no small numbers as they prowled around in search of crumbs scattered about by the prisoners. A bare plank served the purpose of a bed. There were fourteen prisoners in the adjoining cells; three fallen women, one girl, two boys and the rest men. Don's appearance was the signal for many ironical remarks and salutations, which increased to profanity and obscenity when he persisted in keeping silent. When the officer left the corridor one of the prisoners began to sing snatches of a ribald song, the chorus of which was joined in with great gusto by the others. Then came a violent verbal quarrel between two of the women who were confined in one cell and who were partly intoxicated; this was accompanied by highly seasoned comments made by the other prisoners. During the height of the quarrel, a male voice, full, clear and comparatively well cultivated, and which had not been heard before, began to sing one of Thomas Hood's well known melodies. The words, so strangely out of place, and so immediately telling in their effects upon the prisoners began with:

"I remember, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn';
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away!"

Continuing through the second and third verses without faltering, the singer followed with the fourth:

"I remember, I remember
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky;
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm further off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy."

During the singing there were no interruptions; at the close someone was sobbing. During the remainder of the night there was an unbroken silence, save when fitful dreams wrung from ruined souls fragmentary revelation of passion, crime and remorse. The words of the song sent Don's thoughts bounding homeward, but he was greatly solaced to know that he was not in prison for crime or any fault of his own, and for the first time in his life he realized that a good conscience is better than a great fortune.

In the morning, in company with the other prisoners, he was marched to the police court to be arraigned before the police judge. Rapid as was the disposal of the prisoners, the judge was a man of keen discernment and impartial justice. After a few preliminary questions to Don, he silenced the accusing policeman, ignored the record of the blotter, and pursuing his examination elicited from the victim of circumstances a brief and transparent account of his misfortune.

"You are honorably discharged," he said at the close; and then with great kindness, added: "I am sorry for you, my lad, and I advise you to employ all your energy in getting back to your home and friends. You are far too young to attempt to face the world alone."

The next case, and the last on the docket, was a stranded actor, who proved to be the man who sung Hood's words. He had been taken in in precisely the same way that Don was, and was discharged by the judge without hesitation. The two passed out together, and had no sooner reached the outside of the station than the actor, touching Don on the shoulder, assumed a tragic air and recited the words of Hamlet:

"To be, or not to be—that is the question—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die—to sleep—
No more; and by a sleep, to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished."

"Don Donalds," he continued in the same farcically tragic manner, "we have breakfasted on prison fare; now whither shall we go to dine and wine? But I forgot; methinks our purses are but filled with empty air, if purses we possess, and empty air is only fit for disembodied spirits, whose unsubstantial pulp makes teeth and stomach superfluous encumbrances." Taking Don by the hand he shook it gravely, adding: "Farewell to you where e'er you go. And, alas! a long farewell to ail my greatness, for I no revenue have, but my good spirits to feed and clothe me. I'm but a pipe for Fortune's finger to sound what stop she pleases."

The eccentric and unfortunate actor had so much theatrical bric-a-brac stowed away in his brain that common sense could not find even standing room. But the pathetic wail he sung on that eventful night in prison, and the spell of good it cast upon the occupants of the cells, Don could never forget to his dying day. As soon as he was well clear of the actor he turned

his footsteps toward the river determined to act upon the advice of the kindhearted judge so far as he could. To leave Albany and to return to Boston was now his all absorbing aim. He started along the railway leading from Greenbush with three sandwiches and a few cents in his pocket. The pure, sweet free air of the country was an inspiration to him. At noon he dined on a sandwich and a fresh turnip which he found by the roadside. At intervals during the day he met tramps who, at that season of the year infested the entire length of the Boston and Albany Railroad. Few passed him without attempting to enter into conversation. Most of them were dangerous looking men. Now and then he came upon boys who appeared to be younger than himself. He became disquieted with the thought that he was hovering dangerously near the borders of tramp life, that bottomless pit over which is written: "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here."

By dark he was in sight of the lights of Pittsfield, and being footsore and weary, he began to look for something that would serve as a shelter for the night. A lone haystack in a secluded field looked invitingly attractive and he burrowed into the side that was farthest from the railroad, and there, congratulating himself upon his surroundings as contrasted with those of the prison of the previous night, he fell into a peaceful sleep.

He had not been long asleep when he was awakened by the voices of two tramps who were taking their lodgings in the opposite side of the stack, and making the air smell rank to Heaven with the offense of the rankest kind of tobacco smoke. As they soon became quiet, and were evidently unsuspecting of his own presence he again composed himself for slumber. This time he dreamed of hell and with such a vivid sense of actual flames of torment that he awoke in terror. The stack was a mass of flames and at the instant of his escape toppled

over on the side occupied by the tramps whose pipes were evidently responsible for the disaster. He could find no trace of the men and never knew whether they escaped or were incinerated in the flames.

The red dawn was breaking in the East and he resumed his journey on the road, and happily escaped being called to answer for the destruction of the stack. The sun was just rising when he entered Pittsfield. As he was walking among the freight trains assembled on the network of tracks belonging to the freight yard, and was in the act of passing a locomotive he was amazed, yet inexpressibly pleased to hear someone in the cab say:

"Hello, Don Donalds! Where in time did you come from? Have you turned tramp?" And almost before he could recover from his astonishment, honest Jake Cullum of the roundhouse in Greenbush was shaking him by the hand and poring out a mixed volley of exclamations and questions.

The engineer was also one of the roundhouse saints, and leaning from his cab he hailed Don as cordially and with as much interest as his fireman had done. "Your eye is getting better," he said, "and your cheek will be all right as soon as the scab comes off, but your duds seem to be losing what your skin has gained, though Bob Flanger's hat sticks to you like a true friend. What have you been doing since you left us?"

By this time the conductor of the freight came near, and as Don, in answer to questions, related his experience, several other men who, besides Jake's train, were waiting for a belated passenger train, gathered around and listened to what was going on.

Don was so elated at the idea of being among friends again that he gave quite a humorous twist to his account of his sorrows. Nevertheless more than one eye was dimmed by

moisture, and several strong expletives dropped from the lips of the men in expression of the sympathy they felt.

"If I had the handling of some of those Albany chaps," said Jake, "I'd make them drink tar for a week and then throw them into the firebox of my engine for fuel."

"Going to Boston, are you?" asked the conductor, and on Don's answering in the affirmative, he added: "But don't you know that in attempting to walk that distance you place yourself in danger of becoming a regular member of the tramp brigade?"

"Let's give him a jog on our train," said Jake eagerly; "I know it's against the rules and all that sort of thing, but so many rules have been broken for the crushing of the boy, it's high time that some were broken for the sake of saving him. It takes a tough one to walk from here to Boston, and he'd starve to death or die in his tracks before he got over half the distance."

"I guess we can fix it," said the conductor.

"And like enough lose your situation for your pains, for just now the spotters of the company are keeping a sharp eye upon us," remarked a cautious yardman who, while he was as much concerned for Don as any of them, did not wish to see the conductor compromise himself by carrying a passenger without authority.

"Put him in a box car, and carry him as far as Worcester, the end of our run," suggested Jake.

"That's talking United States!" exclaimed a brakeman; "it can be done as easy as swearing."

"No," interrupted Don, decidedly. "I'm going to Boston honestly, or not at all. No rules shall be broken on my account. It would not only place me in the wrong by making a railway sneak of me, but it would place everyone on the

train in the wrong, and that is altogether too big a price to pay for a railroad ride."

"The youngster is right—sound hearted to the core," replied the conductor, but I didn't propose to help him on by running the rules out; there's too much risk in doing that. My brother is head man at headquarters, and I'll telegraph to him about the whole business; I am quite sure that he will telegraph an order here for a ticket for at least a part of the distance."

The conductor, after being absent fifteen minutes, came back and handed Don a ticket from Pittsfield to Boston on second class. "There," said he, as joyfully as if Don were his own relative, "that will save your shoe leather, and what is of more consequence, it will keep you from getting mixed up with the lousy tramps. Now you'd better scramble off to the passenger station for number five will soon be here."

Don couldn't find many words to voice his gratitude—he was too deeply moved for that, but he found his feet fast enough and set them in rapid motion for the passenger station. Jake was so glad for the boy that he jumped upon his engine and with the connivance of his engineer and conductor, sent out a series of parting shrieks from his engines that excited the wonder of the yard and town, and awoke the echoes of the hills far and near.

"There," he growled with satisfaction, "that's against the rules, too, but I'll be darned if it isn't time for something to be broken for a chap that's as true blue as the sky, and that's been knocked about like a tin can tied to a dog's tail."

The engineer laughed, and then suddenly exclaimed with a look of annoyance: "By Jove, we've played the fool after all!"

"How?" asked the fireman, surprised.

"We forgot the collection, and that's enough to knock the bottom out of all our preaching."

"Well, I'll be darned!" sighed the fireman, aghast at the omission. "That's as bad as sending a ship to sea without any provision. But look here! It isn't too late yet."

"Yes, it is. There's number five now, and she'll pull out before we can get down to the station."

"That won't make any difference if we're in earnest. Let's make up two dollars and telegraph next station to give it to him, and we'll pay as we go through."

"You are level headed Jake, sure."

So the amount was made up, and the conductor again called into use, wired: "Find boy in second class, number five, with bruised eye and cheek and give him two dollars. Will refund as we come along. His name is Don Donalds."

When number five stopped at next station, Don was alarmed as well as amazed, when a man, who was evidently in a hurry, confronted him with the question: "Is your name Don Donalds?"

On receiving confirmation of his conjecture, he gave Don the telegram to read, and without further ceremony handed him two dollars, and hurried away, for the train was already beginning to move.

With the telegram and money in hand, it did not take Don long to unfathom the mystery. His money was all gone with the exception of ten cents, and the two dollars dissipated a new cloud of anxiety that was beginning to settle upon him.

"God bless them," he said. "They don't wear velvet slippers, silk dressing gowns and white chokers, like The Reverend John Paul Lovejoy, D. D., but they are solid gold while he is only gilt-brass."

CHAPTER XVI.

A PERPLEXED FAMILY.

"It is fourteen days since Don left us," said Bert to his mother in the presence of Nora, "and I haven't had a word from him yet. He promised to write to me the first day after his arrival in Albany, and I supposed that his promise was as good as a fact. I never was more disappointed in a fellow in my life. It is a shabby way to treat one's best friend."

"You are not his best friend if you begin to think mean things about him," Nora replied with a good deal of earnestness. "There must be some reason for his silence, and you ought to wait before you condemn him."

The little mother sided with Nora; she was getting anxious about Don, but she had kept her thoughts to herself. Now, she involuntarily expressed herself by saying: "I hope nothing serious has happened to him; he certainly would have written you had it been possible for him to do so."

At the bare thought of harm to his attic chum Bert's loyalty reasserted itself, and he said: "I am shabby myself to suspect him of being shabby. He is high spirited and proud, and it is more than likely that, failing to find anything to do, he has run short of money and has put off writing until he could give a good account of himself."

"Short of money, and in a strange city!" exclaimed Nora,

horrified by the thought. "What will he do? What can he do without money?"

"If he is short of money, that's all the more reason why he should have written. I have five dollars that he might have just as well as not," said Bert.

"And I have sixty-five cents that could be added to it," said Nora. "Can't we send it to him without waiting to hear from him?"

"We haven't his address," Bert replied, "and besides, for aught we know, he may have started for that horrid Chicago and gone to work gathering prairie dogs and rattles from the rattle snakes to bring back to us. He is a great fellow for the country and country curiosities, you know." And Bert spoke without the sign of a smile.

"You are just awful to make light of such a serious thing!" said Nora quite angrily.

"Let us wait a few days," the widow suggested soothingly. "We may hear good news from him yet."

But Nora was not to be pacified. For the first time in her life the thought of being without money had come to her in all its dread significance, and she kept asking: "What can he do without money?" Getting no satisfactory answer, she went to her room and throwing herself upon the bed, she sobbed till both her tears and her apprehensions were exhausted.

On Saturday afternoons she was in the habit of taking protracted airings on the Common. Miss Arabella Belinda Agincourt was in the habit of doing the same thing. Each one preferred the Beacon Mall, where the noblest elms swayed their branches in umbrageous glory, and the nobbiest people displayed their attire in all its gay diversity, whilst the representatives of the common people mixed among them, or sat upon the seats of the mall to watch and to make their demo-

cratic comments upon the pageantry of fashion and the grandeur of uplifted noses.

The day following the family council about Don was Saturday, and Nora went out to take her usual afternoon promenade among the elect or elite, the two words amounting to the same thing in the mental eye of the world. She had but just reached the favorite mall when she met Miss Agincourt face to face, and remembering the part she had played as Don's evil genius, Nora gave her a succession of glances that were eloquently contemptuous and vindictive.

Being arrayed and powdered to the fullest extent of her resources, Miss Agincourt looked down upon the little, plainly dressed girl with pitying complacency. Seeing that the old maid was not annihilated by her withering eye-volleys, Nora turned and followed behind her and took her full measure of vengeance by making malicious comments to herself upon the attire of Don's enemy. Not content with this, she mimicked her mincing gait to such an extent that those near watched the artful pantomime with great amusement, and in some instances with open laughter. It was surely a very unbecoming piece of conduct for a little saint who could quote Scripture so continuously and appropriately, and all the more unbecoming, because the victim of this spontaneous malice was unaware of what was going on behind her.

Suddenly Nora uttered a suppressed cry of pain and immediately started for home, where she arrived pale, and panting from the effects of her haste. Miss Agincourt just as suddenly changed her course and made her way directly to the counting room of Wickworth & Co., into which she had no sooner entered than she said to the colonel, who happened to be alone: "That Donalds boy has turned out just as I expected. He didn't leave the city as you supposed. I have just seen him

sitting on one of the seats of Beacon Mall, and a more hardened and disreputable looking boy I have never seen."

"You must be mistaken," said the colonel severely, for he had not forgiven his relative's interference in Don's case. "He certainly left the city for Albany."

"I am not mistaken," she replied, meeting her uncle's severe gaze with a touch of defiance. "Notwithstanding his dreadful hat and clothes and a big scab on his cheek, I recognized him as certainly as I now recognize you. He looked as dissipated as if he had been bumming about the city ever since he left the store. And he recognized me, for the moment his eye met mine, he jumped up from the seat and fairly ran away. He lied to you about leaving the city, just as he lied to you about his board bill."

"He told the truth about his board bill; and I happen to know by the testimony of Bert Williams, who saw him board the Albany train, that he purchased a ticket for Albany with part of the money that I gave him when he left us. That boy is no liar, and if you have seen him, as you say you have, he has been unfortunate. And instead of following him up with your unfounded suspicions, you should have accused yourself as being in part responsible for his misfortune, and should have spoken to him and tried to put yourself in the way of making some reparation for the serious injury you did him. It is no small crime to be instrumental in casting a cloud upon an innocent boy's future. I shall be uneasy about him until I hear more of him, and if I had any clue to him I should try to find him. I have been worrying about him ever since he left here, for the more I have thought about him, the more I have been convinced of his worth and of the harm that has come to him through your impertinent meddling with things that did not concern you." As usual with the colonel when he became

indignant enough to use the whip, the sting was in the end of the lash.

Miss Agincourt, growing red in the face, said: "If the deacon were here, he'd protect me from your insults."

"I mean no insult, but if he were here I'd say the same things, and possibly, if he joined with you, I should say harsher things than I have already uttered."

Miss Agincourt hurried away in no amiable temper, and she had no sooner closed the door behind her than the colonel gave vent to his annoyance by using some hot Mexican War expressions, which might burn through the paper if they were put down in black and white.

When Nora reached home she was so excited she could scarcely control herself: "Oh, mother," she began, "I have seen Don, and such a wretched sight as he was, was enough to break one's heart."

"Control yourself, my dear; you certainly must be mistaken," said the little mother, alarmed at her child's agitation, and no less so at what she said.

"Oh, mother, I did see him! And that hateful Agincourt saw him as plainly as I did; and I saw the wicked sneer that came to her face when she recognized him. Don looked perfectly dreadful! He had an old hat on that looked as if it had been picked up in somebody's back yard. And there was a great scab on his cheek. And there he sat without a collar, and his shirt looked the color of the walk beneath his feet. His clothes were dreadfully soiled, and torn besides; and his shoes were nearly worn out, and you know how particular he was about his dress and looks. He saw me, too, and when I started to go toward him, his face turned red and he ran away from me. I believe that he has walked all the way back from Albany and that someone has been pounding him, or that he

has met with some dreadful accident, and that he was so ashamed of his appearance that he didn't want me to speak to him. Oh, if he had only waited for me I would have brought him home with me, even if all Boston had stared at us!" And Nora, exhausted by her excitement, began to cry and wring her hands.

Her mother was much perplexed, but the more she questioned Nora, the more was she convinced of the correctness of her representations. She was filled with anxiety and could not restrain her own tears.

As soon as Bert came home, the story was poured into his ears, and lost nothing in the retelling by Nora. He questioned her on every point, and found it difficult even then to believe that she had really seen him.

"It must have been somebody else who resembled him, just as Don and I resemble each other," he said, anxiously seeking a loophole of escape from his fears.

"Then why should he turn red at seeing me, and run away from me?" Nora replied, shutting her brother up to her own conviction.

He went over to the Coverts to see Miss Agincourt. The amiable maiden had already acquainted Covert and his wife with her discovery, and the first thing Covert said when he saw Bert was: "So, you have heard from your pet attic boarder? Are you going to take him in again?"

"Is Miss Agincourt in?" Bert asked without noticing Covert's question. "If she is I should like to see her alone for a few minutes."

"Oh, of course! You want to hear the story straight and hot from her own lips. She is in the reception room and will, I know, be very glad to see you."

Bert was no sooner in the presence of the lady than he began with: "Did you see Don Donalds this afternoon, Miss Agincourt? Nora says he was on the Common, and that you saw him at the same time she did. I thought it possible for her to be mistaken."

Miss Agincourt smiled so maliciously that Bert was answered before she spoke. Taking time to frame her reply in accordance with her smile, she went on to say with a most provoking deliberation: "From the outcry your sister made, and from the way she started toward him, I think that I am justified in saying that she recognized him as easily as I did, notwithstanding his rags and filth."

"His rags and filth!" Bert exclaimed, white with rage at the evident satisfaction with which she used the words. "If he was in rags and filth, it is because you pulled away the ladder by which he was trying to climb and dumped him among the mud and stones. If I were not a gentleman making a call upon a lady I'd say more and worse. I beg your pardon for speaking so plainly."

Miss Agincourt indulged in such a peculiarly sharp-pointed laugh that Bert dropped from the heights of the man down to the impulsive boy that he was, and suddenly burst out with: "May God have mercy upon your poor little, miserable, skinny, powder-faced soul!"

"Tut, tut! you young scamp!" interrupted Covert, hastening into the room from the place where he had been eavesdropping. "If you don't know how to control your tongue, you must get into the street as quickly as your feet can carry you."

"Save your breath, Mr. Covert—it is so very, very valuable; and trust me to know enough to get out of a den of vipers without waiting for orders to go." Bert had already risen to

take his leave, and he shot this parting arrow with such downright venom that both Covert and Miss Agincourt winced under the stroke.

"Yes, it was Don beyond a doubt," said Bert in answer to his mother's inquiries. "And that Agincourt viperess is actually rejoicing over what she called his rags and fith. What do you think of that for a specimen of womankind?"

"She is not a fair specimen of the sex to which your sister and mother belong, but she is a sample of people of both sexes who are disappointed if their evil surmisings fail of fulfillment."

"She tried to make her uncle believe that Don was a liar, and now she will go to him and try to convince him that he is a criminal also," said Nora bitterly.

If they had known that the sweet Arabella had already been to the store, and that she had already been roasted by the colonel they would not have wondered at her lack of compassion for the unfortunate Don, for roasted people are apt to reserve their compassion for themselves.

The explanatory guesses of the little family were not far from the truth. They concluded that Don had been overtaken by some unaccountable misfortune, and that having returned to the city in a beggarly condition, his pride had prompted his escape from Nora, and would prevent him from coming to the house or from putting himself in the way of being seen by anyone who knew him. They feared that he would suffer to the last verge of endurance before his pride yielded.

"To-morrow is Sunday," said Nora, lighting up with a faint hope, "and you must spend the day searching for him. Perhaps he may be on the Common again."

Bert spent the day roaming the Common, the Public Garden and the streets where he thought he would be likely

to happen upon his chum. He searched in vain. The fear that Don was without a shelter to cover his head, filled the family with such dismay that silence became their only refuge.

Colonel Wickworth did not dismiss Don from his mind with the departure of Miss Agincourt from the store. He had a high opinion of his worth, yet, wise in the knowledge of high-strung natures, he readily understood why the boy had left the city, and reproached himself for not having seen him personally and dissuaded him from making so hazardous a move. The picture that was given of his forlorn appearance haunted him all day Sunday, and the only relief he obtained was by assuring himself that Don would certainly return to his North Square boarding place. But there still remained the fact, as indicated in Miss Agincourt's account, that he avoided his former landlady's daughter; and it was a fact he could not explain to his satisfaction.

The deacon was away on business, and on Monday morning the colonel sent a note to Bert's employers requesting them to let him go to the Wickworth store for ten or twenty minutes; and by way of explanation, he said that the Donalds boy was in trouble without any fault of his own, and that the interview was to be in his interest.

"Has Don returned to your place?" was the first question with which the colonel met Bert's entrance into the counting room.

"No, sir," was the desponding reply, followed by the wondering question: "How did you know that he had returned to the city?"

"I learned of it through Miss Agincourt, and I judged from what she said that he has been very unfortunate, and has, in fact, become destitute. I am anxious about him, for he does not deserve to suffer."

Immensely pleased with this manifestation of interest on the colonel's part, Bert opened his heart and repeated what Nora had said about Don's appearance. He also tried to account for Don's failure to return to North Square.

"I think I understand that part of it," said the colonel nervously, "but I cannot understand why he should look so seedy in so short a time. Possibly he has pawned his clothing to keep from starving. Have you written to him?"

"Not yet. He left word for me to forward his mail to Albany, and I took it for granted that he would not be very likely to go to the office here."

"A letter dropped in the office will be published in the usual list of letters remaining in the office, and he may see the list and call for the letter. Write to him and urge him to return to your house. Say that a friend will supply him with all needed clothing and become responsible for his board until he can get on his feet again. Write also that Phillips & Sampson being in need of a boy, I have recommended him to them, and they will keep the place open for a week or ten days. You must also put a 'personal' in four of the city papers, saying that he will find something to his interest by calling upon you at an early date, and here is the money to pay for the advertisement. I am much concerned for him, and as soon as you hear from him, you must let me know of it, but not in a way to bring our doings to the notice of my brother."

Bert promised to follow the colonel's directions to the letter, and thanked him gratefully for the interest he took in Don's welfare. At the home dinner that day the colonel was canonized among the saints, and Nora's tongue itched for words adequate to his praise.

Both the deacon and Miss Agincourt had a sneaking partiality for newspaper 'personals,' and it was not long before

they saw the one relating to Don. Miss Agincourt was the first to inform the deacon of Don's return to the city. She abated neither jot nor tittle in the malignity of her suspicions, and the deacon concluded that the shop had been rid of a hopeless scapegrace. The 'personal' was dismissed from notice by assuming that it was merely an attempt on the part of Bert's mother to recover an attic boarder.

CHAPTER XVII.

A PUZZLED YOUTHFUL PILGRIM.

While Don was making the journey from Pittsfield to Boston in the comfortable car at a rate that almost annihilated distance, the jolts of the train, the turns in the road and the swift succession of scenes were but parables of the jolts of his mind, the turns in his thoughts and the succession of possibilities that suggested themselves to his feverish imagination. The tramp from Albany to Pittsfield, and the night spent in the haystack, rankled in his heart fully as much as did the night spent in the prison.

As the train sped on, tramp pilgrims by ones and twos and threes were passed almost every other mile, and he shivered at the bare idea of being one in the long and scattered procession of forlorn tattereddemalions leaking out of nowhere and streaming on to an equally indefinite destination. How did their lives begin? Where would they end? Was not every man's hand lifted against them? Were they to be the vermin of eternity as they were of time? Here was a "crook in the lot" that was past Don's power to straighten out. How much of the crook was due to the faults and misfortunes of the pilgrims of the road? How much, to the defects of society or the indifference of humanity, or the positive neglect prompted by the overweening selfishness of the more fortunate? Don believed that every human being, tattered or tailor-dressed,

had an immortal soul, but from his point of view it appeared to him as if souls were considered of far less account than the buttons people wore upon their clothes. He knew how keenly even a ragamuffin like himself could suffer, and he blamed himself for not having thought more concerning the sufferings of others until the shoe began to pinch his own foot.

A dim light relieved his dark thoughts. There were the roundhouse saints who had been so kind to him. Were there not many others like them scattered among the multitudes? saints who seldom entered churches, yet ministered to suffering as they found opportunity, and that, too, without letting their left hand know what their right hand was doing?

With two dollars in his pocket and rolling wheels beneath him bearing him so swiftly toward Boston—with these furnished to him by his roundhouse benefactors, and with their rough, yet sympathetic words lingering in his memory like flowers clinging to a beetling cliff, he was in a fair way to take reasonable views of even the inequalities of life.

But suddenly there was a turn, a violent jolt in his thoughts and he was thrown from the track altogether, and all that was left for him to do was to pick himself from among the splinters of the wreck, count his wounds and be his own surgeon to them.

Charity! That was the word that threw him from the rail.

"I am an object of charity," he said to himself, "and the roundhouse men helped me because I was an object of charity." The thought made his two dollars burn in his pocket; and the measured sound made by the wheels as they struck each successive rail spelled charity as plainly as it was spelled in the spelling book or dictionary. The noble word, so suggestive of noble deeds and motives, stuck in his throat so obstinately that it almost choked him.

"I'll not be an object of charity to anyone, nor for anybody," he said aloud, gritting his teeth and clenching his hands, and stiffening up in his whole person. "That is where the tramp-world begins. Men become willing to receive charity, and charity becomes the open hole down which they sink into shiftlessness and nothingness. And if people give, it is because they want to rid themselves of the things that would otherwise remain in sight to annoy them. No more charity for me. If I can't fight my way up, I'll cast myself down so deep that not even an undertaker can find me. Every dollar I have received, from the colonel down to the firemen, shall be paid back again; and if I can't get it into the hands of the men to whom it belongs, I'll throw it into a missionary box, and send it so far away that there will be small chance of its coming back to haunt and humiliate me."

So here was Don going back to Boston minus his trunk, but with a car load of pride and a car load of suspicion and distrust, which might have been of use to him could they have been condensed into pocket quantities and carried about as self respect and caution. Possibly the pressure to which he was to be subjected led, in a measure, to this result in the end.

When he landed at the station he felt glad to know that he was in Boston again, and he said to himself: "Here I'll stick and push my roots down until I can find something to grow upon."

The passengers who came out of the Boston and Albany station were confronted by one of the most squalid and disreputable precincts of the city. Keenly remembering his own battered and disreputable appearance, and fearing that the neighborhood would claim him and suck him down into its whirlpool depths without any choice of his own, he hurried in the direction of the Common. He thought of the attic in the

widow's house and longed to go back to the little mother's family. But having resolved to keep clear of all acquaintances till he was in a condition to meet them on equal terms, he stifled his feelings and entered the Common and sat down upon one of the seats.

What should he do next? How soon would his blank page give place to a title page or to a chapter with something in it worth considering? For a long time he remained motionless. He studied deeply what should be his next move, but the more he thought, the more perplexed he grew. Presently he noticed that his garments were still covered with the dust of travel; his hands were grimy, and his skin felt as if the filth of a sewer had been flowing over him. The consciousness of dirt took possession of him, and his whole nature rose in rebellion against this first and worst symptom of degradation. It seemed to him as though his outward meanness of appearance was corroding his very soul with rust and shabbiness. He hurried to the foot of the Public Garden which, at that time reached the salt water of the inflowing sea. The sun was setting gloriously over the purple hills in the west. Not a loiterer nor a bluecoat lingered near. A boat-flat floated below the wall; lowering himself to this he disrobed and flung himself into the water. And there, where Commonwealth avenue, the grandest avenue in all Massachusetts, has since been laid out upon made land; and where magnificent churches, art rooms, institutes and palatial residences have since sprung up, the pride of Boston and the wonder of visitors, Don revelled mid the sunset hues reflected upon the waters, diving, swimming and plunging about as he had been wont to do in the waters near his far-off home. And then, after sporting like a porpoise, he remembered his chief purpose, and seeking the shallows dredged sand from the bottom with

which he scoured his skin till it was as red as the sun itself.

If the Naiades—the nymphs of the waters—had done their duty, they would have put a new suit of clothes on the flat for Don's use when he should return to shore. In recompense they might have taken his old garments to use as floor-cloths for their kitchens. But perhaps Boston intelligence had banished them from its matter-of-fact precincts and had forced them to return to Greece or to the classic realms of pure mythology.

Don took his clothes and threshed them on the planks of the flat till every dust-atom fled in dismay. When he climbed the wall and walked about renewed in every fiber of his being, he looked like a young god masquerading in old clothes just for the fun of the thing, or for the sake of walking incog and taking point-blank peeps at the lower walks of Boston life.

Now that he had shaken the dust from his garments, washed the grime from his body, and thereby thrown off some of the weight from his mind and driven out some of the specters which had tormented his soul he walked briskly to the upper part of the Common where, after obtaining something to eat from one of the stands, he sat down to watch the after-tea promenaders who flocked together on the Tremont Mall in great numbers. Presently joining in the promiscuous procession and catching the spirit of the happy throng he walked and whistled as unconcernedly as though a bed awaited him in one of the millionaire mansions of Beacon street.

As the evening advanced the crowd sifted out through the gates of the Common till only belated people making short cuts in various directions appeared here and there. Finally the sifting left but an occasional straggler to disturb the solitude. In the tree forks there were houses built for the pet squirrels of the city, and among the branches there were fancy

nests provided for the birds which chose to occupy them—the English sparrow had not yet conquered the United States—but Don had nowhere to lay his head. Having resolved to husband his scant funds for food alone he was dependent upon chance for sleeping quarters.

The day had been a long and exciting one and he was now suffering from the inevitable reaction and fatigue. Seeing that the mall policeman was beginning to notice his presence, he passed down to the old cemetery on the south side of the Common, and, looking through the iron railing, he sought some place where among the vaults and tombstones, he might pass the rest of the night. A large fir tree which hugged the ground with its low thick branches invited him to its shelter, and he was about to climb the fence and hide himself among the dead, when a watchman appeared and drove the thought from his mind. He left the Common and passed into the streets, where for awhile his loneliness was relieved by the returning theater goers. When these also melted away among the shadows he found himself alone near the old Tremont Temple. Noticing a narrow passageway in one end of the building, and observing that it had no door, and concluding that the stairway led toward the top of the structure, he decided to venture in, hoping that he might happen upon some corner where he could lie down and sleep undisturbed. The few feeble jets that were left burning, and which served but to make the darkness visible, indicated that they were for the use of the watchman of the building. Nevertheless he continued to ascend till he reached the uppermost floor. He was now in a wide hallway bounded by seemingly disused apartments, and cumbered with stowage of a miscellaneous description. He noticed a long narrow packing case with a loose upturned cover leaning against one of the walls.

"A bed good enough for a prince!" he said softly to himself, after cautiously examining it, "barring the fact that it looks a little like a coffin." It was partially filled with soft packing papers. Don slipped in, lowered the cover, leaving an opening sufficient for ventilation, and after lifting grateful thoughts heavenward, he fell asleep.

Tremont Temple was a hive of rooms and offices, with the great auditorium, the chief meeting place of The Temple Church, and the much-used lecture room and place of gathering for great public occasions, at the center of the whole. The night guardianship of the quaint old granite building—subsequently destroyed by fire—was intrusted to a gray-haired negro, a member of the Temple Church, and one of the eccentric characters of Boston. In his way he was a pedant of words, and once a year a complimentary benefit was extended to him by the fun-loving youth of the city. The large hall was used for this purpose, and notwithstanding the admission was put at fifty cents, it was always filled to suffocation. The negro usually gave a rambling lecture packed with columns of dictionary the pompous delivery of which was accompanied with incessant applause or catcalls, and tributes thrown upon the stage in the shape of bad eggs, dead rats, cabbages and other unsavory accompaniments. In the end the negro was the greater gainer; the young men had their annual frolic, and the negro his dollars running up into the hundreds; and so, as between the negro and the audience, the negro, judging by the practical results, was the wiser of the twain.

He was an extremely pious man and a frequent and acceptable exhorter at the Temple Church prayer meetings. His bachelor quarters were on the floor where Don had made his bed for the night. Having completed the last round of the building toward the gray of the morn he was retreating to his

room when he heard a rustling in the box where Don lay.

Going toward the sound he said in a low voice to himself: "If my olfactories do not deceive me, I hears the sound of a mighty progigious rat in that lemoncholy looking box."

Don, who, though still asleep was dreaming that he was preaching a sermon before a temple congregation, uttered some words that were echoes from his father's pulpit.

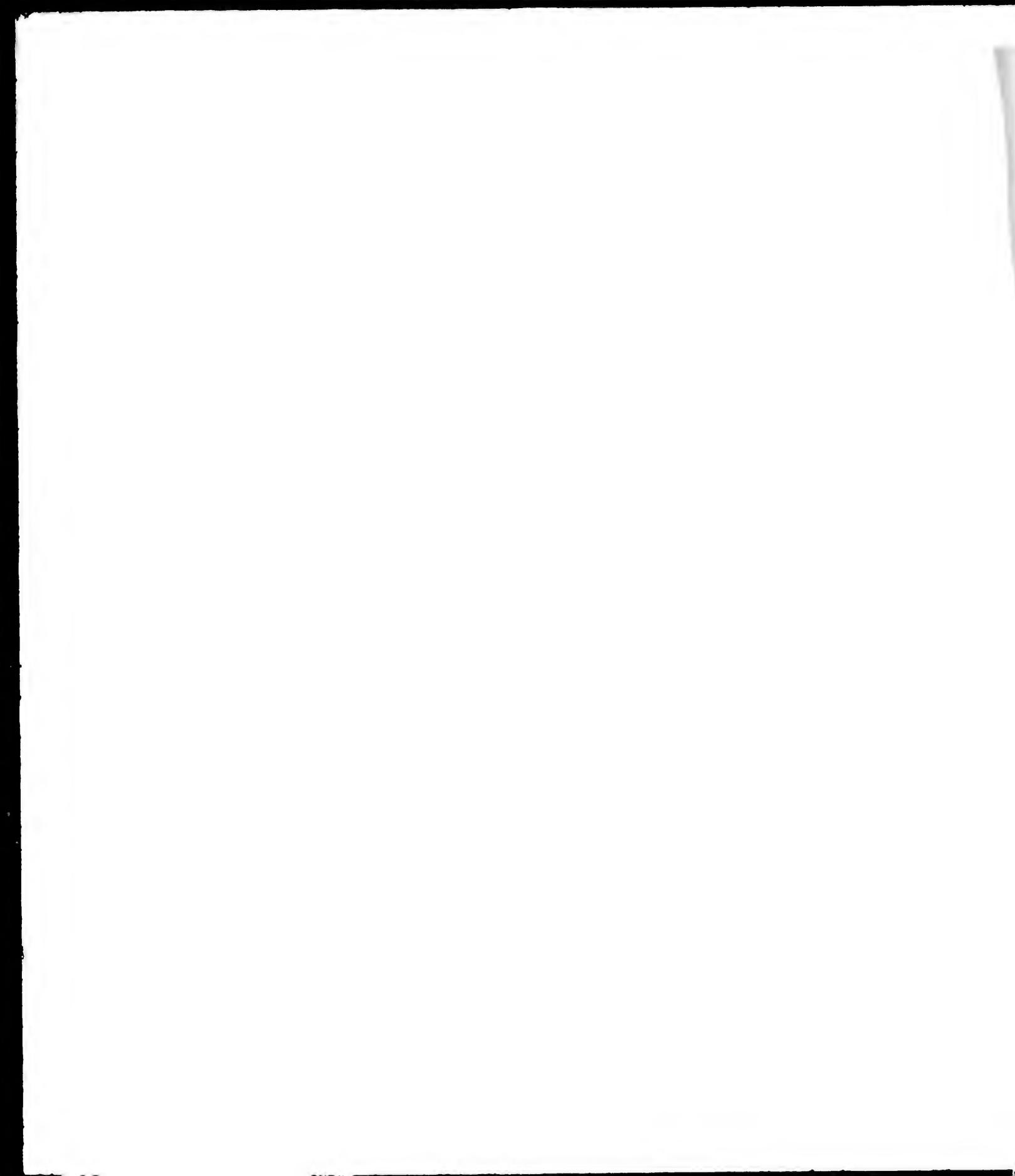
"De complexion of dose words don't germinate from the inceptions of no quadrupuddle animal," said the negro, intently listening. "And it isn't no emmernashun from Satan nuther. Sounds critically like as though a preacher dun got lost from his moorings and sailed plum into the projecting arms of a packing case."

Advancing, he cautiously lifted the loose cover, just as Don, in low sighing tones which seemed to come from afar, said: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

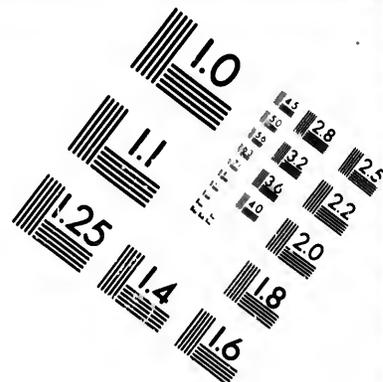
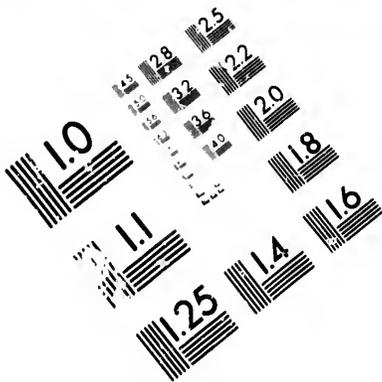
"Bless your soul, honey!" exclaimed the black man, forgetting to starch his sentences, and speaking in tones that trembled with emotion; "there is nothing to be afraid of while this chile is watching over you. And the Lord himself has said to them who trust in him, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee'."

The sound of his voice awoke the sleeper. Don opened his eyes and seeing the black face peering down upon him, without being able in the dimness of the light to discern the sympathy expressed thereon, he said in a half pleading voice: "Don't call a policeman; having no other place to go to, I came here to sleep for the night, not meaning any harm to anything or anybody."

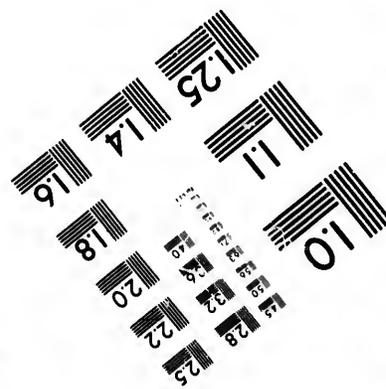
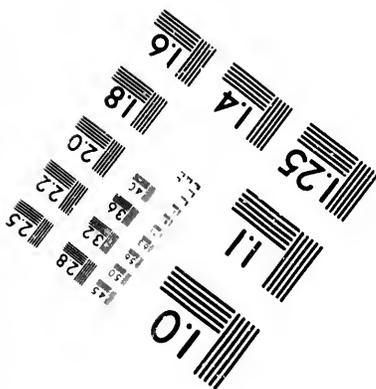
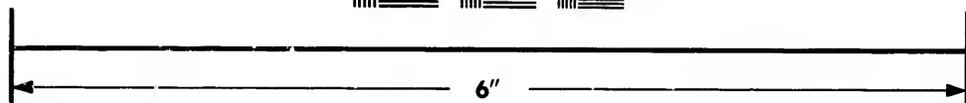
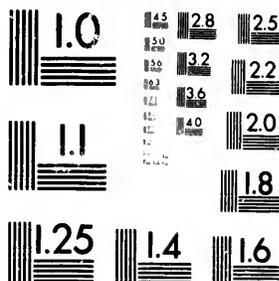
"Policeman!" exclaimed the negro. "I'm the policeman of this edifice, and the gardeen of all that's in it. And when I happen upon a boy in such a tight box as that, and a preaching







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and a scripting in his sleep, I'm not going to disconvenience him by giving him up to the heathen for his inheritance. If you'll elevate yourself from that box, I'll take you to my room what's on this floor, and give you a breakfast as expediently as possible."

Don followed him to his well kept room, where the negro, being an excellent cook, soon served a warm and appetizing breakfast. Happily for the guest, the host became so intent upon framing a succession of his wonderful sentences that he forgot to inquire into Don's private history or future intentions.

The box-lodger went down the long flight of stairs leading to the street laboring under conflicting feelings; he was grateful to the negro for his kindness, yet humiliated to think that, notwithstanding his resolution, he had again become the subject of charity, nor did he recover from the sting of his pride until he had taken a vigorous walk upon the Common.

When the hour for the opening of business approached he went down to the wharf side of the city, and after applying to several stevedores for work, was to his great joy engaged for two hours to wash down the upper decks of a ship which, not being ready for sea, had not yet shipped her crew. For this work he received twenty cents which so encouraged him that he went the rounds of the wharves in the hope of finding other employment. He continued his search, but unavailingly, till some time after noon.

Boston Common is the airy Bethesda where countless weary and woebegone spirits have found mitigation of their sorrows and ills. Don again resorted to it for rest and for the soothing effects it always produced upon his mind. After sitting awhile in one of the least frequented portions of the open green, where he could get the full benefit of both sun and air, he took one of the by paths that led toward the Beacon Mall,

where the Saturday afternoon promenaders were out in full force. The gay procession fascinated him, and he sat down upon one of the numerous seats facing the mall to watch the rich display of color and beauty. A lovely little miss chasing a gaily painted hoop passed so near to him that he turned his head to keep her in view as she sped down the mall. When he again faced the throngs of people, Miss Agincourt was slowly passing with her steel-gray eyes fixed contemptuously upon him, and close behind her was Nora, who, when she recognized him, made an involuntary movement toward him, her face filled with surprise and pity.

Overwhelmed with shame and confusion, and hardly knowing what he did, he turned his back on her and literally ran away.

"What will they think? What will they say?" he exclaimed in great distress, when at a safe distance he halted to recover his breath.

"Am I a coward or a fool—or both?" he reflected after having had time to cool, and, for the first time since his return, distrusting the consistency of his conduct.

"I am neither!" he finally concluded; "but I should have been both if in this condition—looking like a cornfield scarecrow—I had thrown myself upon my friends as another object for their charity."

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN INVOLUNTARY DETECTIVE.

Days passed without any change in Don's fortune. Having no use for the post office, he kept away from it, and having no change to spend upon newspapers, he went without them, and consequently Bert's letter failed to reach him, as did also the 'personal' written for his benefit.

He scoured the city for work, but was getting so severely scoured himself that his appearance was a constant contradiction to his applications. His shoes barely held together, his clothes were little better, and Bob Flanger's hat, the crown of his mendicancy, was so rapidly going to pieces, there was small chance of even a fragment of it being left for a memento of the roundhouse saints. He still took his salt water baths, although no cleanliness of body could atone for the condition of his clothes. Of a former Russian age the historian tells us that: "The grandees came to court dropping pearls, diamonds—and vermin." In those days, splendor atoned for filth; in these, no degree of cleanliness of the body can atone for frayed garments. The world thinks more of clothes than it does of skins, and the Lord is about the only one who has no respect for the mere outward appearance.

Notwithstanding the most heroic economy Don's dollars had become reduced to cents. If he should be reduced to the pangs of hunger, what then? One Sunday morning while walking down Salem street before the inhabitants were stirring,

he, for the first time, noticed with envy the loaves of brown bread and the pots of baked beans which, fresh from the baking ovens that had been kept going all night, were left on the door steps, just as now the Sunday newspapers are left. Something whispered, "If thou be an equal of thy fellows, command a pot of beans and a loaf of brown bread to follow thee; and help them to obey by carrying them under thine arms." He had heard Father Taylor say from the pulpit: "If I saw a hungry man stealing bread, my tongue would wither before I would cry, 'Stop, thief!'"

If human beings ask for the bread of work and are given the stone of indifference; or, if they ask for the egg of subsistence, and are given the scorpion of reproach, what wonder if they sometimes turn to ravening fiends ready for treasons, stratagems and spoils!

By day Don's courage rose like the sun, but by night his fears multiplied like the stars. The midnight dens of vice, the skulking minions of crime and the staggering victims of dissipation filled him with horror. By day Boston appeared like a belle; by night, like a hag. Don did not believe in using pious phrases for superstitious incantations, yet from his young soul rose a voiceless cry to the Invisible One: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Time and again he recalled the language of the noblest of all human Litanies: "From all evil and mischief; from sin, from the crafts and assaults of the devil; from thy wrath, and from everlasting damnation, Good Lord, deliver us."

At eleven o'clock of a night which was to be memorable in his life, he found himself in the vicinity of the old North Church. He knew its history; the story of the signal lantern, and the Ride of Paul Revere to Lexington. Something in its plain old front appealed to his confidence, and he tried all the

entrances in the hope that he might find an opening that would admit him. But the building was closed as tight as the water lily that shuts itself up at night.

Then he thought of the old historic Copp's Hill Burying Ground near by, where so many of the colonial fathers and revolutionary heroes were buried. He determined to spend the night among its graves, for he felt that he would there be safe from the interference of the guardians of the night. The cemetery, propped up by walls, lifts itself quite high above the level of the surrounding streets. Its winding walks and heavily shaded grounds, its innumerable graves and diversified stones and monuments afforded him just the seclusion he needed. There were gas lights sufficient to enable him to see the immediate spaces around him. Going to one of the most isolated portions of the ground, he sat down upon a flat stone which was supported by several pillars. On looking upon the face of the stone there was just enough light to enable him to read the epitaph of Cotton Mather, the foe of Quakers and the burner of witches. He looked under the stone, not for the spirit nor for the dust of the stern old puritan, but to see how much space there was between the under part of the stone and the surface of the earth.

Here was a lodging for him. Near by there were several small piles of green clippings which had been cut by a lawn mower. Some of these clippings he put beneath the broad stone, and then crawled in and made himself up for a peaceful night's rest. He pulled up his coat collar for a quilt, drew his hat over his eyes for a curtain, and put his two hands under his head for a pillow. It was a grotesque anticipation of the end of all flesh, though the fact did not appeal to his imagination at that moment. Peeping from under the edge of his hat-rim, he saw a rat moving here and there among the graves,

and owing to the irregular flickerings of the gas lights the trees, shrubbery and monuments appeared to be dancing a stately minuet with the restless shadows. For a moment his flesh began to creep, but he diverted his fears by thinking: "If Cotton Mather had half the virtues that are recorded on the stone above me, there is little danger of his dust beneath me coming up to interfere with my lodging."

For a long while he laid and listened to the diminishing sounds of the streets, the play of the wind among the foliage, and for the striking of the clock bells of the city. Weariness overcoming watchfulness he finally became unconscious.

About three o'clock he was awakened by the sound of voices immediately over his head. He next became conscious of two pairs of legs—one pair in black and the other pair in gray—hanging down from the top edge of the stone in thrilling nearness to his head. He was so excited by the discovery, and his heart throbbed so violently he was sure the strangers would hear its beats.

The men began to converse, and the subject of their conversation left no doubt as to the nature of their characters.

"It's a mighty good haul," said a deep voice at the top of the black trousers.

"Yes," responded the other with an oath, and in an undertone. "But," he added fiercely, "while I was hooking that ticker, and raking in the rings and the jewelry from the bureau where the gas was burning, the young woman sat up as straight as a clothes pin, and blinked at me like an owl. But when I panted my gun at her and told her that I'd kill her if she made a sound, she fell back as limp and as silent as a dish cloth. I had the bead on her, and at the first breath of sound would have killed her as dead as a door nail."

"Well, I shinned through my part of the job as easy as a

farmer picking his apples," said the first speaker. "The first room I went into had an old duffer and his wife in it, and they was both snoring so loud an engine might have gone in there whistling and not heard itself. It was there I got them two gold tickers and them two pocket books, and them little tinklers. On the other side of the hall I found two youngsters a-sleeping as accommodative as these dead blokes around in these here graves. There I scaled two more tickers, two purses, and this here handsome seven-shooter; and they kept as still all the time as if the angels were fanning of them."

"And the swag we pulled from the silver closet is solid silver, as sure as nuts," remarked his companion, as he clinkingly tested one of the pieces upon the stone. "I guess it'll be some time before the chap that's under this stone'll have another such a layout over him," and although Don knew that the words referred to the dead, they startled him almost as much as if they meant him.

"It's a blamed good job for beginners," was the chuckling reply. "And now let's count the inside of these pocketbooks; they are as fat as the city dads."

Although Don knew that he was in great danger, he was seized with an irresistible inclination to sneeze, and finding that it was impossible for him to suppress the untimely tendency, he accompanied the explosion with an outcry that was so prolonged and curdling the robbers with an exclamation of terror fled from the spot leaving their spoils and dropping their hats as they ran.

Here was fresh cause for alarm on Don's part. The police on some of the adjacent streets would certainly be brought to the spot by his startling cry, and he would be implicated in the robbery. But no one came. It seemed an age from the flight of the men to the dawn of the day. He crawled cau-

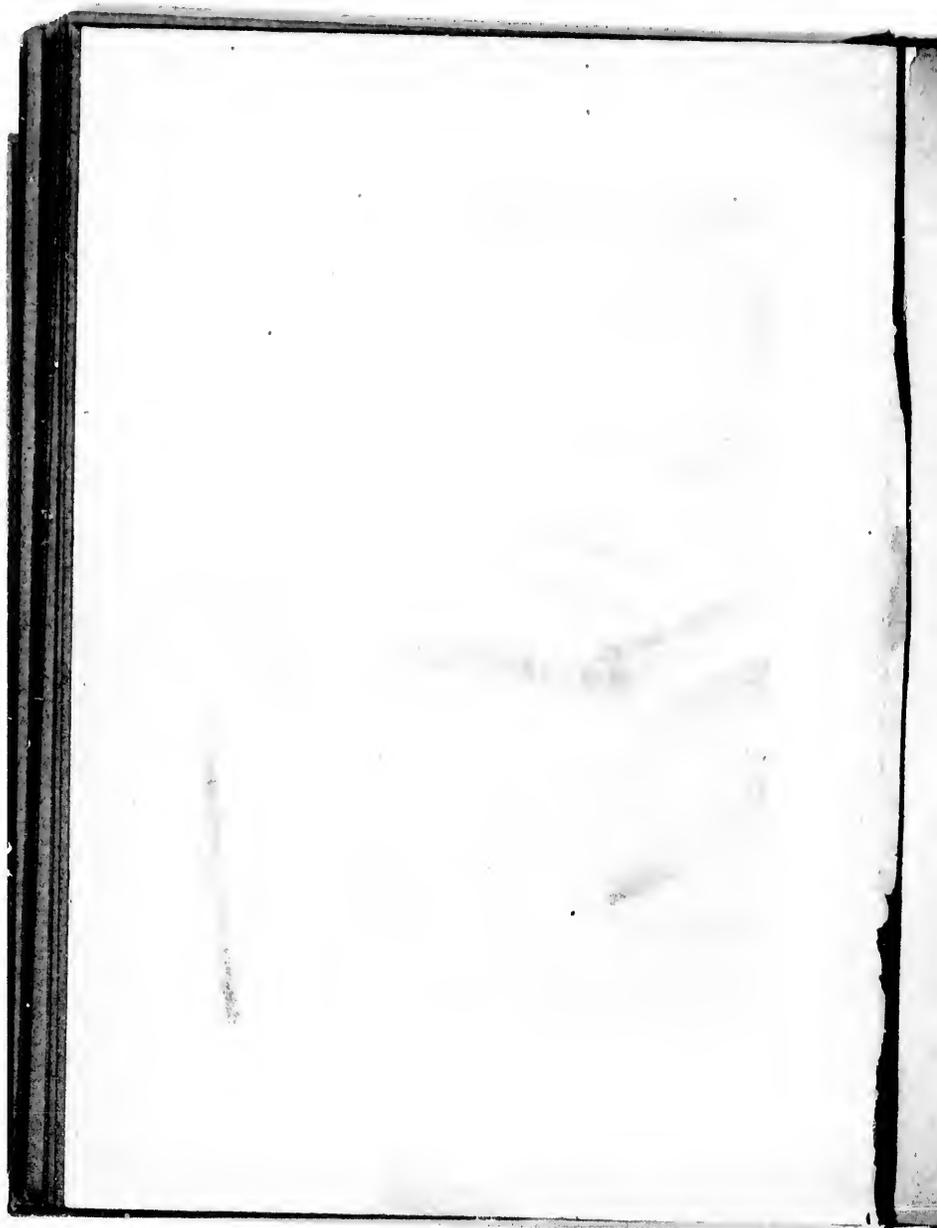
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tiously from under the stone and was met by a display of wealth that was dazzling to one on the very verge of starvation. He promptly and hastily bundled everything into the bag from which the robbers had drawn their plunder, and with the unwelcome burden on his back and the two forsaken hats in his hand he started for the nearest police station. The early morning stragglers looked curiously at him as he passed, but his greatest dread was lest the police should cross his path and find the plunder in his possession before he could clear himself by delivering it at the station.

Marching straight up to the two officers who were behind the station desk, engaged in an earnest conversation, he delivered the bag into their possession, and while they examined the contents he told his story from the time of his entrance into the cemetery to the time of his leaving it.

The bag contained four gold watches, one revolver, several pieces of costly jewelry, upwards of three hundred dollars in bills, several notes of hand and one large check.

"This is a very strange story you tell," said one of the men, who proved to be the captain of the precinct, "but fortunately for you, circumstances are in your favor, and we have the evidence to prove that you have done one of the best detective jobs that was ever done in this district. One of our officers was nearly run down by two bareheaded fellows who were chasing down Salem street as though the whole department was at their heels. They are now in the lockup, and, unquestionably, these hats belong to them. One of the men has black trousers, and the other gray, as you have said. Could you recognize them?"

"I did not see their faces for the reason I have stated," said Don immensely relieved by the turn of affairs, and by the believing words of the officer. "If you could get them to talk

in my presence without letting them know of my connection with the case, I think I should recognize their voices."

"Well, we'll see about that; but I am afraid that you'll be puzzled. While they thought they had a sure thing their voices would sound one way, but now that they are juggled, they may sound altogether different. The boy that's getting a spanking doesn't speak as he did while laying in the goodies from the pantry. However, we'll have them brought in and see what we can do with these hats."

The men had given the names of Cranston and Grimlow, and when they were brought in, Don thought that they were as villainous a pair as he had seen during the whole of his own nocturnal adventures.

There was quite a difference in the sizes of the hats, and when the men were brought to the desk, the astute officer took the larger of the two and with great apparent suavity and simplicity said to the larger headed criminal: "Here is your hat, Mr. Cranston." With similar politeness, he added: "And this smaller one is yours, Mr. Grimlow."

Not suspecting the trap laid for them, each man received his hat as a matter of course; but they winced when the captain, lifting the bag from beneath his desk placed the contents in full view, saying: "I am afraid that your title to this property is not as good as the title you have to your hats, and I presume that you did not know that we had a detective under that tombstone last night. You doubtless thought that the dead had risen to bear witness against you when you heard that outcry, when it was only this witness we happened to have there," and he pointed to Don, as he spoke. "He wasn't in uniform last night, as you perceive, but all the same he picked up what you left, including your hats, and brought it in. I am glad that our officers have taken you in so that you

might have another opportunity to look upon this plunder. It would be good policy to own up to the whole transaction, for by so doing you may shorten your time in the penitentiary."

Before he could go further with the sweating process, and before the pair had uttered a word, he was reinforced by five persons who entered the station in what might be called 'a state of mind.' One was a fat, ponderous, well dressed German; another was his wife, equally obese and well dressed; and the remaining three consisted of his pretty daughter and two grown sons. All were more or less out of breath.

"Ach! you bolice vas goot for noddins!" exclaimed the irate head of the party before he was half way across the floor. "You petter puts some betticoats on, vor you lets us pe robbed und killed yust as though ve vas nopoddy but poor beoples mit no monish to pay our taxes."

Here his eye fell upon the spoils displayed upon the captain's desk. The veins on his forehead distended notwithstanding the thickness and tightness of his skin as he said: "Gott in himmell! Dot vas our broperty! How vas you get it so soon?"

He was interrupted by his daughter who, pointing to one of the prisoners angrily said: "That is the man who threatened to shoot me last night! Oh, you contemptible coward! I should like to see you hung higher than Haman!"

"Very good," said the captain complacently, and not without amusement, "Now, if some of you will identify the other prisoner, we shall be in a fair way to provide both of them with a strong home in the State Hotel."

The family were residents of the captain's precinct and were quite well known to him. Mr. Vonberg and his two sons were the owners of a prosperously large clothing house

in the business portion of the city. The head of the family was still fuming under the irritation caused by the invasion of his house, and he replied to the captain's question somewhat wrathily by saying: "How vas ve identify anypuddy ven ve vas schleeping und minding our own business so hard dot ve don't know noddins, except dot von what keeps ervake?"

"Well," said the captain, "you can identify this property fast enough."

"Yas; ve don't hafe to keep ervak vor dot, und ve vas dake it home mit us dis very minute."

"We shall have to wait for the end of the prosecution and for the order of the court before we can do that, Mr. Vonberg. But you need have no anxiety about the safety of it."

"I guess dot vas so; but how vas you get it so quick?"

After sending the prisoners back to their cells, the captain began his explanations with the introduction of Don to the family. "He was our detective in this business, and you are indebted to him for the safety of the property, which he brought here shortly before your arrival." And he went on, and mid a running fire of questions and exclamations from each member of the family, explained the particulars of the case. But none of them could understand how any innocent person could be so unfortunate as to be compelled to take lodgings in a graveyard before his death; or how, being so destitute, he could be honest enough to give up what had, with such seeming opportuneness, fallen into his hands.

The captain was a good judge of human nature, and having been greatly prepossessed in Don's favor, he strenuously defended him from all suspicion of dishonesty or insincerity; and he ended by saying: "The least you can do for the return of your valuables is to make some provision for his immediate needs."

At this moment an early bird of a reporter, searching for the early worm of morning news for his evening paper, came in, and with all the zeal of an experienced professional pounced upon the case as an exceptionally rich piece of local news. He probed into details so industriously and deeply that he was soon in possession of the main facts of Don's history from the time of his departure from home to the time of his singular arrival at the police station. Not a word of the account was lost upon either the policemen or the Vonberg family. The latter held an animated consultation with one another while the reporter was busy with his notes, and the result may be given in Mr. Vonberg's own words.

"Dot boy," said he mellowly, "vas schleeps no more mit ther deat till he vas deat hisseli. Ve dakes him mit us to preakvast vare he vas hafe some goot clothes put upon him before he eats. He vas putty much the same size as mein second son, who vas gif him his second suit vrom top to pottom, vich vas make him look like a young shentlemen. Und ve vas gif him vifty tollars, ven he vas done mit preakvast, vor dot concert he sings unner dot gravestone. Den he schall go mit us to our store, vare ve vas gif him a new trunk und tree new suits of clothes vor to put in it. Pesides, he schall hafe a blace in our store vare he vas get six tollars a veek, till he vas get selen ven he vas mit us six months."

And turning to the reporter with assumed cunning, he added: "You vas write all dot down mit der pencil erpout Vonberg und his sons, so dot it schall make von goot pig advertisement vor their pusiness."

"I will, for a fact!" exclaimed the reporter, generously glad to know that Don's affairs were taking such a favorable turn. "And you may depend upon it," he added with warmth, "your confidence in him is not misplaced. You are not doing a deed

of charity, but an act of justice, and a good stroke of business withal."

From his inmost soul, Don blessed the reporter for these words. In no small degree they helped to melt the ice and snow from his bending branches, and to restore the self respect that was so rapidly diminishing under the pressure of poverty and the accumulation of distrust. The ponderous machinery of justice, as seen in the police station; of business, as seen in the Vonbergs; of the press, as seen in the reporter, no longer seemed a mere thing of steel and steam heartlessly thundering mid the agonies of human souls; the pulsating hand of life was upon the lever of the machine, and in that life there was a fountain filled with blood drawn from humanity's veins—a touch of nature that made all the world kin.

And so, the hapless youth who had returned to Boston overloaded with pride and distrust, was ready to dump his unprofitable baggage at the station, where he had been so profitably humbled, and at the same time so wonderfully exalted, by his growing knowledge of human nature and his increasing confidence in his fellow beings.

The change, however, was so great and sudden, that he was as one who walked in dreams. Nor was he fully awakened and conscious of the substantial reality until the honest Vonberg and his cordial family reminded him that he was to accompany them home to breakfast.

CHAPTER XIX.

UNDER COVER AGAIN.

Fresh from the bath, and clad in a nobby suit, Don sat at the table of his host on equal terms with all the members of the honest and cheerful family. No dregs of humiliation were mixed with the cup of his satisfaction. The Vonbergs placed the burden of obligation upon themselves and not upon him, and without affectation treated him with a respect that was inspired, not so much by his recovery of their property, nor by the change in his appearance, as by his easy self possession and intelligent measurement of the whole situation. Their respect for him increased their pleasure, for, being generous in their dispositions, they rejoiced to know that they were to have a part in the improvement of his fortunes.

At the close of the happy meal, Don said to the parental Vonberg: "Now, if you will allow me, I will bundle up my old clothes so that they may be given to the first ragman that comes along, then I shall have the pleasure of thinking that they, in course of time, will be sharers of my change for the better by being turned into something useful."

"Dey vas pundled alretty, so dot you vas hafe no more potter mit dem; und soon dot ragman vas pe habby because he vas get dem vor noddins."

"But I should like to save the hat, Mr. Vonberg."

"Safe dot hat! Mein gracious gootness, Mr. Donalds!

Dot hat vas look like it vas stepped on py an elevant. You vas not vare dot ven you comes to mein store, vas you?"

Don explained its connection with the roundhouse saints, and with Bob Flanger in particular. "I intend to keep it for a memento," he said; "that hat once covered the head of as big hearted a fellow as ever trod among nature's noblemen."

"Ach! Dot vas very goot, mein son! Und you shall hafe all the old hats in dis house, mit mein daughter Dorothy's pesides, if you vas keep dem in remembrance of dose Vonperg saints."

Dorothy appreciating Don's motives as well as his humor, which was constantly sparkling from his eyes, brought the sacred relic, and, after brushing it carefully wrapped it in new manilla paper and tied the bundle with a narrow blue ribbon. When she handed it to him she said: "Your roundhouse saints are deserving of remembrance, but I should like to keep the hat myself in remembrance of the young gentleman who was the means of bringing to justice the cowardly sneak who threatened to shoot me."

Don was saved the embarrassment of an answer to Dorothy by her father, who said to her: "Vell, mein daughter, you vas hafe dis hat vat I now gifs him, ven he vas vare it enough und gifs it pack to you." And he handed Don a hat that matched the clothes he had on, adding to what he had already said: "If you vas pe a glothing house saint you vas pe shure to gif dot hat to Dorothy vor vat you call a memento, ven you vas vare it out so you don't vant it again. She says dot you vas a shentleman, und so you vas all der vile dot you wasn't looks like von. Now you looks yust like vat you vas, und dot is yust as it should pe; and I vas gladt dot dot is so."

When Don reached the store at the foot of Brattle street, he was surprised by its magnitude, and the variety of its stock,

which included almost everything suitable to the exterior respectability of male humanity from a shoe lacing up to valise and trunk supplies.

The two sons, Werner and Wilhelm, whose names the parental Vonberg had borrowed from one of the masterpieces of German literature, at once entered upon their business duties, while the father personally supervised the fulfillment of the promises made to Don in the police station. Besides filling a capacious brass-bound trunk with clothes and furnishings suitable to the needs and tastes of a respectable boy, he measured Don for a custom made suit of clothing, which was extra to the contract.

"Now vare vas you hafe your paggage sent?" Vonberg asked when he had snapped the spring lock of the trunk to its close. "Shall it go to dot blace vare you sleeps mit der stone last night? Nein! You vas go straight to dot little vidder und her son und dells dem dot you vas poard mit dem some more. Und ven dot baper vas come dis efening you vas reat all about yourself und dose Vonpergs, whose broperty you hafe safe, und whose store you hafe entered vor a glerk. The express vagon is at der south door to dake you mit your paggage, und you vas come here next Montay vor duty."

While Don is on his way back to the widow's family let us connect the thread of events. Bert had employed every moment that he could spare to discover the hiding place of his lost chum, and he had enlisted the sympathies and secured the assistance, not only of the colonel, but many others who need not be mentioned.

Thinking that his friend might possibly have shipped on board some vessel bound for the vicinity of his home, Bert would have written a letter of inquiry to Don's father had he not been prevented by the maturer wisdom of Mrs. Williams,

who feared that such a letter might only cause alarm to the family.

It was well that he was restrained, for all the while that Don was in the wilderness his parents supposed that he was in the book store. The gap in his correspondence was laid to the preoccupation of his thoughts by the novelties and excitements of city life. That he should be too proud and resolute to advise with them in case of need or distress was a thing they had not thought of, for it not infrequently happens that boys and girls are as little understood by their families as if they were ducks hatched in a hen's nest.

On the very morning that Don's fortunes were so opportunely resurrected from beneath the Copp's Hill tombstone, Bert was pluckily hoping and planning for his restoration to their attic comradeship. "I'll not give up yet," he said to his mother after breakfast. "Put me up a pocket lunch so that I can spend my noon hour searching for him among the machine shops and foundries of the South Side. We went over there once to see the Globe Iron Works, and while we were going through them Don pulled me up in front of a new locomotive and said, that the mechanics who could put together such work as that, were doing better and greater work than ever old Vulcan did when he made the war shield for Achilles. He was so enthusiastic over what he saw that he declared that if he had to begin again he would try to get into a machine shop even though he had to begin by shovelling ashes and sleeping under a machine bench. He may be doing this very thing and keeping himself low till he can get himself into shape again."

And inspired by his hopes, Bert pocketed his lunch and tripped away whistling so loudly upon the street that a police-

man with a sensitive ear curtly commanded him to pull in his lips.

But Nora was in no mood for whistling, or the indulgence of any of its girlish equivalents. She had conscientiously applied all her Bible threats to Miss Agincourt for intermeddling with Don's business, and had just as scrupulously appropriated all the promises to herself for being such a champion of his character, but without deriving much comfort from either process.

"Mother," she said, as soon as Bert had closed the door behind him, "I meet that slanderous old maid almost every day, and the more I frown at her, the more she smiles at me. What's the use of the threats and promises, that you say will right all things at last, if she's to keep on smiling and I'm to keep on crying? And the worst of it is, I have prayed every morning and every night for the Lord to bring Don back to us and it doesn't do any more good than if I were to try to raise flowers upon the pavement of the streets. If you knew where Don was, and I were to ask you about him, you wouldn't keep me in the dark; and I think that the Lord ought to be as good as my mother. The first thing you know I shall be a heretic and an unbeliever, and will be going off to hear Theodore Parker, just like other wicked people."

"Nora, Nora!" exclaimed her mother greatly shocked to hear such unwonted things from her daughter's lips. "You are bordering close upon blasphemy."

Alarmed by her mother's expression of horror, Nora fled to her room and endeavored to expiate her sin by praying and confessing depths of iniquity she had never been guilty of and by forming resolutions she could never perform. While she was thus futilely engaged, an express wagon rattled up to the front of the house, and immediately afterward there came a

vigorous pull at the bell. Curiosity overmastering devotion, Nora arose from her knees with more haste than solemnity, and opened her door just in time to hear her mother say in the hall below:

"Thank God, you are safe, Don!"

"Yes, safe as a steeple, and back again like a bad penny," was the characteristic reply she heard.

Rushing headlong down the stairs she gained such an impetus by the time she reached the hall, that Don, to prevent her from running against something harder than himself, caught her in his arms, and then to reward himself for his forethought, kissed her warmly before he released her again.

"You have been crying, Nora," he said, as she drew back from him like a startled bird. "What has troubled you?"

Beginning to realize that she had made a revelation of herself in more ways than one her blood tingled from head to feet and her face was an aurora of changing colors. Seeing how well dressed he was, she plunged into another conflict of thought and feeling which made her breath come and go in short quick gasps.

"Oh, Don!" she pitifully exclaimed, "it wasn't you I saw on the Common in that awful state. You didn't run away from me, did you?"

As she looked steadily into his face for an answer, she noticed how wan and worn he looked, and saw that traces of his wound still remained upon his cheek. "Yes," she said, "it was you, and you did run away from me. How could you do it, when we were all so anxious about you?"

Beginning to understand how great a cloud he had cast over the widow and her children by not confiding in them more, he humbly replied: "Give me time and I will explain everything, and when I have done that you will not blame me.

But I cannot explain just now—it is too long a story. And, besides, I must attend to business first. Is my attic still vacant? Will you take me to board again?"

"Take you?" said the little mother, smiling through her tears. "You do not know how much we have missed you, and how we have grieved over you! Bert will be almost beside himself when he comes home and finds that you are safe and well. You shall have our room, and Nora and I will move up into the attic."

"Guess not," said Don, bluntly. "If you knew how I have longed to get back to that attic, you wouldn't talk about packing me into any other room and cutting me off from Bert. I shall not wait for your permission, but will take possession as if I were lord of the manor."

"Come here, Brassy," he went on, addressing his new and glittering trunk, "it is time for you to be climbing up in the world." He made an attempt to lift the trunk to his shoulder, but in his weakened state he was unequal to the burden and he protestingly consented to let Nora and her mother assist him in the task.

"Thank Heaven! Here I am again!" he said after entering the room. "But who has been here?" he suddenly asked, after noticing that several improvements had been made in the arrangements.

"Nobody but Nora and Bert," the widow replied. "They have always said that you would come back, and so they have worked at the room more or less every day to make it more attractive for you."

"And all the while I have been saying to myself, they will soon forget that there was ever such a person as Don Donalds," said Don.

"Forget!" exclaimed Nora indignantly. "You must have

strange ideas about friendship. Why didn't you come to us while you had those awful clothes on and while your wound needed care? You look thin and worn, and I solemnly believe that you have been in the worst kind of trouble. I didn't think that you would be so mean as to stay away from us when you needed us most. Why didn't you come before?

"Well, the fact is, I was hunting for a streak of luck, and as I did not find it until last night I could not very well get here before this morning."

"Where were you last night?"

"Under a tombstone, where I found my luck. You may read all about it in the Evening Transcript, and when you have done that, I'll not object to any question you may see fit to ask."

"Under a tombstone—and in the paper!" and Nora caught at the words as if they contained some dreadful secret.

"Wait till Bert comes home to dinner," pleaded Don; who was really too much exhausted to undergo the ordeal of relating the harrowing details of his recent experiences without first bracing himself up for it.

"He will not be home to dinner," said Nora. "He took a lunch with him, so that he might search for you among the South Boston machine shops and foundries during his noon hour. He has searched for you almost every day since I saw you on the Common, and has grown thin worrying about you."

All along, since his return to the house, Don had been keeping a tight rein upon his feelings; now they broke bounds, and his self possession forsook him entirely. His head seemed to be floating away from him, and he had only strength enough left to say brokenly: "Please leave me until I can collect myself, for I am worn out."

Frightened more by the sight of his tears than by hints of

his adventures, Nora begged forgiveness, and with her mother left the room. They had no sooner gone than Don threw himself upon the bed and fell into a profound slumber which lasted till evening. Haunted by vague apprehensions the little mother repeatedly went to him but finding him asleep each time did not disturb him, while Nora wandered about the house impatiently waiting for the evening papers, and for her brother, who, she was certain, would dispel the clouds that darkened her thoughts.

Meanwhile, curiosity was rampant at the Covert house. When the express wagon reached the widow's door, Miss Agincourt, who was addicted to that uncanny habit of perverted natures, nail-biting, sat at her window gratifying her appetite for herself by nibbling at her finger nails with as much avidity as if they were bonbons. Ceasing from her feast she seized her lorgnette and leveled it upon Don and his new trunk. Here was a trial for her faith—for her confident belief in Don's downfall. Impatiently taking a gormandizing bite at her right thumbnail, which already resembled a mutilated duck-bill, she hurried down stairs to confer with the kindred souls of Covert and his wife.

"That Donalds boy is back again," she said, petulantly, and jerking her head and twisting her lips for emphasis; "and what is very strange, he has a big new trunk with him and is more stylishly dressed than he ever was before."

Assuming an air of the most disinterested solicitude, Mrs. Covert replied: "If his fortunes have changed he should have come back to us, for I am sure that his brothers would not approve of his boarding on the other side of the Square."

Nettled to think that her envy was not directly approved, Miss Agincourt resorted to insinuation, her favorite weapon, saying: "It is more than likely that his brothers are content

to let him keep out of sight. While they were here they never so much as mentioned his name. I hope that my old bachelor uncle has not been wasting any more money upon him." By this last remark she exposed the secret of her hostility to Don; expecting legacies in the event of the colonel's death, she was morbidly jealous of every one to whom he happened to take a fancy.

"The widow is using her imp of a daughter as a bait for a boarder," said Covert, contemptuously. And thus the wholesome trio continued for some time to interpret the widow's and Don's affairs by the little fire-bug lights they carried under their own wings.

CHAPTER XX.

A QUEER TEMPTATION.

When Bert returned he burst into the house like a besom flourishing an evening paper around his head so triumphantly it was on the verge of being reduced to tatters. Before he could open his mouth to express his torrid excitement, Nora unwittingly increased it by telling him that Don was in the attic.

Throwing the paper into his mother's lap, and without stopping to heed her remonstrances against intruding upon Don's slumbers, he ran up the stairs as if his feet were winged like those of Mercury and entered the room without ceremony. The riot of his joy was suddenly checked when he looked upon the face of his chum, it was so changed by the marks his trials had left upon it. Seeing that he did not stir, and prompted by an ungovernable longing, Bert sat upon the edge of the bed and leaning over threw his left arm around Don.

"Wake up! Wake up, you everlasting good for nothing scamp!" he exclaimed with feelings that were quiveringly at variance with the letter of his words.

"Scamp!" The words pierced the sleeper's dull senses like a splinter, and forthwith he was thrown into a long complicated nightmare of congested misfortunes through which he fell into abysmal depths with the velocity of lightning, while hoarse echoes accused him of being a lost and irredeemable vagabond and 'scamp.'

The horror of that descent so stirred his chain-bound faculties that by a supreme convulsion of energy he seized the edge of a projecting crag, and with a long drawn sigh of infinite relief climbed back into daylight and a bright world again.

Seeing Bert's eyes, within a foot of his own, glimmering through unmistakable tears, and finding that his own heart was puffing up like an airy bubble ready to vanish into nothing again he stretched forth his arms, saying brokenly: "Let's have a hug, old fellow."

When that sacred act was over, he arose with something of his former springiness, and after plunging his face into cold water and drying it again, he, with towel still in hand, stood looking at Bert as mutely as though his tongue had melted and slipped down his throat.

"Well!" he finally articulated, "how are you, you awful boy?" It was not much of a speech, yet it was enough to let the steam on, and after it their tongues went ahead like a pair of linked locomotives.

"If I were able," Bert began, "I would take hold of you and shake you around this room worse than you ever shook that Phillips and Sampson boy around that bookstore."

"Yes, shake him," interrupted Nora, bursting into the room just in time to hear the shake part of the sentence, "but in addition he ought to be scourged forty times save one.

"Whom would you save the one for?" asked Don, reflecting the exultation and joy that shone so brightly in her countenance.

"For myself," she retorted quickly, and it ought to be as heavy as all the rest put together, for allowing myself to torment you with my giddy and impertinent questions when you were all worn out. But, Oh, Don, after all, I couldn't help it, could I?"

"I rather think not, seeing that you are a girl," he replied, laughing in spite of his endeavor to keep sober.

She had the evening paper in her hand; she had rapidly read the sympathetic reporter's succinct yet graphic account of Don's adventures, and was so tossed between conflicting feelings and conjectures that she became incoherent the moment she undertook to express herself.

Having made several futile attempts to get at the things that lay between the printed lines, she was impatiently interrupted by her brother, who was himself eager to ask a thousand questions more or less.

"Now, Gipsy," he said, calling her by the name that he himself had fastened upon her, "please put a padlock upon your mouth for a season. A little pitcher like you ought to be seen and not heard—at least not until the bigger one has had its say. I am going to call Don to a strict account for his 'sins and transgressions,' as you are fond of saying when you wish to whip either of us around a stump. If there is anything left after I get through you can pick it up and handle it as you please.

"But in the first place, let me tell him what a picnic I had this afternoon. I was behind the counter feeling as glum as an apple paring that has lost its insides, when Mr. Ticknor called me into the counting room and handed me the paper containing the account of 'Don Donald's Resurrection,' and 'His Debut in the Role of a Detective.' Mr. Ticknor had become interested in the mystery of your fate, and in my attempts to solve it, and when he gave me the paper and told me to take time to read the flaming local, his eyes were rather watery, though his lips were doing their best to smile.

"Before I had time to finish the story, the colonel came swinging in looking as if he had just closed the Mexican War.

He, too, had been reading about that tombstone business and had brought a paper over for me to read. Finding that I was already deep in the story, he and Mr. Ticknor began to talk and laugh rejoicingly over your coming to life again.

"The upshot of it was, they packed me down to Brattle street to see how much of the story was true. When I got there, that old Mr. Vonberg had just got through reading about you and himself and was so excited that he deluged me with a perfect flood of broken lingo from which, however, I was able to make out that everything the reporter wrote was true. When he said that you had gone straight to the widow's house after leaving his store, I should have blubbered if I had not braced myself up by saying that you was an idiot for not having gone there before. He objected strongly to that view of your conduct, and nonplussed me by saying that if you had not made your bed under a gravestone, his family would not have recovered their property, nor would the robbers have been brought to justice. Although he has a broken tongue, he has a long head, and judging from what he said, he has taken a strong fancy to you on your own account.

"When I got back to the store, Mr. Ticknor was reading your adventures to Grace Greenwood and Ralph Waldo Emerson, who had happened in during my absence. I made my report, and then you ought to have heard the chattering they did, and all about you. Mr. Emerson told me to give you his sincere compliments, and to say to you for him that hereafter you must take for your motto, 'Nil Desperandum.' And lest I should get the motto wrong end foremost, he repeated it and explained it. The others said such a message from such a man was as much as I could carry at one time. But they wanted me to let you know that they all said, ditto.

"So there you are, old fellow, with your name in the papers

in good style, and in the hearts of people who are worth having for friends, and next week you will be in Vonberg's store as big as life, taking your first lessons in selling the outward signs of respectability.

"Upon the whole I am almost glad you started for the West, though I must still protest that if you had gone as far as that awful Chicago, it would have been the total end of you. I should be willing to go as far as Albany myself if I could come out of the big end of the horn as you have."

"God forbid that you should ever be as I have been!" said Don fervently, shuddering at the bare recollection of the anguish he had endured.

They were interrupted by the tea bell, and Bert did not get an opportunity to reach the lash of his intention till quite late in the evening. After tea they were surprised by a call from the colonel, who said: "I did not think of coming when we sent our compliments from Ticknor's; but after I got away from business I became strongly desirous of seeing what a resurrected boy looks like. You do not appear to be quite as rugged as you were when I last saw you. Still, you look quite substantial for one who has graduated from beneath a grave stone."

"There is enough of me left to make another start," said Don, "although I must confess that I feel as if I had passed through a very grave crisis."

"Of course—of course," the colonel responded, smilingly. "And hearing you speak so gravely of making another start reminds me to tell you that you have fallen into the hands of one of my best friends, and a Teuton of the first water. Mr. Vonberg was the major of my regiment; a braver soldier never went into battle, and a kinder man never came out of one. The sons are chips of the old block, and the firm is one

of the best in Boston. I am going around to see him this evening, and I shall take care that his good impression of you suffers nothing from my visit.

"But before I go there I shall call upon my niece, Arabella. She swears—if she ever swears at all—by the Evening Transcript, from which she has doubtless learned by this time that you were not born to be trampled into the mire. If she has not learned this much I shall try to open her understanding by droppin' a little oil upon the hinges of her mind." And the peculiar emphasis he threw into his words left the impression upon the boys that his lubrications would not be drawn from that oil of gladness the prophet speaks of.

When the colonel entered the Covert house he found his niece holding the Transcript in her lap as if it were a pet cat or pug, although her countenance was far from being the epitome of satisfaction that such a burden is supposed to inspire. She had read Don's adventures with decidedly mixed emotions; indeed, she was trying to navigate herself between Scylla and Charybdis; in other words, she was in a strait betwixt her animosities and her sympathies. She had nearly concluded that it was better to depart—from her animosities, and to be—with her sympathies; for, to do her justice, the thick powder on her face had not entirely smothered the higher sensibilities of her nature.

"Ah, I see that you have been reading about Don," said the colonel, looking at her with such a penetrating glance that she instinctively let her eyelids droop.

"Yes, I have read that extraordinary story, but I doubt its truth."

"Oh, of course! You doubt everything that runs counter to your prejudices. I take especial pleasure in informing you that every word of that account is true; the only fault to be

found with it is that the half has not been told. I have called to say to you that if hereafter you interfere with him in any way I shall cut you off from my will with a shilling."

Arabella was on intimate terms with the Vonbergs, and she understood that her uncle's visit was intended to anticipate her in any possible adverse influence she might wield over that amiable family. His threat led her to swift repentance, and she became precipitately forward to promise all manner of good concerning her future relations to Don.

The colonel went on to the Vonbergs chuckling over the success of his missionary efforts. But while he was smoking a pipe with his old comrade in arms, and discussing Don's adventures and character, he took good care to inform the major of his niece's failings and to warn him against her prejudices. "She was the means of his leaving our store," he said, bitterly, "and the direct cause of all his suffering. The old cat has promised not to touch the bird again, but as easy promises do not often change a hard nature, I am determined that she shall not have another chance to strike her claws into him."

"If she vas drife him to dot gravestone I vas hafe to thank her vor safing our broperty, und den I vas tell her she needn't do dot some more," said the major with a grave face, yet twinkling eyes.

Dorothy listened to the conversation, and thinking that her father's levity was ill-timed, she heatedly said: "If Arabella says anything against that boy here, she will get into hot water."

"Und dot vill be goot vor her gomblection," he responded while placidly watching a circle of smoke he had just blown from his lips.

"I see that the trial of those burglars is to begin to-morrow

morning," said the colonel, "and I suppose you will all have to go into court as witnesses. I should like to attend myself, for it is likely to prove amusing as well as interesting."

The trial was interesting beyond all expectation, and the lawyer who defended the robbers indulged in a piece of legal jugglery that almost upset the gravity of Judge Russell, who was the husband of one of Father Taylor's daughters, a regular attendant at the Mariners' Church, and who was quite well acquainted with Don's antecedents before he made his unfortunate trip to Albany. The lawyer's defence was intended chiefly to secure a mitigation of sentence. And the theory of his side included the assumption that Don was himself an accomplice of the burglars, and that the other two, supposing that they heard the approach of a policeman in the cemetery, fled incontinently, leaving the plunder with Don, who, being the most hardened of the three, was not so easily alarmed. It was also assumed that, while escaping with the plunder, he saw a policeman apparently following him, and, thereupon to secure himself, turned into the station with it, and there related an impromptu story accounting for the bag being in his possession. From the evidence elicited from Don concerning his wanderings and night experiences, he tried to build up a claim that he was nothing but a vagabond with such a surplus of smartness as would naturally make him a precocious criminal of the first water.

Arabella being present, instead of being astounded by this ingenious piece of sophistry, really began to hope that it would prove true. Don perspired in helpless amazement at this aspect of the case, while Bert, who sat at his side, laughed so openly that the court officer was compelled to punch him into sobriety.

The defence was so weak it fell at the first breath of the prosecutor, and the burglars were sentenced to fifteen years in the penitentiary.

Don had often, in his air castle moods, aspired to appear in print. Two pin-feathered poems of his had been published in a weekly paper when he was at an age in which most boys are content if they are quit of petticoats and pinafores. He was now in print to his heart's content, for as both local and general news was scarce, the reporters made the most of all the circumstances connected with his case. He was, indeed, beginning to feel uneasy in the glare of publicity, and frequently reminded himself of Peter Piper's warnings against trying to mount the airy ladder which only angels can ascend or descend with safety or comfort.

Bert, with vindictive gusto, replied to his self depreciating fears by saying: "But just think what a torment it must be for that tallow-faced Deacon Wickworth and that peppermint-eating Arabella to see the kind things that have been said of you in the city papers. It's as good as if their chairs had been stuck full of big pins. You will go into the Vonberg store with flying colors, and that will be worse than fire and brimstone to the small cannibal souls that would have made roast meat of you."

When Don reported for duty at the store he was handed a package of forty-one fat letters, the larger part of which were addressed in feminine handwriting. The package had been accumulating ever since the morning following the publication of the Copp's Hill incident. Although greatly surprised at this influx of correspondence and curious to know what it meant, he would have laid the letters by till after business hours had not the major insisted upon his taking time to give them his immediate attention.

The letters were from anonymous sympathizers who, with a solitary exception enclosed money for Don's benefit. The total of these contributions was two hundred and eighty-six dollars. Don was profoundly moved, as were the Vonbergs also, by this sympathetic display of modest generosity on the part of entire strangers.

After a moment of silence Don surprised the major and his sons by saying: "Not one dollar of that money belongs to me, and my duty is clear. I shall bank it, and then go straight to the papers and give notice that I am not in need of assistance, and shall request my unknown friends to recall their gifts. The very sight of that money makes me feel as if I were an imposter preying upon people whose sympathies have run away with their judgments."

The major and the younger son remonstrated against his plan as being equivocal in spirit and impracticable for execution. The elder son thought the point of honor well taken and approved Don's determination. Stacking the letters upon the desk and stuffing the money in his pockets, Don departed upon his errand.

"Vell, py Jubitor, und all the rest of dose heathen vellers!" exclaimed the major, explosively, as he disappeared, "dot poy's brinciples vas like chilled steel vat you can neither bend nor break. Vat you say, mein sons, if ve vas make him cashier at ten dollars a week instead of sefen? My colonel say mit me yesterday dot he vas goot at writing und goot at figures und goot at eferything."

The cashiership had been vacant for several weeks, and the sons approved of their father's suggestion with enthusiasm.

CHAPTER XXI.

A TELLING ILLUSTRATION.

There is enough water under the great Sahara Desert to make it blossom as the rose, and there is enough benevolence underneath the howling wilderness of society to work the same wonders for itself should it ever be sufficiently tapped. From this vast latent fountainhead have come forth the streams which have ameliorated the horrors of war, of famine, of plagues and the desolations that have been wrought by hurricanes, conflagrations and all the other untoward forces that devastate the earth.

In a sr all way Don had tapped this hidden fountain of benevolence, and once started it was not easy to stop. The notice to his unknown friends was, as he had been forewarned by the newspaper men, futile so far as the recalling of their gifts was concerned. And not only so, but the recent trial, together with the comments of the friendly newspaper men, so augmented the stream of gifts that the sum mentioned in the previous chapter was more than doubled.

"You vas hafe to wait till it stops raining," said the major, "before you can sleep out toors again or hafe any more afflictions. You vas hafe a mind of your own, und the public vas hafe some mind of its own as vell as you vas."

And this conviction was triumphantly expressed by Bert himself, who had vainly tried to argue and to ridicule Don out of what he called his country notions of honor and honesty.

Some of the later gifts were sent anonymously through the offices of the papers, and the fact was mentioned in their columns. This provoked a correspondent to intimate that Don was taking advantage of the public, and the insinuation so rankled in his mind he could scarcely eat or sleep.

Something in the correspondent's letter excited the colonel's suspicion that Arabella had written it, but on being questioned she strenuously denied having any knowledge of its authorship. Not until he obtained the original copy and confronted her with her own signature did she acknowledge her transgression. Having a West Pointer's ideas of truth and honor, he washed his hands of all further dealings with her and left her to the conviction that she had effectually cut off the limb in which she had hoped to build her old-age nest. It was in vain that she tried to regain his favor by publishing a second letter confessing that she was unjust in the first. He was implacable.

The annoyance Don suffered from her malice was swallowed up by a paragraph he happened to see in one of the morning papers. It was a brief chronicle of the fact that Bob Flanger, the engineer, and Jake Cullum, his fireman, had both been killed in a railway collision. The death of these two roundhouse saints who had been so signally kind to him in his distress affected him deeply, and practically as well.

Wiring to Albany, he found that he could reach there in time for the funeral of the two men.

"Can I go?" he asked of the major, after informing him of all the circumstances.

"Go, und Gott pless you, mein poy," said the major, tearfully appreciating the spirit that animated his young cashier.

Getting off at Greenbush, the scene of his first misfortune, he went directly to the roundhouse, where he was speedily

recognized by two men who had ministered to his hunger while he lay upon the wheelbarrow tattered and bruised.

"Poor Bob and Jake have given their last whistle and rung their last bell," said one of the men, brushing his eyes with the sleeve of his blue check shirt.

"Yes, I know it; and I have come to attend their funeral," Don replied. "I have got Bob's hat yet," he added, recognizing one of the men as the one who had jestingly ridiculed him for saying that he would keep the hat as a memento of the engineer.

Both men had believed in Don's respectability even when he looked so battered and forlorn, and they were not particularly surprised at his reappearing at the roundhouse in the garb of a young gentleman. But when they learned that he had come all the way from Boston to honor the memory of the dead men, and that he really kept Bob's hat as a precious souvenir of the engineer, Sam Langley, the elder of the two, came up to him and, putting a hand on each shoulder, and looking him in the face, said: "Young fellow, you make me believe in human nature. And that is saying a great deal for one who has knocked about the world for more than fifty years. Let's have another shake, for there is no telling how soon I shall have to follow Bob and Jake." And he shook Don's hand with a heartiness that made it ache.

"You ought to be stuck up in a pulpit for a headlight or a steamboiler—I scarcely know which," exclaimed Lem Dudley, the younger of the two men, who was also a freight engineer, stroking Don's right shoulder caressingly with a hand that looked as if it could knock down an ox.

"Did Bob and Jake leave families?" Don asked, in pursuance of one object he had in view in returning to Albany.

"Why, of course," replied Langley; "did you ever know

a railroad man that was worth his salt that didn't have a family? Bob leaves a wife and four little tots; and Jake had a wife and five children, one of whom is as blind as a bat. And the worst of it is, neither of them were very forehanded. The men along the road are making up a subscription to be divided between the two families; and when it comes to that sort of business they don't do things by halves, I can assure you."

"No, I suppose not," said Don, warmly. "Will you let me put my name on the list?"

"Certainly, if you have got anything to spare," Langley responded gladly, pulling out a subscription list which was already quite numerously signed.

Don took the paper and after affixing his name hesitated some moments before he filled in the amount, for it was necessary that reflection should go before decision. He had previously resolved that the money which had come to him from his unknown correspondents should be used for the benefit of others, and his chief object in visiting Albany was to determine whether or no some of it might not be advantageously applied to the families of the dead engineer and his fireman. The details of the accident by which they lost their lives showed that they had sacrificed themselves for the safety of a passenger train.

Observing his hesitation, Langley said: "You needn't make it very hard on yourself, you know; every little helps."

"I was trying to decide how much, and not how little I could give," Don replied. "I think I have decided upon the right thing, and will put down one hundred and twenty-five dollars for Bob's family, and the same amount for Jake's." And he filled in these figures, adding: "Although I put this on the paper, I shall carry the money to the families myself

before the funeral takes place, for it may comfort them to know that Providence has not forsaken them."

And before the men could recover from their astonishment he told them his story as briefly as he could, and explained the motive of his action. "And now, if you will tell me how to find the families I will get this thing off my mind as soon as possible."

"If we don't go with you as guides they will be apt to think that you need a guardian," said Langley, who was more than half inclined to think that the whole transaction would turn out as an illusion.

"If you can spare the time, so much the better; you will save me the trouble of making too many explanations."

They went with him, and the details of what followed may be safely left with the reader's imagination. After seeing and ministering to the families, Don felt as if life had a new meaning and magnitude. Responsibility and duty became new words to him, and he became convinced that even a boy might be of some use to the world.

Before he left Greenbush he erected a small drinking fountain in the roundhouse for the benefit of the railway men. It bore the inscription: "Sacred to the Memory of Robert Flanger and Jacob Cullum. Erected by a Boy Who Knew Them as Roundhouse Saints and Railway Heroes."

The Reverend John Paul Lovejoy, D. D., still blessed Albany with his stately presence and brilliant light. He was an 'up to date' preacher with a strong partiality for newspaper illustrations. Certain old-fashioned people intimated that he knew far more about the newspapers than he did about the Bible, and that his preaching was inspired more by the spirit of the age than it was by the Spirit of The Almighty. They

said that his morning paper always took precedence of his morning prayers.

All acknowledged, however, that he had a great aptitude for 'telling illustrations.' To do him justice, he seldom read a paper without discovering fresh material for pulpit ammunition. Opening his journalistic purveyor one morning he was immediately attracted to a column or more of matter which was big-headed with the words, "Pathetic Precocity of a Juvenile Philanthropist."

The Roundhouse Fountain had been discovered by the press. By interviewing the roundhouse men and other people to whom the roundhouse men referred them, the reporters acquired a clear outline of Don's doings and experiences from the time of his first appearance in Albany up to his second, and his benefactions to the relicts of the late Robert Flanger and Jacob Cullum. Some things, however, escaped their pursuit, and among them was Don's visit to the popular Doctor of Divinity.

Doctor Lovejoy became so engrossed in the reporters' discoveries that tears clouded his expressive grey eyes and ran down to the point of his more expressive Roman nose. "What a Telling Illustration that will make!" he exclaimed with the keen discernment of a professional sermon-architect. He cut it out with his polished clippers and triumphantly consigned it to a mahogany boxlet marked, "Telling Illustrations." Here was an auspicious inspiration for his next Sunday morning sermon. A suitable text was not far to find. To the 'illustration' he pinned the words: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." With such a luminous text pinned to such a voluminous illustration he was in a fair way of adding to the fame of his illustrious name.

Not content with this beginning, he crossed the river to

Greenbush, interviewed the roundhouse men, as he contemplated the memorial fountain, and from them went to Mrs. Flanger and Mrs. Cullum for further verification of the newspaper account. The more he investigated, the faster his sermon grew. It sprang up like the magic tree of the Hindoo magician.

When he preached that sermon, his fashionable congregation became a fountain of tears; although, truth to tell, they were moved, not so much by the inspirations of the text, as by the 'telling illustration', of which the text was but a prelude or a jug-handle. It was the almost unanimous conviction of the audience that for eloquence and pathos the sermon eclipsed all previous efforts of the renowned pastor.

The Monday morning press contained a verbatim report of the doctor's masterpiece. Although severely fatigued by the strain of the preceding day, the doctor sat down in his luxurious study and read his own sermon from beginning to end. He cut it out and pasted it in a vellum scrapbook already plethorically full of other sermons preserved in a similar manner.

Having done this with a glow of satisfaction, he turned to open his morning mail. The first letter he took up bore the Boston office mark. There had been intimation of his being called to fill the pulpit of one of the largest churches in The Athens of America. This was a thick letter. What if it should contain the coveted call!

Daintily clipping one end of the envelope he reversed it and shook the contents upon the elegant study table. The first arrival from the interior was a silver ten-cent piece; the next, several newspaper clippings; and last, came the letter. Puzzling as was the silver, he put it in his vest-pocket; and eager as was his curiosity concerning the sender of the missive,

his attention was riveted by the appearance of the name, Don Donalds, in the scrap that lay face toward him. He thereupon read the scraps first, and was delighted to find abundant confirmation of the sketch he had given of the character of The Juvenile Philanthropist the day before.

He next looked at the signature of the letter. Bertrand J. Williams. He knew of no one by that name. He turned to the contents of the letter for enlightenment, and — was enlightened.

When, after his return from the sojourn in the wilderness, Don related to Bert his experience with the Reverend John Paul Lovejoy, D. D., there was a violent storm of juvenile indignation which was slow to abate. And when Don left Boston to make his second visit to Albany, Bert bethought himself of writing a letter to the Albany clergyman. This letter was so ingeniously put together that the writer must have perspired over it as if he were sitting on a steam boiler. He enclosed the scraps as evidence of Don's standing in Boston. He informed the doctor of Don's object in visiting Albany, and described his previous visit, and scathed the reverend gentleman for slamming his door in the face of an unfortunate who was far better as a boy than the preacher was as a man. As a measure of his manhood and a reminder of the ten cents so insultingly offered to Don, and as a compensation for the energy he had expended in slamming the door he enclosed the ten cents, with the request that he should bore a hole in it and wear it around his neck as a commemorative medal.

Surprised as the doctor was to discover that the boy he had treated with such scant courtesy and grace had turned out to be the Juvenile Philanthropist upon whom he had expended his tropical eloquence, he was indignant beyond endurance. Indignant to think that anyone, even in classic Boston, should

write to him, The Reverend John Paul Lovejoy, D. D., in such pointedly incriminating and contemptuous terms. And the Ten Cents! Was ever such an insult offered to a Doctor of Divinity before!

Who was this presumptuous Bertrand J. Williams? He studied the letter. The chirography and construction were unimpeachable. There was no trace of juvenility in it, although the impertinence of it indicated someone who was the very impersonation of "sassiness."

There was one comfort; the revelations of the letter could be kept from the Albany public. The radiance of his telling sermon and its "Telling Illustration" should not be dimmed by the discovery of his shabby treatment of the boy whom he had lauded to the skies with such pathetic and effective fervor.

Alas! for all human calculations and security. Fame has its penalties and dangers. The great sermon was reprinted in the Boston papers. And Bert wrote a note to the press exposing the difference between the eloquent doctor's preaching and practice. The shuttle wove its thread between Boston and Albany. The note was reproduced in the Albany press, and finally it was announced that the doctor, having a chronic sore throat, would be obliged to seek another climate.

The reporter of the Transcript, who was the first to give sympathetic publicity to Don's adventures, and who continued to be his firm friend, caustically wrote, in somewhat labored classic terms: "The doctor leaves Albany with the hot shirt of Nessus on his back and the avenging feet of Nemesis at his heels."

Don knew nothing of what Bert was doing until it was too late to remonstrate. All he could say then was: "You are an awful boy, Bert, but I did not think that you could be so wicked."

It should be said before closing this chapter that the doctor purchased a cigar with Bert's ten cents and meditated upon the mutability of human events while blowing the smoke from his eloquent lips.

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CHAPTER XXII.

PICKING UP A PROTEGE.

Nora was an interrogation point. When she could not answer herself, she carried her questions to the attic for solution. "Who are The Boston Originals?" she asked one evening with wrinkled brow.

"You must be one of them, for that is certainly an original inquiry," said Don. "Tell us what you mean."

"I was going down Hanover street this afternoon, and at 114 I saw printed in big letters at the entrance of the narrow stairway, 'The Boston Originals. Meeting Held Every Sunday Evening on The Top Floor.' I have heard of a good many denominations, but I never heard of that one before."

"You know as much about them as I do," said Bert, "and I supposed that I was as well acquainted with the oddities of Boston as any one could be, seeing that I am to the manor born."

"That is such an odd title, we shall have to go there next Sunday night and find out what it means," remarked Don, musingly.

"Oh, for mercy's sake, don't go! It might be worse than going to hear Theodore Parker," exclaimed Nora, taking alarm.

"If the Originals should prove to be as good as he, it would certainly pay us to go," Bert retorted, sturdily. "What do you say, Don?"

"Originality is a scarce article; it is something we should search for. Besides, Nora's curiosity is certainly justifiable, and we will go there in the spirit of investigation so that we may be able to gratify her with some degree of intelligence."

"If you do go, it shall not be on my account," said Nora, firmly. "You shall not pack the blame of that meeting on my shoulders as you did in the case of the Faneuil Hall meeting, to which I sent you. I am not playing Mother Eve this time. If you find any forbidden fruit there, you will have to blame yourselves for it."

"We will assume all the re-spon-si-bil-i-ty ourselves," Bert said with grave pomposity.

On going to the hall the boys discovered that they were in Adullam's Cave—an assembly of social, political and religious malcontents of both sexes, who were set against everything from the rising to the setting of the sun. The men wore locks that hung down to their shoulders, and the women, hair that was cropped close to their skulls. The men looked as lean and hungry as Cassius, and the women as leathery and big-boned as furies. The atmosphere was pervaded with the odors of unwashed bodies, old clothes, beer, bologna and tobacco. Each one looked at his fellow as if questioning his right to existence.

They were presided over by the notorious Leroy Sunderland, an apostate preacher and celebrated mesmerist, whose life, it was alleged, was a flat contradiction of the Ten Commandments. After leading in singing, which sounded like the wailings of lost spirits, and in a prayer that addressed nobody and asked for everything that would tend to turn society topsy-turvy, he made a short address which clearly showed that he was a professional Ishmaelite, whose hand was against every-

body and who rejoiced in having everybody's hand turned against him.

"Well," whispered Don to Bert, "I guess we have put our foot into it deep this time."

"Yes," responded Bert with a grimace, "and it will be deeper still when we make our report to that Nora of ours."

After Sunderland's speech the meeting was "thrown open" to anyone who wished to speak. This was the signal for a fusillade of sharpshooting against everything in sight and out of sight.

"Has anything hit you yet?" asked Don of Bert, after listening in a dazed way to the tirades of the speakers.

"Lots!" said Bert sententiously.

Presently a man, who was evidently a foreigner, began to anathematize the United States and everything connected with it. Others followed in the same vein.

This is getting altogether too hot for me," whispered Don, indignantly. "If they keep this up you will have to hold me down."

"Blaze away!" exclaimed Bert excitedly. "It seems to be a free-for-all fight. I'll help push you up if you'll only pitch in. Men who talk that way about this country ought to be flung out of it."

There was a lull. Don drew his feet under him and started to rise, but another was before him.

The new speaker was a man of foreign accent with a scholarly command of the English language. His dark, curly hair was slightly streaked with gray, but his heavy moustache and side whiskers were as black as jet. He was seedily dressed, yet there was that in his student-like face and refined bearing that inspired respect. His dark eyes were large and beautiful. His tones were clear and cultivated.

He began by saying that he was an exile from Hungary, where he had once possessed both wealth and influence, though now he was without a roof to his head or the means of purchasing the common necessities of life. In his wanderings on the street he had seen the sign at the foot of the stairs and had entered the meeting as a means of resting his weary feet. Yet, unfortunate as he was, he rejoiced in being in the United States, the ideal of his dreams and the queen of the nations of the earth. He pictured the woeful condition of Hungary and Poland under the feet of the oppressors and contrasted it with the happy state of things in this country.

Waxing warm and growing eloquent as he proceeded, he began a series of polished, yet startling invectives and denunciations against the speakers who had spoken ill of their country, and closed by declaring that they were so unworthy of it they ought to be driven from it.

Don and Bert were so excited that they clapped their hands and pounded the floor with their feet until they were exhausted. Their example proved contagious to others who were in the hall, and the confusion was so great that Sunderland closed the meeting.

Don and Bert held a hurried and earnest consultation, and with results that followed immediately. They intercepted the stranger as he was about to leave the hall, and taking him aside, invited him to go home with them.

Looking keenly into the two frank faces awaiting his answer, he said in subdued, almost quivering tones: "I am a stranger to you, and you are too young to invite me to your home without first taking counsel of those who usually determine matters of this kind. Nevertheless, I thank you with all my heart."

"You are in hard luck, and I know what that is by experi-

ence. We believe that you are a gentleman notwithstanding the unfortunate situation you hinted at in your very eloquent address, and it will be to your advantage to go with us." And Don spoke so sympathizingly that his words went straight to the heart of his listener.

"Better accept," said Bert bluntly, "for we are in earnest. In one sense, I am the master of the house to which you are invited, and my mother and sister, who are the only ones to consult, if such a thing needed to be done, will heartily approve of any invitation I see fit to extend to anyone. We are plain common people, who use words to express what we mean."

"I will go with you; and more gladly and thankfully than I can tell," said the stranger, and with so much relief depicted in his face, that both boys were more than ever convinced that they had run no risks in giving such an impromptu invitation to one they had never seen before.

"My name is Conrad Krasinski," he continued as soon as they had reached the street, "and I will tell you more about myself when I am better able to confirm my representations."

The boys gave their own names and impulsively assured him that they were not looking for vouchers of his respectability, for that was sufficiently evidenced by the speech he had made in the hall, and by his looks and manners.

Two of the boarders had gone away Saturday night, leaving a comfortable room vacant, and in the hasty consultation held with Bert, Don had said: "You have a vacant room, and I have over half of that anonymous fund still in the bank. Put him in there and I will pay his board out of that fund till something turns up for him. Or better still, I will pretend to loan him seventy-five dollars, so that he can pay his board himself and leave your mother and Nora in ignorance of his destitution. That will put him on a better footing in his own estima-

tion, and will encourage him to do the best he can for himself. I will tell him of the arrangement for secrecy so far as we are concerned, and charge him not to give us away."

And in accordance with this plan Krasinski was introduced to the household as a new boarder, and conducted to his room by the boys, where they left him with best wishes for a good night's rest and more cheerful outlooks for his future prospects.

"Where did you pick up that distinguished foreign-looking gentleman?" asked Nora, when they returned to the sitting room to report to their little censor and mentor.

"At The Boston Originals," said Bert, promptly. "He was the chief speaker; and a glorious speech it was, too, in favor of our country. We got acquainted with him, and finding that he was seeking for a boarding place, we brought him home with us, leaving him to send for his baggage when it would be more convenient for him. We will report further some other time." And taking Don by the arm, he led him off to the attic.

"You are an awful boy," said Don laughing, to think how expertly Bert had extricated them from an embarrassing position.

In the morning they arose early, and hearing Krasinski stirring in his room, they sought entrance to explain their plans, and to settle his footing in the house.

Overwhelmed by their kindness he broke his reserve, saying: "I was professor of languages in The Budapest University, and a member of the Hungarian House of Deputies. But having been an active co-worker with Louis Kossuth in the attempt to free the Hungarian people, I was obliged to flee from the country. I have been here but a short time. Being disappointed in my remittances, I was turned out of my boarding house, and my baggage was retained for my indebtedness.

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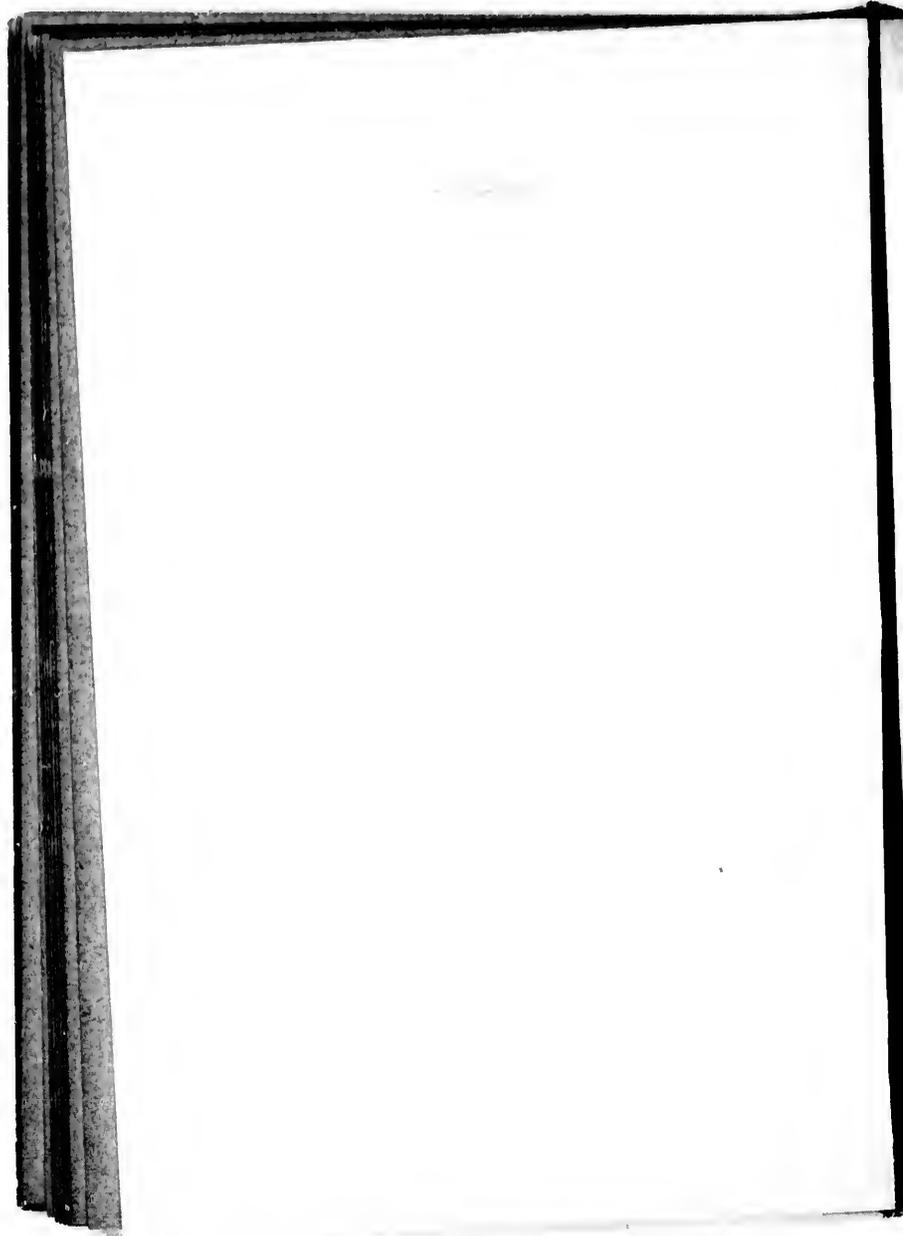
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With the money you offer to advance I can pay the small amount due and reclaim my baggage and papers. In time I hope to obtain a private class in the languages and make my own way again. Your kindness has saved me from the horror of walking the streets at night, and made it possible for me to begin anew. I can assure you that you will lose nothing by your generosity to me."

This revelation stunned the boys. But regaining theirself-possession, they soon discovered that they experienced no difficulty in maintaining easy terms with the professor. Don said he would redeem the baggage at noon and furnish him with seventy-five dollars at the same time. And he would also claim the honor of being his first private pupil in Latin and Greek. Bert said he would be the second; and if the professor could teach French, his sister Nora should be the third pupil.

The professor said he could teach both French and German in addition to the classical languages, and he was so relieved by the sudden change from killing care to comparative comfort that his face was literally transfigured. And when he accompanied the boys to breakfast Nora thought he was the most fascinating and entertaining gentleman she had ever seen. Nor was her pleasure diminished when Bert informed her that she was to take French lessons of him. The little mother herself was captivated by his grace and breeding, and congratulated herself on having the good fortune to secure such a boarder.

When the boys left the house for their daily duties, Nora kissed Bert, and said: "If Professor Krasinski is the kind of company they keep at The Boston Originals, you may go there again." She noticed that her brother shrugged his shoulders briskly, and thinking that her kiss was not welcome, she ran into the house in a pout, forgetting even to say her usual morn-

ing good bye to Don, an omission which clouded her whole forenoon.

"Now, Bert," said Don, when they were clear of the house, "this affair must be kept out of the papers, for the professor would not like to appear as the protege of such a pair of juvenile imps as we are."

"If the public knew that you had taken him under your wings, and that you were spending that trust money, as you call it, for his benefit, it would be the making of him," was the quick and earnest reply.

"Solemnly promise me that you will do all you can to keep this cat in the bag, or I'll cut your acquaintance."

"I solemnly promise, so help me. But what's the use? We may tie our end of the bag as tightly as we please—that won't prevent the cat from bursting out at the other end. The reporters are lorgnetting you as closely as that Arabella Powderface is lorgnetting our house, and so long as the game is in sight, they are not going to give up the chase for news."

"Well, if we two keep our mouths sealed, they'll be baffled."

"What if the professor should open his?"

"He is a gentleman, and gentlemen do not pin their private affairs to their sleeves."

The professor was a gentleman! He showed it in everything he did or said, notwithstanding he was a bachelor. He was a rare teacher, and his three pupils became so enthusiastic under his instructions that others were soon added to their number.

Not long after the discovery of the professor by the two boys, Louis Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, for whose blood the Austrians were thirsting, arrived in this country. As his deliverance from his enemies was effected through the intervention of the United States, he was greeted by great throngs

wherever he went. On his approaching visit to Boston he was tendered a review of the troops on the Common and the compliment of a public meeting in Faneuil Hall. When he arrived the professor was in a state of exalted excitement. The day was set apart as a city holiday. Quite early in the morning he appeared in the attic where he was in the habit of visiting as if he were but a boy himself, and invited them to accompany him to the Revere House, whither he was going to make a call upon his old chief and friend, Louis Kossuth.

"I shall be most happy to introduce you to him, and as my best friends, too," he said, with all the confidence of a man who was sure of the ground he stood upon.

When they arrived at the hotel, hundreds were already seeking access to the rooms of the great magyar. But the professor's card secured access in precedence of all. The moment he entered the room, Kossuth fell upon his neck, embraced him and kissed him again and again. And both men were so overwhelmed with emotion that it was sometime before they could speak. The boys felt as if they were intruding upon the holy of holies of friendship.

The professor took them by the hand and said: "Louis I must introduce to you these two boys; they saved me from death by starvation, and have been the brightest joys I have had since my arrival in this great country." And while Kossuth received them with effusive cordiality, the professor briefly explained what they had done for him. Kossuth patted them on the shoulder, and to their overwhelming embarrassment informed them that they had been kind to one of Hungary's greatest and purest men, and to one of Europe's greatest linguists and scholars. He invited them to his Faneuil Hall meeting and gave them tickets—which were selling high—to secure their entrance.

Feeling that these bosom friends would have much to say to each other and in their own language, the boys excused themselves and departed in a state of mind bordering on ecstasy. On their return home they almost frightened Nora and her mother with their revelations and excitement.

The ovation given to Kossuth was one of the greatest ever given to any man in the United States. People crowded after him in the streets; the review was attended by countless multitudes, and Faneuil Hall was densely filled with people, who came to hear him rehearse the story of the rise and fall of the Hungarian Republic.

The address was all the more stirring because of the conspicuous part the speaker had taken in trying to prevent the consummation of the greatest crime of the modern era. It was all the more striking for being delivered in the purest English which, as was well known, Kossuth learned in captivity from an English dictionary, and copies of Shakespeare and of the Bible.

Both Don and Bert were present, but their attention was in a measure diverted from the larger interests of the occasion by things that became singularly personal to them. Their beloved instructor, by the insistence of Kossuth, sat on the platform among the most distinguished men of the city and state. In his opening remarks, Kossuth referred to him as being present, and said that he had been one of his most able and trusted compatriots, and one who, rather than recede from the struggle for independence, had suffered both confiscation and exile. He earnestly commended the professor to the confidence and the sympathy of the American people. It delighted Don and Bert to witness how instantly and generally the great audience cheered for the professor. But the next sentence overwhelmed them with confusion of mind.

"Boston has the honor," Kossuth went on, "of having two lads who were the first to discover the presence of the professor in this city, the first to recognize his merits, and the first to extend to him generous sympathy and material aid."

"Three cheers for the lads," shouted some one in the gallery, and thereupon the cheers were given with a will, to the great pleasure of Kossuth and the intense gratification of the professor.

From that moment the professor's fortunes began to change for the better, and not long afterward he became a tutor of languages in Harvard and a welcome guest of the literary and political circles of Boston. He remained loyal to his young benefactors and continued to hear their recitations and to direct their studies.

Immediately after the Faneuil Hall meeting, Krasinski was interviewed by the reporters concerning the lads referred to by Kossuth. He frankly gave their names, described the occasion on which he first met them, and freely detailed the particulars by which he had been placed under such great obligations to them.

The boys' secrecy availed them nothing. "The Tombstone Detective" was for the third time prominent in the local columns of the dailies, but this time as Don Donalds plus Bertrand Williams.

The Reverend John Paul Lovejoy, D. D., who had settled at Worcester, trembled in his Oxford shoes when he read the latest news of "The Boy Philanthropist," and he shivered all the more when he learned that "Bertrand J. Williams," his whilom "ten cent" correspondent, was Don's friend, and, "double," as the reporters styled him. But having consigned his great sermon with its "Telling Illustration" to the very bottom of his barrel, his name escaped further association with

the names of the boys who had become such thorns in his flesh.

The amiable Arabella had turned up her naturally "tip-tilted nose" still further when she heard that the widow had descended to the harboring of a "Hun" for a boarder, but when the reverberations from Faneuil Hall reached her she was badly stunned. She had passed many an hour feasting on The Mysteries of Paris, and of London and of New York; with far less satisfaction she now sat in her chamber vainly endeavoring to digest what she piously called "The Mysteries of Providence," so inscrutably deepened by the accumulating clouds that persistently arose from the attic of the Williams Boarding House. It greatly added to her melancholy, as well as to the envy of the Coverts, to find that the widow's house was becoming so celebrated that it was far more remunerative to its mistress than it was when Don shouldered his trunk across the Square and planted his green self so near the sky.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

TALKING THROUGH HIS HAT.

Although efforts had been made to induce Don to descend a story or two, he still retained his attic quarters. The seclusion no less than the elevation pleased his fancy. Besides, both he and Bert declared that the air at that height either came in fresh from the country or from the sea. And the pattering of the rain on the roof or the whistling of the wind around the chimneys over their heads was far more suggestive and poetical than the sound of footsteps and muffled voices. Having the whole upper floor to themselves, with all its nooks and crannies they were as independent as eagles in their eyry.

Bob Flanger's hat had the place of honor over Don's mirror, where he could see it every time he saw himself, and be reminded of the heroic head that once throbbed beneath it while the engine thundered on the rail. More great thoughts came from beneath the battered felt than were ever dreamed of by the perfumed exquisite who, although he may believe that in the beginning God created man, thinks that man was not finished till civilization crowned him with the glory of a "silk plug."

Nora dusted the hat every day, and, not infrequently, when Don returned at night, he found it decorated with a sprig of green or a spray of bloom which she had purchased with a portion of her limited pin-money. But her display of senti-

ment was prompted less by the pleasure it afforded Don than it was by the memory of the man whom he had canonized as a roundhouse saint.

She had read of the healing virtues of Saint Peter's handkerchief, and she believed that there was virtue in Saint Robert's hat. "I should like to fasten it onto Miss Agincourt's head for a whole week," she said. "It might be the means of her conversion from some of her ugly ways."

Bert laughed immoderately at the quaint conceit, saying: "She would cut a queer figure with that hat on."

"It would not be half so queer a figure as she now cuts in the eyes of the angels with even her best Sunday hat," Nora retorted with spirit, and truth withal. "I would rather be in fashion with God than to be in fashion with all the world beside."

"Well, I am glad I saved that hat," said Don sympathizing with Nora's seriousness. "The Bible says of Abel's faith: 'By it he, being dead, yet speaketh', and I am sure that poor Bob speaks through his hat to me every time I look upon it, and every time I think of it. All the while I was listening to Professor Krasinski that night at The Boston Originals, Bob was speaking to me through his hat and saying, 'There's your chance to use some of that trust money you have on hand to good advantage.' And he spoke truly. He'll tell me what to do with the rest of it."

The jovial major, remembering how carefully Don had saved the hat, often jested with him about it, but was just as often met with the rejoinder that Bob was speaking through it as eloquently as ever. This seriousness, coupled together with the singularity of the expression, led the major to tell Dorothy and the colonel what Don was in the habit of saying about Bob and his hat. The colonel reiterated it to Ticknor and

Fields, and through them it got to the ears of the literary celebrities who congregated there, and finally to the pencils of the alert reporters, who began to use it as a stock phrase. As Boston is supposed to set the fashion for literary phraseology, there is reason for believing that this is the origin of the expression, "Talking through his hat." To be sure, we would not lay this down as literary law and gospel. But as we must account for everything in one way or another, this is a good way to account for the origin of the phrase. It might be objected that the expression as used at present does not bear out the former meaning. Yet to this it may be replied that many words that were of respectable parentage have sadly degenerated from their primary significance. When Don first used the phrase, Henry Ward Beecher, who was then rising to be the first preacher of the modern pulpit, might have borrowed it without the slightest danger of being impeached for using slang.

One morning when Don reached the store, the major handed him fifty dollars, saying with the air of a man who was making a good beginning for a new day: "A laty vas at mein house last night, und from Dorothy she vas vind out all about dot hat und how Bob vas talk through it, und tells you vat you must do mit dot monish you receifed from dose beoples vat don't hafe any names. Und she was gif me vifty tollars und say she don't hafe no name to go mit it. Und you vas hafe to ask dot hat vat you shall do mit it. Und if you vas vind annuder Brovessor Krasinski, or some udder poor veller who vas need it just like him, it vas as goot as she vas vant it."

"That will, make one hundred and ninety dollars I have received since that Krasinski affair came out in the papers," said Don, anxiously, as he took the money; "all of it is to be used at my discretion for the benefit of unfortunate people; or,

rather, at the discretion of Bob Flanger's hat. They all speak of that, and seem to have more confidence in it than they do in some of the charitable societies. They say the winter is approaching and times are so hard that many will suffer if they are not helped. But they should distribute their own charity, and not place so much responsibility upon a mere boy."

The major made light of Don's embarrassment, and chuckled aloud as he replied: "You vas a zoziety all py yourselves, mit Bob for bresident, you for treasurer, und dot Bert for segretary; und you vas make your reborts to Nora und dot little mudder some more ven you vas veels like it. Dot's all fery goot, you see. Dot laty vat sends vifty tollars ish rich, und she say if you vas want some more she vill gif it just as you say."

"She must be a noble woman," said Don, with feeling. "Please thank her in my name, and assure her that I shall make a good use of what she has sent, and account for every dollar."

That evening Don and Bert and Nora had just settled themselves to their language lessons when they heard a cane thumping up the attic stairs with an emphasis that left no doubt in their minds as to the identity of the approaching visitor. Father Taylor, who lived near, was in the habit of visiting them frequently, and considered himself privileged to start for the attic the moment he had passed the compliments of the evening with the widow in the hall below. He always carried a heavy hickory cane which had a crook that was as big as "the crook in the lot" that the Bible tells of so mysteriously. Whenever there was anything particular upon his mind, that cane thumped like an old-fashioned door-knocker, to the great disturbance of nervous and timid people who were not accustomed to his way.

"There comes Father Taylor!" exclaimed Nora, who always delighted in a call from the mariner preacher. "By the way, he is thumping he must have something tremendous upon his mind." The words were scarcely spoken when there came a knock upon the door that would have split the panel if it had not been proof against such violence.

"Come in, and welcome," said Bert, as he hastened to open the door, and greeted the visitor with the cordiality that was born of both confidence and affection.

"I see you are all sailing for the port of knowledge," said Father Taylor, who rarely spoke without using nautical terms. "That's a good port to steer for, and you can't do better than to press on all the canvas you can carry while going in that direction, especially while you are young and taut in your rigging and stiff and strong in your timbers. But I must run up under your quarter for a minute or so, for the king's business requires haste."

"Your cane said business every step you took up the stairs, and we have prepared ourselves accordingly," said Don, leaning back in a listening attitude.

"Spoken like the hearty that you are," Father Taylor responded with evident satisfaction. "And now to throw the lead at once; that stevedore we were talking about the other day, came home this afternoon with another wife in tow; and that, too, when his last one had been dead only seven weeks. You know what a brute he is, and if my reckoning is correct, his new wife is as much like him as one shark is like another. That only son of his didn't run along side of her very heartily, and by way of a wedding feast the father gave him a rope's-end that has welted him from head to feet. The boy ran to my house for refuge, and I have taken him under my lee for good. Got papers from the Humane Society for that purpose.

Now, what shall I do with him? He is the brightest boy in his school, and as trim as a clipper ship. We can't afford to have him wrecked by a drunken father and a virago of a step-mother." And Father Taylor thumped the floor so vigorously while he was speaking that the boarders in the flat below supposed that the boys were putting down a new carpet.

"There are fifty dollars for him," said Don, laying the crisp bill in Father Taylor's hand. "A lady sent it to me this morning to use at my discretion; and Bob's hat has been speaking to me all day about it. I guess the Lord had Ladd Chapin in mind when he turned that bill in Bob's direction. Ladd's mother was a woman after the Lord's own heart, and I am sure that He knows enough about His business to prevent the son of such a mother from being driven to the dogs when he could better be led to a decent life."

"There she blows!" exclaimed Father Taylor, driving his knuckles into his eyes in lieu of a handkerchief to brush away his tears of satisfaction, while his swarthy mobile face, so nobly and so deeply seamed with lines of thought, switched about as if angels of joy were pulling at the strings of expression. "I have sighted a regular sperm whale this time, and no mistake," he continued, in Nantucket whaleman phraseology.

"If you will send Ladd to Exeter Academy in New Hampshire," said Don, "where he will be beyond the reach of his father, I am sure that the lady who sent that fifty dollars will gladly become responsible for his education, seeing that he is such a deserving boy. I do not know her personally—not even her name, but Major Vonberg does, and he assures me that she is as benevolent as she is rich. She sent word that she would honor any demands I might make upon her. She has great faith in what Bob says through his hat, and I am sure

that he, with his hand upon the throttle of this business, would let on his fullest head of steam."

"Of course—of course! What spirit engineer wouldn't!" exclaimed Father Taylor, thumping his way up to the hat and taking it down and trying its measure on his own capacious head made extra formidable by its heavy shock of tumbled, dark Abraham Lincoln-like hair. "Why his head was bigger than mine," he continued, as the hat settled quite loosely to his eyebrows. "The brain that carried that hat had room enough in it for whales to swim in; it was a sea, not a gudgeon pond. Let us pray."

And with the hat still on his head, the absent-minded man who was as grand as a cliff and as sweet as a flower, knelt, and without any polite preliminaries of supplication poured out a prayer for Ladd Chapin that was so briefly to the point and so fervently and pathetically pleading, that the three who knelt with him, felt as if the fountains of the great deep were being broken up.

"There," he said as he arose from his knees, "I know it's all right for Ladd, so I'll square away, and give him the signal of Land ho!" And he thumped his way to the door with Bob Flanger's hat still hanging down over his eyebrows like a shadowing helmet of strength from the invisible world.

"Excuse me, Father Taylor," said Don, "but you mustn't take Bob away from us."

"Well, I declare!" he exclaimed, lifting the hat from his head and looking at it with twinkling eyes. "I have been caught praying with three pairs of spectacles on my forehead, but you are the first to catch me praying with a hat on. The fact is, there is so much for me to do in this world that I cannot always stop to see whether my rigging is ship-shape or not. If you had not spoken I should have gone straight home with

that hat on my head, and my wife and daughters would have been thrown into spasms. They would have made more fuss over it than the Lord did while I was praying. The Lord seeth not as man seeth—nor as woman, either." He placed the hat upon its peg and then went thumping down the stairs with so much calm energy that the boarders peeped from their rooms to see what had happened.

"He is a grand old fellow!" exclaimed Bert, with enthusiasm. "That Lovejoy's D. D. ought to be taken away from him and given to Father Taylor."

"Pshaw!" sniffed Don, contemptuously. "Taking the D. D. from him would be like taking the clothes from Barnum's Living Skeleton; and giving them to Father Taylor would be like sticking a pair of goose-quills into the wings of the Angel Gabriel.

"But let's get to work. A visit from such a man as he is, is like a breath of good sea air; it puts life and energy into a fellow, and makes him feel like taking mountains by the ears. Professor Krasinski will be here to-morrow night, and our lessons must be recited without fault, for his commendations are worth having."

Nora was the first to close her book. Perhaps this was due not so much to the superiority of the feminine intellect as to the fact that French is so much easier to learn than Greek and Latin. She made no boasts of being in advance of them, yet she was impatient at their delay, for she was anxious to free her mind concerning Ladd's grievances and prospects. He was her schoolmate and she was well acquainted with the good reputation he bore among the teachers and his school companions.

"Is he really taken from that drunken father of his? and will he really be sent to Exeter Academy?" she anxiously asked.

"Be not faithless, but believing," said Bert, promptly, turn-

ing against her the weapon she was so fond of using against others. As soon as that rich lady hears that Don and Bob Flanger and Father Taylor are pushing him uphill, she'll join in the push with all her might. Don said, Exeter Academy, and that settles it. But won't Father Taylor enjoy showing that fifty-dollar bill to Ladd and telling him the news. I shouldn't mind being a minister myself if I could pray as he prayed here, and have my prayers backed up as his are. It would be better than being either rich or great. I shouldn't wonder if Don finally ended in a white choker."

"Father Taylor doesn't wear a white choker," said Don, quietly. "Neither does Theodore Parker, nor Edward Everett Hale, nor Starr King, nor Henry Ward Beecher," he continued, naming some of the eloquent men he had listened to. "But The Reverend John Paul Lovejoy, D. D., does," he added after a pause that was filled with bitter recollections. "And now that I come to think of it, I never saw my father wear a white choker. If I should ever get into the pulpit, I would rather have the whiteness in my heart than around my neck."

"But if I should ever marry a minister," said Nora positively, "I'd want him to wear a white tie; it looks so neat, cool and stylish, you know."

"Of course," interrupted Bert, sarcastically; "the females dote on the white choker, and I guess that's the principal reason why so many ministers wear them. But I'll bet you a dollar that neither Jesus nor the Apostles bothered themselves about white chokers and shad-belly coats and collars. When a minister has to advertise his calling by his clothes, it's a sign that he should join the circus or the theater, where they depend more upon advertisements than they do upon the Lord."

"You are just too awful for anything," said Nora, gathering up her books and leaving the room in a pout.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN A PREDICAMENT.

Professor Krasinski was a naturalist, but not of the kind that is satisfied with pressing a leaf in a herbarium and giving it a big name in a learned language. If he happened to be under apple blossoms in spring time, he would, as like as not, say to an apple twig: "Look here, my fine little fellow; you look very gay and sweet now, but very soon you'll have to shed your blossoms, those daintily scented and beautifully crimped pink gowns and white petticoats, and begin to think of something more solid. I know that a green, fuzzy little apple is not near so pretty as a blossom, but it's a deal more promising, and the blossom that isn't willing to make room for it by dropping out of the way, isn't worth the blooming."

In this same manner he studied boys in general, and Don in particular, watching every degree of development, and talking his thoughts aloud with the most companionable freedom and sympathy. He saw that Don's aims were becoming simplified. The boy's mind was shedding its pink and white petticoats. It was rounding out into the shape of the sphere—that simple form which is the symbol of solidity and completeness.

He and Don had been conversing about The Lady of The Lake Club, and it pleased him amazingly to hear Don go on, because he saw that the boy was beginning to laugh at the

theatrical clothes, the complicated ceremonies, the tremendous titles and the grandiloquent speeches of the secret conclave that used to meet on board of *The Lady of The Lake*.

To make his laugh all the merrier, he fell in with his mood and said: "Arnold Doane, your Grand Potentate, must have been a master joker as well as a master of ceremonies. I suppose he was trying to teach you how to make fun of the things that deserve to be ridiculed, wise old boy that he was. Since my arrival in this country I have joined six secret societies, for I desired to learn something about the undercurrents of American life. I may be wrong in saying it, but nevertheless I am of the opinion that several of the societies to which I belong are jokes, native-born, American jokes. The robes worn and the big titles assumed are doubtless intended to pour ridicule upon the dazzling trumpery of old world monarchies. It is possible, however, as I will admit, that they may also be intended to ridicule the savagery of the aboriginal inhabitants of this country—the Heap-Big-Indian with his Hole-In-The-Sky name, and his eagle feathers, his red and yellow paint decorations and all-night scalp and ghost dances. If they are not jokers, they must have a hankering after old world splendors and titles, and being afraid of democratic publicity, meet in secret to gratify their hankeringings.

"But, by the way, what became of your juvenile Grand Joker and his *Lady of The Lake Crew*? Are they still playing Little Bo-Peep under those theatrical clothes and big titles, or are they outgrowing such things?"

"Doane went to Australia to dig for gold, and the other Grand Fellowes are doing such common things as fishing, digging potatoes, chopping logs, carpentering and ship-building," Don replied, hardly knowing whether to laugh, or to look serious. "I was Keyman to the club, and I am now keyman

to the Vonberg cash box. I also wore the cap and bells at the club, and for aught I know I am wearing them still."

"Never speak lightly of the common callings of life, my lad," said Krasinski, earnestly. "Society couldn't stand upon its legs for a moment if it were not for the bones of the common callings. And never depreciate yourself. Self depreciation is the mildew of ambition and endeavor, and the bane of all success. It is not humility but only the mockery of it. How about that boy you have recently taken in charge?"

"Ladd Chapin is not in my charge," said Don. "I received a note from Mrs. Lydia Godwin requesting me to take him to her. She proved to be the lady who sent me fifty dollars to be disposed of at my discretion. Being a rich widow without children, she has adopted Ladd and will educate him. But although Mrs. Godwin is doing so well by Ladd, she is getting me into a sea of trouble."

"What kind of trouble?" asked the professor, solicitously.

"Tract trouble. She has laid out Salem street, and the streets adjoining, into a tract district and wants me to become her tract distributor. I told her I had no more piety than a cat. Yet, notwithstanding all my protestations, she insisted, and here I am with five hundred tracts on my hand which I have promised to distribute. Now what do you think of that for an adventure? I am to begin next Sunday by giving away one hundred."

"But you could have declined," said Krasinski, smiling in spite of his courtesy.

"Yes, of course I might, could, would or should have declined, but for all that, I didn't, you see. She had been so nobly generous to Ladd, I thought I ought to be willing to do something for her. But one should have a face and a voice to

fit the tracts. I have been looking over some of them, and the more I examine them, the more ridiculous I feel. If anyone should take one of those tracts and begin to converse about the contents, there would be nothing for me to do but to run for it. Let me try a dozen of them on you, professor, by way of getting my hand in. You can at least tell me what you think of them." And Don opened one of the packages and gave Krasinski an even dozen.

The professor received them as gingerly as if he were handling torpedoes. He was not used to this kind of spiritual ammunition. Still, as in courtesy bound, he began to look them over, but, as must be confessed, with the eye of a critic instead of the submission of one who takes everything for granted that passes under the name of religion. It required no great insight to discern that some of the leaflets were very good indeed, but that others of them were crude, if not coarse, and unimpressive if not positively ludicrous in their exaggerations. He rubbed his chin, scratched his head, and moved uneasily in his chair. He was able to speak in seven languages, but in the present instance was at a loss to express himself in any.

"Did Mrs. Godwin really give you five hundred of these tracts to distribute promiscuously?" he asked, finessing for time, in the hope that he should soon find words adequate to the emergency.

"Yes; five packages, one hundred in each package, as you can see for yourself," said Don, smiling, and placing the packages in a heap on one of the professor's knees. "And that is not the worst of it," he added, as Krasinski carefully returned the toppling pile to the table.

"What worse thing could a good woman do?" asked the

professor, in an almost tragic manner, and bending forward so as to meet the answer half way.

"She is a member of the Salem Street Congregational Church, of which Doctor Edward Beecher is the pastor. She gave me a note of introduction to him, and would not let me leave the house until I promised to go to him for further instructions about this tract business. Think of being sent to beard such a lion as that in his own den! Perhaps she has sent me there to be converted, when the fact is, I don't want to be converted—at least—not by any doctor of divinity."

At the mention of Doctor Beecher, Krasinski leaned back in his chair with a sigh of relief. He was too much of a gentleman to make light of sacred things, but as Don went on he had to bite his lips to prevent his mirth from getting the mastery of his breeding.

"I will go to the doctor with you," he said, as gravely as he could under the circumstances.

Don clapped his hands with delight, and exclaimed: "With you to back me, I shall not be afraid to meet a dozen D. D.s."

"The doctor is taking Hungarian lessons of me," continued the professor. "I have an appointment with him this evening, and you can go down with me. You may dismiss all fear of embarrassment in his presence. We are friends, and the fact that your pious Mrs. Godwin sends you to him gives me a good opinion of her discretion. There is method in her madness, and, as I begin to suspect, something that is better than method, even. It would do you no harm if you were to meet the whole Beecher family."

"The whole Beecher family!" exclaimed Don, appalled by the mere mention of such a thing. "Why there are eleven of

them, including Doctor Lyman Beecher, the father of them all."

"Yes, I know it; and I heard the grand old patriarch of the tribe preach at Cambridge last Sunday. They make a bright galaxy. I wish there were more such stars in the American firmament. Their light reached me even in Hungary. Since arriving here, I have become personally acquainted with six of the family, and I am charmed with every one of them, but with none more than with Edward, the Salem Street pastor, who puts me more and more in love with American institutions and people."

"I will consent to go there with you to-night if you think that he will help me out of this tract predicament," said Don, yielding to the professor's enthusiasm.

The doctor lived on one of the short streets leading out of Salem street. He received his visitors very cordially and conducted them into his study, which was such a wilderness of books and such a chaos of papers and odds and ends of every description, it was quite difficult to find a place to sit down.

"They say that confusion is a sign of genius," said the doctor laughingly, "but I can assure you there is no genius here, unless you have brought one with you." And he glanced smilingly at Krasinski, and from him to Don, who colored like a school girl, yet could not help smiling back at him.

"I am afraid that your Conflict of Ages is the cause of the confusion in your study," said Krasinski; and then turning to Don, he went on to say with a freedom that showed the terms he was on with the doctor: "Every Beecher has a hobby, and the doctor's hobby is that we lived in another world before we arrived in this, and that we are permitted to come that we may have a chance to correct the blunders we made before we came here. He calls his book *The Conflict of Ages*, and I believe

he is writing it to see how effectually he can get up a conflict among the ministers. By the time his fellow clergymen are done with his book there will be nothing but the covers left. He has read chapters of it to me, and I'm inclined to think that if these were Puritan times we'd see the doctor going up in smoke some dry burning day. He is a heretic, if there ever was one, but heresy is popular, and I suspect that the doctor is as fond of popularity as any of us."

"But if he gets the ministers down on him, how can he become popular?" asked Don in the innocence of his soul.

"Why, bless you, boy! Don't you know that the man who is unpopular with the ministers, is the man who becomes popular with the public?" said Krasinski, more than half seriously.

"You must not mind what the professor says," remarked the doctor somewhat gravely.

"No," assented Krasinski, and then added apologetically, "I have a pernicious habit of trying to make truth go further by dressing it in clothes that do not belong to it. And, to use a Yankee expression, 'I rather guess' I have contracted the habit since I came to America."

The doctor laughed heartily at the remark, and then went on to engage Don in conversation about some of his personal experiences of which he had read so much in the papers. Imperceptibly he approached the object of Don's visit. Evidently Mrs. Godwin, under cover of tract work, desired to send Don upon a sort of still hunt after the worthy poor and destitute of the district. She had great confidence in his insight and discretion, which she thought had been developed in a remarkable way by his own painful experiences. She proposed to have words and deeds walk together. Doctor Beecher understood her and had an enthusiastic admiration for her benevolence and wisdom. And such was the effect of his

representations upon Don that his objections to the tract business vanished.

"If that be her object," he said, earnestly, "I'll take five hundred more of those tracts, and agree to get rid of every one of them."

The doctor continuing, said: "Mrs. Godwin thinks she has such an awkward way of putting things, that the best course for her to pursue was to send you to me for explanations. She has a good deal more confidence in me than I have in myself."

"I am glad I came, for I have discovered that she is a jewel of a woman, and that you are a jewel of a preacher," said Don, impulsively.

"Did you ever hear me preach?" asked the doctor, drawing his face down.

"No; but I'll come the first chance I get."

"Better not, my boy; I am as dry as a broomstick."

"Well, I like broomsticks that have good sweepers at the end of them, especially when they get into the pulpit, where, according to my notions, there is a grand chance for pulling down cobwebs and getting rid of dust."

The doctor glanced at Don very gravely for a moment, and heaved a sigh, for cobwebs and dust, however sacred they might appear, were his particular aversion, and the greater part of his life had been spent in contending with them. But he thought it a strange coincidence that a mere boy should put the truth so patly.

"What do you think of that, professor?" he asked, turning to Krasinski, with a touch of pathos in his voice.

"Don't urge an answer," Krasinski replied evasively. "I am taking lessons that I must learn before I shall be prepared

to recite them. Please go on as if I were not here, or I shall feel as if I were intruding."

"Intruding!" exclaimed the doctor, deprecatingly. "Never use that word in connection with yourself again. You are one of the best brooms that ever came into this study. Cobwebs and dust recognize their deadliest foe whenever they see you. After your visits I am twice the broom I was before you came."

"But I have something else to say to your young friend. Mrs. Godwin has been the means of sending five promising ministers into the pulpit. She wishes, as she said to me, if possible, to make the number a round half dozen." And addressing Don directly, he continued: "She hopes that, by getting you engaged in the work she has laid out for you in her district, you will become her sixth preacher. She instructs me to say to you that if you will consider the matter, she will support you through college and through a seminary course."

Don blushed to the top of his forehead at the bare thought of ever entering a pulpit. There was a long pause, during which the good doctor rejoiced in his heart, for he thought it the prelude of consent and acceptance.

"May I speak my mind freely?" asked Don, with deep embarrassment.

"Certainly! What else are we here for, if not for free and honest speaking?" said the doctor forcibly.

"Mrs. Godwin must be a very noble woman," Don began, "and I am profoundly thankful to her for the interest she takes in me, and for the generous and lofty plans she is forming for my future usefulness. But she is entirely astray in her selection. Ministers should be selected from the flower of mankind. I have neither the piety nor the ability for the work she proposes."

"The bud that is enclosed in humility has great possibilities in it," said the doctor, encouragingly.

"There are already two ministers in our family," Don continued, "and others of the boys seem to have inclinations that run in the same direction. Even if I felt like becoming a preacher, I should be suspicious of the feeling, because I think it runs in the family blood."

"There are seven ministers in the Beecher family," interrupted the doctor. "And if our three girls had been born boys, doubtless they also would have gone into the pulpit. As it is, it is pretty hard to keep them out of it. You have hit a good-sized nail squarely on the head when you speak of blood tendencies leading to intrusions into the pulpit."

And while he paused, as if in deep thought, Don began again where the doctor had interrupted him. "From what I have seen of ministers," he said, "three-fourths of them appear to be mere broadcloth tramps driven around from pillar to post at the beck and bid of the worst and meanest members in the churches. And I have had enough of tramp-life already."

"There goes another nail!" exclaimed the doctor, who was too honest to send truth to the shambles.

"Besides," continued Don, growing more and more earnest as he went on, "if I were desirous of entering the ministry, I would never allow other people to pay my way in. If I could not pay my own expenses, I'd give the pulpit a wide berth. I have heard my father say that there is too much drumming for pulpit students, and that too many of those who are drummed into the schools and seminaries are altogether too willing to have their way paid by other people."

"Your father must be a wise man," remarked Doctor Beecher, "but even the wisest of men sometimes take extreme

views of things; and when the fathers eat unripe grapes, the children's teeth are apt to be set on edge. But it is evident that your convictions are not to be blown away by a mere breath of wind. I am free to acknowledge that it is better to be footfast than headlong."

Thinking that it was time for him to end his call, Don, after thanking the doctor for his interest in him, began to pick his way through the piles of books that, owing to the overflowing of the shelves, were stacked upon the floor. In spite of his care, he upset two tall piles that fell to the floor with a great noise. His apology for his awkwardness was interrupted by the good nature of the doctor, who laughingly said:

"Never mind the books. It's only the Apostolical Fathers and a lot of the commentators that you have upset. In one way and another they have been upset so many times that they must be quite used to it by this time. I presume that the authors of some of them, having learned wisdom in Heaven since their decease, would not be sorry if they were upset for good."

"With so many books around you, you must be a very wise man," said Don, diffidently.

"One may have many books and yet be wanting in wisdom," was the frank reply. "I sometimes think that I am only what Pope calls

'A bookish blockhead ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head'."

"Just before coming here," replied Don, "the professor gave me a short lecture on the evils of self depreciation; I hope that he will repeat it to you after I leave."

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CHAPTER XXV.

KEEPING A CONTRACT

One wintry Sunday morning Don awoke to find January in his room claiming a welcome on the ground of having just arrived from Nova Scotia. His approaches were resented and an effort was made to drive him out by kindling a fire under his very nose. Scratching a hole through the thick frost upon the window, Don saw a few of the taller chimneys trying to keep their mouths above the billows of a great white sea in which the lower ones had been completely submerged. Where the roofs of the buildings had been accustomed to show themselves there was nothing but wave on wave of silent crystals.

Boston had capitulated to a New England snowstorm of nearly four days duration. The very boys had cried for quarter and on Saturday had carried their sleds to the basements knowing that even Boston Common was unavailable for coasting.

The entrances to the city were hermetically sealed. The snow in the streets was piled to the level of the lower window sills, and the isolated vehicles on runners that ventured abroad showed such a strong tendency to tumble upon the sidewalks that pedestrians were few and far between.

The trees of the Common and the cemeteries cracked beneath their burdens, while the streets resounded with the noise of avalanches descending from the roofs.

The wind blew in terrific gusts, condensing the snowflakes

so compactly that they smote like particles of flint and rasped the exposed surfaces of the building like sandpaper. The cold crept into the houses with such insidious persistency that even living coals failed to emit heat sufficient to withstand it.

The hands of all the city clocks were frozen to their faces, and city time was as silent as the great wooden watches that marked where the time regulators wrought. Sextons, ministers and congregations were unanimous in their convictions for once, and not a single bell pealed the loud call to the usual denominational rendezvous. Nature had given the signal to the churches that for that day at least she intended to have the monopoly of singing and preaching, notwithstanding her voice was so untuneful and unwelcome.

The city was a whited sepulchre in which for the time being the people were buried alive. Thomson and Whittier have sung the poetic beauties of the snowstorm in the country, but on the Sunday we commemorate, two hundred thousand people, more or less, bitterly complained of the prosaic inconveniences of a snowstorm in the city.

After breakfast Bert, chilled to the bones and discontented to the soul, and covered with a quilt in addition to the warmest garments he could clothe himself in, went into Don's room and seated himself as near to the stove as he could get with safety.

"Ever see anything like this down in old Acadia?" he asked in a challenging way.

"No, I never did," said Don with proud concession. "Nova Scotia is so nearly surrounded with water that weather like this is next to impossible."

"Boston is nearly surrounded by water, too, but that doesn't seem to make any difference with the weather," Bert retorted.

"There is so little of it that it freezes up with everything

else, while the arms of the sea that surround Nova Scotia are so big and warm they never freeze," said Don, "and that is why the atmosphere there never becomes like the congealing stuff we are having here."

"Twenty-seven degrees below zero," groaned Bert, "and making a header for a still deeper plunge. The mercury will burst the bulb next thing we know and start South for a warmer country. We'll have lively times at the store to-morrow doing nothing but trying to keep our shins warm. But say, old fellow, what in time are you trying to do?"

Don had all the while been covering himself with a succession of garments. He now stood before Bert cased in a heavy overcoat with the fur collar turned up his neck, and a fur cap with earlets dropped to meet the collar. Bert was wrapped up like a mummy to make himself proof against the cold, and he supposed that Don was imitating his example preparatory to chumming with him in the vicinity of the stove. But when, in addition to gloving his hands, Don stuffed into his pocket tracts enough to physic a hundred sinners, Bert's surprise knew no bounds, and he again vented his emotions by a snapshot question.

"I promised to visit some of the back streets of my district to-day," Don said, smiling at Bert's almost querulous manner, "and promises should not be made unless there is an intention to keep them."

"This is downright madness! Why, the angels themselves would be excused from 'hovering around' on such a day as this!"

"Possibly; but I am not an angel, and I shall have small prospects of becoming one if I disappoint so good a woman as Mrs. Godwin."

"She will put you down for a goose instead of an angel if

she hears that you have been out in this Siberian temperature."

"I think not. She has money for the needy, who in such weather as this may be in their sorest trouble. So long as she is ready to give, I am ready to be her hand. Besides, I'll venture to say that Bob Flanger never let a snowstorm or a cold wind keep him from the rail when it was his turn to be on it."

He looked up at Bob's old hat so reverently that Bert became ashamed of himself and said: "You are right, Don; and if I had a drop of decent blood in my veins, or a single grain of heroism in my nature, I'd trail after you like a dog after his master."

"Where one is enough, two would be embarrassing. You can stay at home with a good conscience. But if I were in your place, I'd look out for the little mother as much as possible, and see that the fires are kept going for her. And if you were to encourage the boarders to patronize the coal bin to-day, they'd think none the less of you for it. It would warm their hearts, and that goes far toward warming the body. I happen to know that you three are popular with the boarders because they believe that you consider their comfort as well as their pockets; that is a reputation worth keeping up. I am happier in my attic with you than I could possibly be in a parlor with some people I know."

Nora, finding that the lower part of the house seemed like the interior of an iceberg, called for Bert just as Don was starting out. She was surprised to see Don armed cap-a-pie for a battle with the elements, but on being informed of his errand, was effusive in her pious commendations, especially of the tract part of his mission.

"You will be sure to catch people at home," she said, "and

it will give you such a good chance to talk to them about their souls."

"Their souls!" Don exclaimed, slightly impatient. "Those who do not know how to handle a gun are not apt to go hunting for big game. I know no more about shooting for souls than I do about hunting for elephants. Do you take me for a Father Taylor or a Doctor Beecher? I'm willing to scatter the tracts, but I wouldn't touch them with a ten foot pole if this business were to end with them. When Bob Flanger and Jake Cullum took me in among the roundhouse saints, they didn't say anything about my soul, yet when they went to work on my body, they touched the knocker of the front door of my soul. That's what I aim and hope to do by going out to-day."

Don escaped as soon as he could, and Nora went in and sat down with Bert, who, with a broad smile, said: "Mrs. Godwin and Doctor Beecher combined can't get Don into the pulpit."

Nora thought the pulpit the summit of all attainment. Her imagination kindled at the bare idea of seeing Don clerically clad, even to the white tie, swinging his arms in all the glory of sacred gesticulation and rolling out sentences in all the unctuousness of pious speech and intonation. She thought it would be just lovely to see him take his seat upon a pulpit sofa, or chair, and put his right elbow in his left hand and his right hand over his eyes with all the solemnity of ministerial dignity. Bert's declaration that Don would never go into the pulpit excited her indignation to such an extent that she roundly rebuked him for his hardness of heart and levity of speech.

But out of this hillside of conviction and from among the green herbage of religious sentiment so strongly predominant in Nora's marked character, came a pure purling spring of

maiden partiality for Don. It flowed so transparently and openly that Bert had no difficulty in recognizing it. Nora loved Don to a degree which startled her brother, and forthwith he resolved upon giving her something in return for what she had just given him.

So he gave her a good round lecture on Donology, the gist of which was that no girl of her immature age should allow herself to fall in love with a juvenile who was but a little older than herself. He pointedly reminded her that she was not living in India, where children are married at twelve, but in Boston, where people are not supposed to reach the high noon of love until they are twenty-five or thirty years of age."

"It isn't good sense," he went on to say, "for girls and boys to go a-cooing with one another wholesale before their pinfeathers begin to peep through the down of their pigeonhole. I don't mean to say," he went on with a very paternal air, "that either one of you has been imprudently affectionate, for although you and Don think so much of each other, you have not made fools of yourselves. But I do mean to say that in thinking of Don as a minister and wishing for him to be one, you are also thinking of yourself as a minister's wife and hoping to be one."

It was a cruel little lecture, but a wholesome one nevertheless. As for Don, Cupid played no tricks with him while on the streets; Boreas was holding him too sternly in hand for that. The snow blinded his eyes, the frost nipped his nose and froze his very eyelashes together. Tiring of dodging avalanches from the roofs, he took to the middle of the street, where he floundered about in great snowdrifts. Not a vehicle made its appearance, and he knew by the red and bloated faces of the few pedestrians who were abroad that only an all-consuming thirst for strong drink could have drawn them out in

such a storm. Seeing a white mound, out of which a shoulder was protruding, Don probed it and extracted a man in the last stages of intoxication. After working with him awhile, he succeeded in learning his residence, whither he conducted him with great difficulty, but only to be met by a virago of a woman who cursed her husband, and Don also, for not letting him lie where he had made his bed. Pitying the shivering children, of whom there were three, he endeavored to propitiate the mother in the hope of aiding them all. But her violence was so great he had no alternative but to leave the tumble-down den that served as a shelter to the wretched family.

Warm welcomes elsewhere partly compensated him for the untowardness of his first reception. Few were forward to ask assistance, while nearly all were anxious to further his aims, as well as willing to receive his leaflets.

Being informed that a family on the second floor of a tenement building was reported to be in distress, Don knocked at the designated door and by a voice within was curtly bidden to enter.

On going in he found himself in a room lighted by a single window thickly covered with the fantastic lacework of the frost. The floor was bare, and the furniture consisted of a few dilapidated chairs, a small table, on which were a few dishes, and beneath which were piled the utensils belonging to a large, much cracked cooking stove that was destitute of fire.

The occupants of this domestic desert had put on all the scanty personal wear they possessed, and in addition, in order to keep the breath of life in their bodies, had covered themselves in their beds, of which there were two. In one of these lay the parents and two small children, in the other, were three girls, ranging from six to thirteen. Of food there was not a crumb.

Astounded by a destitution the like of which he had never witnessed, Don expressed his sympathy and his desire to aid them.

At the mention of aid, there was a general stir in the two beds. The head of the family raised himself to an upright posture, but glancing at the tracts Don held in his right hand said, with the sarcastic bitterness of despair: "Tracts will hardly meet the requirements of people who are starving and freezing."

The frigid air was proof enough of the danger of freezing, and the emaciation of the faces that were in sight was frightfully significant of the nearness of starvation.

"I beg your pardon," said Don, thrusting the tracts into his pocket, "I forgot I had the tracts. The sight of them must be provoking to people who are in your condition. If you will lie down and keep as comfortable as you can, I will come back with fuel, food and raiment. I may be delayed because of the storm and the state of the streets, but you may count on relief for a certainty."

He had no sooner gone than there was a general outburst of hopeful chatter in that dark chaos of poverty and helplessness. The ragged shrouds stirred with something resembling animation.

"Will he really come back?" asked the smallest girl, who had been holding her hands in her armpits to keep them warm.

"Yes, Belle," replied Louise, the sister next in age, "didn't you see his face? It looked as if there was a soul behind it that never had a sham thought in it. He'll come back, never fear."

Had it not been Sunday, Don's course would have been clear to an immediate return from coal yard and grocery. As

it was, he went direct to Doctor Beecher as being the nearest available help.

In the absence of the usual Sunday services and partially inspired by the voices of the storm, the doctor was deeply absorbed in working out another chapter of his book on "The Conflict of Ages." He was brought down from his clouds by the appearance of Don in his hallway looking like an animated snowman. Notwithstanding the doctor was a master of words he knew the value of deeds. When Don had told his errand, Beecher immediately began to buzz like a bee which has spread his wings for business.

"You see that house on the other side of the street," he said, directly. "Well, go over there, and besides finding snow upon the street, you'll find snow upon the doorplate, and that's the name of my best deacon. Give him my compliments and your story and tell him to load up for duty. Then hurry over to Major Vonberg's house and tell him to ditto with coals, kindling and whatever else he can carry, for his daughter Dorothy has a handsled that she uses for coasting on Copp's Hill. Direct him to report to Deacon Snow in a hurry. Meanwhile I'll see what the preacher can muster. We'd call upon Mrs. Godwin, but she is too far away for our present purpose, and we will hold her as our reserve."

When they met in front of Deacon Snow's house, they were bundled up to the verge of suffocation. The doctor carried two big baskets, one packed with provisions, and the other with clothing. In his haste to find clothing, he jammed his best vest and trousers into the basket and didn't discover his error until the next Sunday morning, when he wanted them for pulpit wear. The deacon, big, florid and generous, also had a sledload of provisions and clothing. The major, puffing like a small engine, had coals, kindling, clothing and edibles

tied on by means of a clothesline which his servant girl looked for in vain during the next washing at his house. When they started, Vonberg tugged at the rope ahead, and Don pushed behind. Keeping to the inner side of the sidewalk, they escaped several avalanches that shot from roofs into the street; but when they reached Salem street, a snow cliff that was no respecter of persons, and that had been waiting for a chance to play a prank, slid from a steep roof and buried the whole party. When, unharmed, they began to wriggle out of the snow like angle worms out of the ground, they were assisted by a lone policeman, who by some miraculous activity of conscience was trying to patrol his beat. Seeing that nobody was hurt, and that nothing was lost, and finding that all four were having a merry time over their misfortune, he took the baskets of the doctor, whom he recognized as he did the rest, and directing him to hitch himself to Snow's sled as furnishing the easier task, he accompanied them on the way.

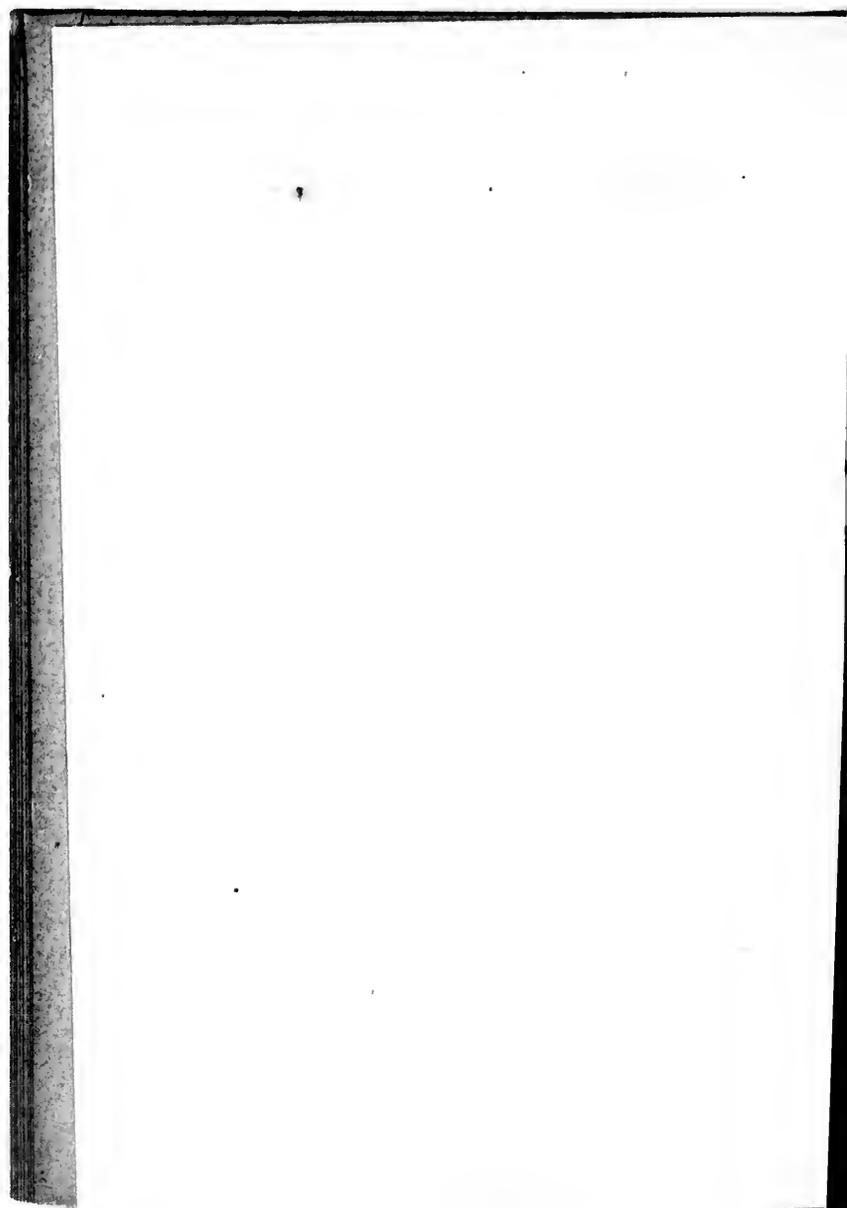
Although talking to the wind is generally regarded as a futile proceeding, the major was voluble in his addresses to the blast and at times charged against it as vociferously as if he were leading a charge against an enemy in Mexico. His broken orations were so quaintly amusing that after one of his most vehement outbursts the policeman, the deacon and the doctor sat down on a snow-cushioned house-stoop to recover from their mirth.

Don sat on a snowdrift for a like purpose, but suddenly recalling the scene of destitution he had witnessed, he said: "Gentlemen, while we are laughing, that family is starving and freezing."

"God forgive us!" exclaimed the doctor, taking hold of the sled rope again; "but then, after all, God knows that a good slice of our lightness of heart is owing to our being on the way

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to help them. A pint of helpfulness is more exhilarating than a puncheon of wine."

The noise made by their ascent of the stairs aroused the distressed family, and when the party entered, they stood in the room looking at the invaders with big-eyed wonder.

Don attacked the stove without ceremony. As the readiest means of starting a blaze under the kindling sticks, he set fire to the remainder of his tracts, saying as he did so, that he knew of no better use to which they could be put under the circumstances. Both the doctor and the deacon said, amen.

When the invasion was over and the family was left to itself, there was a thanksgiving that needed no governor's proclamation to make it valid.

Delavin, the head of the family, was an American ship carpenter, an industrious and sober mechanic, and foreman of his yard. Owing to the depression of the times and his inability to obtain other work, his savings gradually vanished until, driven from his originally comfortable home, even his furniture disappeared piece by piece to the pawnbrokers for subsistence.

They had been too proud spirited to ask for help, and had become so reduced that they were unable to continue their search for employment. With the means of existence and comfort now liberally yet judiciously supplied, their quarters were changed, their persons clothed, their bodies fed, and through the deacon and the major, Delavin found odd jobs sufficient to carry him through the remainder of the winter. Nor was he left to his own resources until amply able to provide for himself and family by turning his mechanical skill to the building of railway bridges, in which calling he soon became very favorably known.

Of all the distinguished men filling the Boston pulpits at that time, there was doubtless not one but would have been as

prompt as Doctor Beecher to go to the aid of the needy on that Sunday had he been called upon for such a work. The same conviction may be justly expressed concerning the leading officials of the churches, and very many business men. But there is no denying the dearth of Dons willing to search in the face of discomfort for the perishing who, for want of searching, suffer torments.

When Don returned and gave an account of his experiences, Bert grew discontented with himself. Nora, on the other hand, congratulated herself on having encouraged him to go forth, and, alas, for even sweet maidenhood, she, with an appreciable degree of self righteousness, credited herself in no small degree with the honor of his work.

There was an interesting sequel to Don's day's work that may be referred to hereafter.

CHAPTER XXVI.

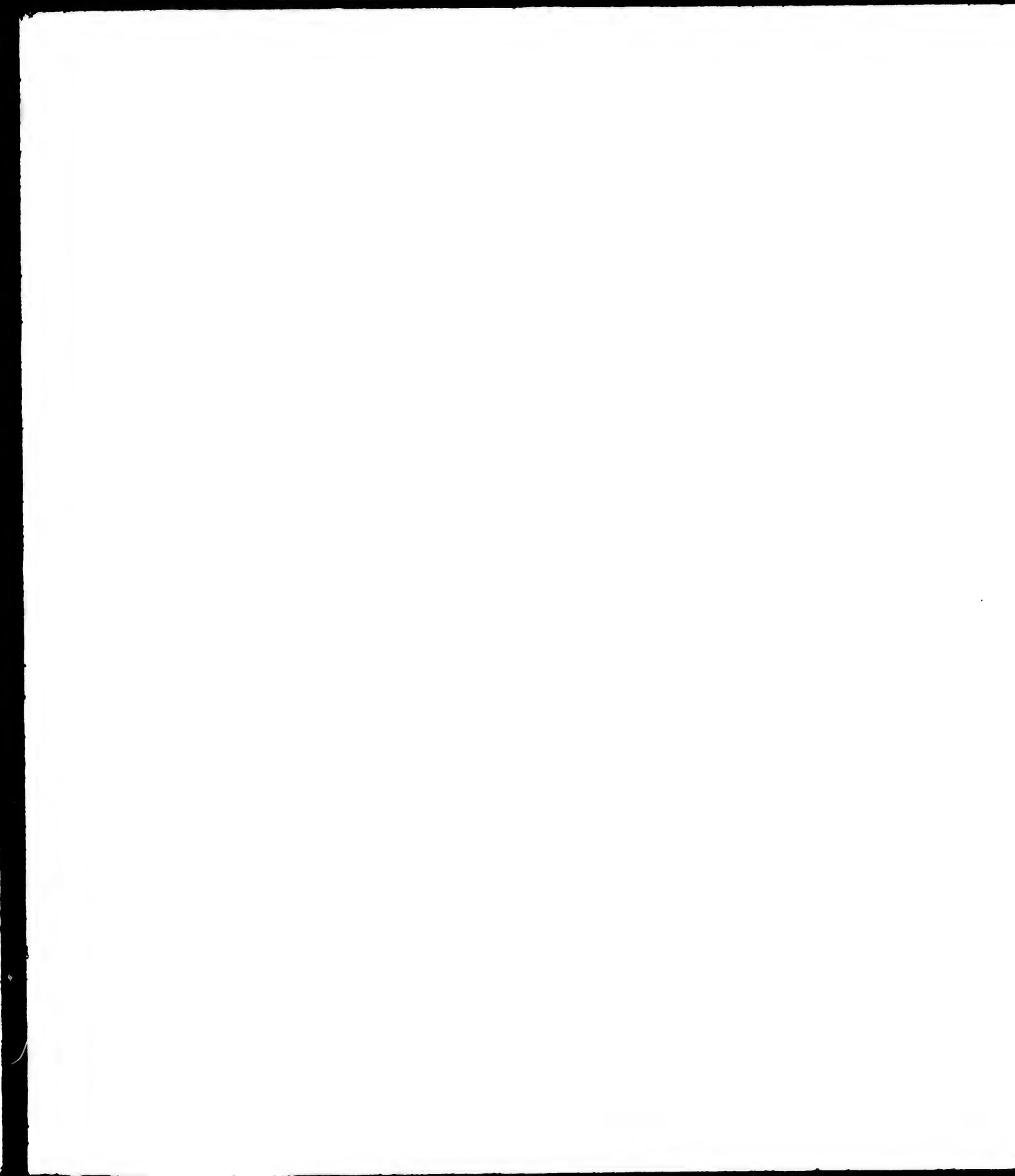
A FRUSTRATED THREAT.

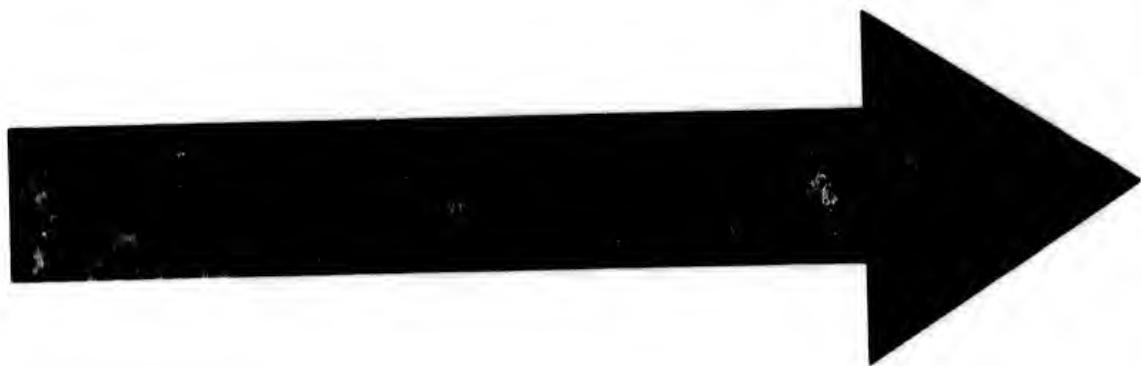
After their work was done, Deacon Snow insisted that his companions should dine with him. At the table a No Name Society was formed, which in course of time included seventeen others besides the four. Strange to relate, this society existed without constitution, rules, officers, annual meetings, reports or speechmakings. It simply said to Don: "Go ahead, and we will back you with all the money you need, and our personal efforts also, whenever you have a mind to order us to the pulling line."

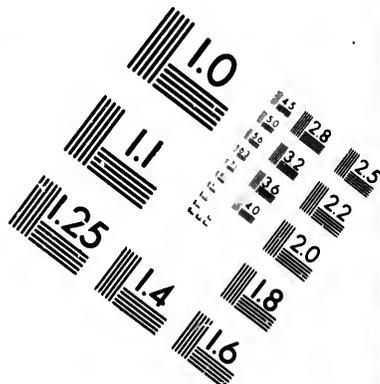
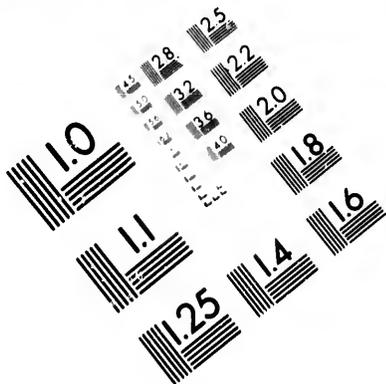
So far from proclaiming their doings upon the housetops or in the market places, or even at the altars of religion, they did not all know one another, much less what each one did to keep Don supplied with means. Nor did the papers become apprised of their doings until an untoward incident made them conspicuous.

Armed with another bundle of tracts supplied from Mrs. Godwin's pious store, Don went out one Sunday morning toward spring on a 'still hunt' for other necessitous cases. His bank trust fund was growing faster than was comfortable for his conscience. It was now eleven hundred dollars, and he was anxious that every dollar of it should be about its business.

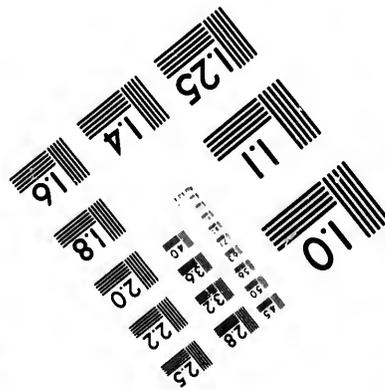
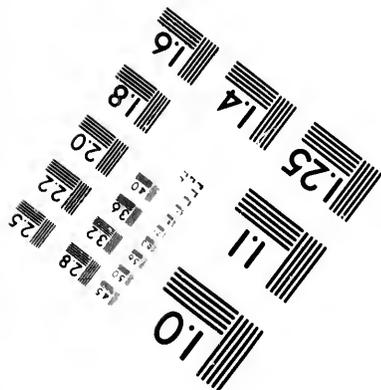
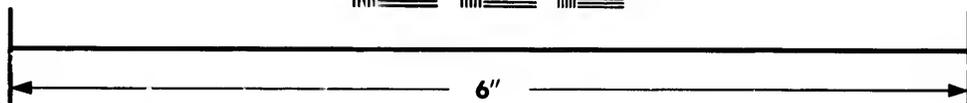
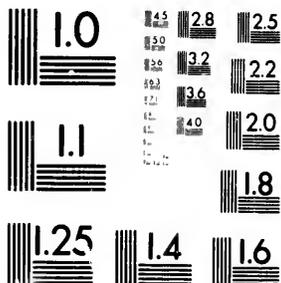
When evening came, Don did not return; this was cause for anxiety, for the Williamses knew of no intimate friend at whose house he would be likely to pass the night. But when







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day after day passed without tidings from him, alarm deepened into despair. Immediate measures were taken to obtain some hint of his fate, but without effect.

Instead of sympathizing with the general anxiety excited by Don's disappearance, Miss Agincourt, with a perversity, phenomenal for a woman, insinuated to the Vonbergs that he had appropriated the money he was known to have been the custodian of and had left for other fields. She even went so far as to intimate that if the Vonbergs were to examine their books they would find that he was a defalcator of their own funds. This so aroused Dorothy's indignation and the ire of the masculine Vonbergs that she was glad to make an excuse for leaving their house at the earliest possible moment.

After her departure, Mrs. Vonberg undertook to palliate her offense by pleading her lonely condition, and this stretch of charity induced the major to say in the best German he could command that his wife was never able to recognize the devil until his horns grew long enough to scrape the ceiling.

The reporter who had befriended Don at the first, and had steadfastly adhered to him through thick and thin, now urged the major to put an expert on his books in Don's defence. This was done with results that were anticipated by his friends. He called at North Square to obtain what information he could concerning Don's benevolent accumulations and expenditures. His private memorandum was found to contain a systematic account of all amounts received and expended, while his bank book showed that the balance called for by the memorandum had been deposited at the bank. A call at the bank elicited the fact that the money was on hand.

"Everything is as transparent as air, and as clean as sunlight," said the reporter to the major, "so far as his accounts are concerned. He has doubtless become the victim of foul

play. I have been in the district he was accustomed to visit on Sundays, but beyond the testimonies of a few families that saw him on the day of his disappearance, at a certain hour in certain places, I can gather nothing that would give a clew to his fate. A reward ought to be offered for tidings of him."

"That has already been decided upon," said Werner, "and we have just sent to the press an advertisement offering a reward of one thousand dollars in such a way as to cover all the requirements of the case. Besides this, we have sent for the best detective of New York to come to our assistance."

The press and the police, to whom Don was so well known, sympathetically furthered the effort to solve the mystery of his disappearance.

But Don was not dead, nor had he left the city.

When he went out on the Sunday he vanished from sight, he intended to extend his explorations to Endicott and Charlestown streets which, at that time included a neighborhood of doubtful repute. Those acquainted with the district alleged that it was a covert for sneak thieves and cracksmen, and criminals of a similar description. Don, however, knew nothing of this; he only saw that it was a shabby looking district, and he went into it thinking that beneath its surface he might happen upon some unfortunates that would be benefitted by his visit.

Discovering an open passage leading to the upper floors of a dilapidated brick building of large proportions, he addressed a neatly clad dark-complexioned man who stood at the foot of the stairs, and after handing him a leaflet, asked if he thought there would be any objections made to the distribution of similar-leaflets among the occupants of the building.

The man deliberately folded the tract and put it into the inner pocket of his overcoat. Fixing a keen, yet somewhat

furtive eye, upon Don, he said in words that were entirely out of keeping with the neatness of his appearance: "You are a pretty young kid to be round peddling holiness; but them what lives in this block needs all the pious pills you can chuck into 'em. Go right up and let 'em have it. They'll guy you a bit, but I 'spose you're used to that sort of thing."

On the first two floors the occupants seemed to be so astonished by his presence that they were speechless when the leaflets were offered. Some accepted them and others simply closed the door against him. In one place he was greeted with a string of oaths that were as original as they were wicked.

On knocking at a door on the upper floor, which had but one occupied quarter, he was ushered into a room containing two men and one woman. The men were playing cards, but the instant he was inside, they greeted him with oaths, and, rising, approached him menacingly. Now that they faced him, Don recognized them as the brothers of one of the men sentenced to the penitentiary for robbing the Vonberg house. Both were at the trial at which their brother was condemned, and as Don left the court room, one of them hissed into his ear: "We'll do you up for this."

Instinctively realizing that he was in danger, Don backed toward the door, but before he could make his escape he was knocked senseless to the floor by a sandbag in the hands of one of the ruffians. When he regained consciousness, he found himself bound hand and foot, and gagged, and sore from head to feet from the kicks they had given after he fell. The room was so dark he could form no idea of either its dimensions or its appearance. He had no means of judging how long he had been there, and besides, he was in such a weak condition that when he attempted to shift his position by rolling over on his side, he relapsed into unconsciousness.

After knocking their victim down and gratifying their revengeful feelings by kicking him severely, the men robbed him of his watch and money. Believing that he was fatally injured, they removed him to a large dark closet, where they intended to leave him until night, at which time they proposed to remove him to a back alley and leave him to his fate.

On Saturday evening Don had written a note to Doctor Beecher in which he stated the amount he had in the bank to the credit of his trust fund account, and expressed his desire to expend it more rapidly than he was doing. This note was on Don's person, and fell into the hands of his assailants. It excited their cupidity and prompted them to hold Don as a prisoner until such times as they could arrange plans by which the money in bank could be gotten into their possession. Removing the gag and giving him food sufficient to keep him alive and keeping guard over him with unceasing vigilance, they tried to work upon his fears, but to no purpose. He assured them that they might as well kill him at once, for the money was beyond their reach, and would remain so. If he were to promise to give it up, the circumstances of his disappearance were so well known at the bank that any attempt to transfer the amount would inevitably lead to the detection and arrest of the men.

They realized the cogency of his arguments and were about to abandon their plan and kill him outright, when a new turn was given to their thoughts by the appearance of the advertisement, offering the reward for Don or for any information that would determine his fate. They now proposed to work for the reward and tried to starve Don into submission to their plans.

So intent were they upon the execution of their villainy

that it would have fared hard with Don but for an interposition from an unexpected source.

Rudd Debolt, the man to whom Don addressed himself at the entrance of the building on the morning of his disappearance, was a notorious cracksman, who had just been liberated from the penitentiary after serving ten years for burglarizing a safe in a store. When Don met him he stood in the doorway deliberating upon his future course. The tract Don gave him consisted of extracts from a sermon delivered by Edward Everett Hale, then young and very popular in Boston. Krasinski showed the sermon to Don and with such unqualified approval that the two published the extracts in a leaflet form for use in Don's work. The title was *The Better Life*, and the words were characterized by both the eloquence and the common sense of the young preacher.

When Debolt read the leaflet it made him a changed man, and notwithstanding the difficulties in his way, he determined to make a struggle for the better life. Both Don's face and manner had accentuated the tract.

When, in connection with the reward the papers described Don, the burglar immediately recognized the description. He remembered that he saw Don go up the stairs of the building on the second floor of which he himself had a room. He was struck by the fact, so explicitly brought out by the press, that Don was last seen on Endicott street, and he determined, if possible to, to penetrate the mystery of his disappearance, and to restore him to his friends.

Debolt was expert in reading the thoughts of the class to which he had heretofore belonged. He was quick to perceive that the Bedling brothers—the men who captured Don—had something unusual upon their minds. Making himself more than ordinarily familiar with them, he wormed himself into

their confidence, and very soon, after obtaining their secret, became an apparent confederate in their conspiracy, thus learning where and how Don was confined. Having attained his object, the police were informed, and when the building was surrounded by an adequate force, Don was discovered in the condition described by the ex-burglar, the criminals having been captured at the outset.

Don had been a captive for fourteen days, and was so emaciated that he was but the shadow of his former self. Vonberg, who had bewailed him as dead, was greatly desirous of removing him to his own house for care and medical treatment, but, as was natural, Don preferred to be taken to his old quarters and to the companionship of the widow's family.

Happily he was not so much injured as was at first feared, and his recovery was so rapid that in six days he was able to return to his duties.

Don's abductors were speedily sent to keep company with the two criminals he had so accidentally discovered on Copp's Hill.

It was one of the curious effects of this series of incidents that the vicious classes of that part of the city became superstitiously afraid of Don and avoided the very mention of his name lest it should cast an unlucky spell upon them. If any of them happened to see him on the street in the vicinity of their haunts, they fled from him lest a look from him should send them to prison.

The building where Don was held captive was discovered by the police authorities to be the nesting place of some of the most notorious criminals of the city. The eminently respectable member of society who had drawn a portion of his wealth from the rentals of the building became so ashamed of the notoriety he attained through the publication of the facts, that

he demolished the structure and on its site constructed a tenement house that would bear the scrutiny of civilized people.

"Now, Master Don," said Bert one evening in the presence of Nora, "you have won scars enough to last for the remainder of your natural life, and you ought to turn over this tract business and this running around after poor people to some of the societies and their agents."

"Yes," assented Nora, who had suffered unspeakably on Don's account, and who, at the moment forgot to be consistent with herself, "let the societies do this work. You have done more than your share of it."

But Don, who was neither dismayed by his experiences nor diverted from his purpose, said: "There is already too much societyism and officialism in caring for the neglected and the unfortunate. When people are wrecked, they want a rescue rope and not a piece of red tape. I shall stick to our No Name way of working; and all the closer, now that I have Debolt to help me. He has become a host in himself."

At the mention of Debolt, both Bert and Nora grew less confident as to the righteousness of their motives in trying to dissuade Don from continuing his Sunday work.

There was good reason for mentioning Debolt in such high and confiding terms. He was entitled to the reward offered for Don, but refused to accept it. This is what he said in explanation:

"That lad gave me that tract at the very moment I was debating my future course in my own mind. When one is just from the penitentiary one's prospects are not very promising. Nor is this to be wondered at. Bad wheat is apt to make bad flour. Those who are bad enough to be sent to the penitentiary come out no better than they were when they were sent in. There may be exceptions, but they are few.

Still if others were met as I was met, they might be induced to do as I have done.

"My first step in the better life was my determination to find Don if he was alive, or to get at the secret of his disappearance if he were dead. I took my success in finding him alive as a sign that I was to be successful in my efforts to be a different man. I never thought of the reward for a single moment; indeed, I forgot that it was offered.

"If I were to accept it, people would say that I found the boy for the sake of the money, and I should also be liable to the suspicion that I had been a party to his disappearance. I sought him for his own sake, and also because I felt that in some way my life was bound up in his.

"Do what you please with the reward. All that I ask is that I may find employment that will enable me to live an honest life, and that I may be allowed to accompany the lad on his Sunday trips among the waste places of the city as a guard and helper."

The major, who, with his sons, had offered the greater part of the reward, decided to set the money apart for relief work. He was so strongly moved by Debolt's plea that he made him foreman of his packing department, where he proved handy and faithful, and all the more so because he was in constant contact with his young friend.

Debolt now invariably accompanied Don on his Sunday tours among the needy and neglected. He had a peculiar tact for approaching people who were inclined to be suspicious of efforts made for their elevation. He was a good singer and ready and apt in speaking. Encouraged by Don, he started 'Betterment Meetings' in various localities and gave 'Break Lock Talks' that brought him into notice all over the city. Don listened to him with an amazement bordering on awe, and

received impressions from his words that sank very deeply into his life.

So many were affected by Debolt's 'New Life' stories that it soon became a question as to what should be done with those who had determined to imitate his New Life example.

"Organize a mission," said some; and even before any plan was formed for such a purpose, some began to strain their inventive powers for a suitable name for such an undertaking. There were almost rancorous disputes as to whether it should be called The Bethel Mission, or the Bethesda; the Bartimeus Mission or the Magdalene. Two or three wealthy people offered to furnish large sums of money toward the proposed enterprise, provided the mission should be named after selected members of their families. One, especially, a gentleman who had made a fortune by manufacturing beer, offered ten thousand dollars if they would name the mission The Elizabeth Chapel, after a deceased daughter.

Neither Don nor Debolt sympathized with any plan that proposed to tag the sheep of the fold with discriminating distinctions. There were churches enough in the vicinity to furnish accommodations for all who were in earnest. There was no scriptural precedent for tagging some sheep as having fine wool and others as having coarse wool, and separating the one class from the other class as if, instead of being sheep and—sheep, they were sheep—and goats.

Deacon Snow aided and abetted by his robust pastor, said: "Fetch them along; the faster the better. We have nothing that is too good for them. Converted sinners, like Debolt, may be the means of converting some of our saints and causing them to see the error of their fastidious ways. No church should be a mere starch manufactory."

CHAPTER XXVII.

AN ELOPEMENT.

The Lady of The Lake Club continued its existence, though now not one of the original members was in attendance upon its frequent sessions. The roster of the constituent members still occupied the place of honor on the walls. The list, made out in the beautiful handwriting of Arnold Doane, and carefully framed and glazed, and running with elaborately ornamented titles from the Grand Potentate down to the Grand Keyman, was as reverently regarded as if it were a patent of nobility to which the later members owed both their importance and their inspiration.

Peter Piper had no home of his own, but being in great repute among the boys as a man who had no end of veteran yarns to recite, they built him a cuddy on The Lady of The Lake and placed him in charge of all the belongings of the club, furnishing him with the requisite amount of food to keep the breath of life in him, and a small gratuity besides.

Peter was proud of his office, and conscientiously lessened the expense of his keep by making independent additions to his larder. A hook cast overboard brought him fish, recourse to the shore supplied him with clams, search among the shore rocks gave him lobsters, and, as he was handy with his gun, there were wild ducks that could be had for the shooting.

He had but a single daily companion, and that was a large red squirrel, which he had captured in the days of its infancy

and trained to obey his behests, listen to his conversation and amuse his lone hours. The squirrel generally perched on Peter's shoulder in demure sobriety while the Scot was reading his Bible, and for want of a tree ran up and down his legs and played hide-and-go-seek among his garments when liberties of that kind were permitted. When Peter talked, the squirrel having discovered that he conversed more for the sake of listening to himself than he did for the benefit of his company, chattered irrelevantly back again in a language which had descended to it from the woods.

As a stimulus to memory, Peter called the squirrel Don, and when it was too pranky for profit, he gave it lessons in gravity with as much earnestness as though he were addressing Air Castle Don himself.

He kept Don supplied with leaves for his bed, nuts for his chops, salt for his tongue, and any amount of liberty for his recreation. Thankful for the ease of his old age, he not infrequently said to the squirrel: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. See Psalm thirty-seven and twenty-five."

It was against Peter's principle to do any work upon the Sabbath day; hence he never rowed ashore to attend church. The touch of the oars would have been a breach of the commandments. But he did not go without preaching. He held services on board, and having heard so many sermons during his life-time that were not according to his notions of what they should have been, he preached from the same texts so as to suit himself, and never failed to complete the service by praying prayers of Scottish length, and singing Scotch versions of the psalms without abbreviation.

At such times the squirrel availed himself of his liberty, and, curling himself up in his leafy bed, slept through the whole

performances of his revered master. That squirrel distinguished times and seasons; for when the club was on board he was all life; he climbed legs with impunity, and stationed himself on the shoulder of The Grand Potentate whenever he desired to watch the proceedings of the august body.

The Lady of The Lake became enamoured of Peter Piper, and fearing lest some untoward event should separate her from him, she determined to elope with him. Consulting her "next best friend," the Wind, she arranged her programme according to his suggestions.

On Saturday night Peter went to bed and slept the sleep of the just; but when he awoke in the morning her Ladyship was dancing with a recklessness that made him think he was dreaming with his eyes open. The squirrel, terrified by the unwonted movements of The Lady, crouched on the Scotchman's breast and worked its jaws to express its discontent.

Becoming conscious of his presence, Peter said: "Donny, are my senses leavin' me? Or is the de'il really rockin' us on the holy Sabbath day?"

He dressed himself and cautiously ascended to the deck. The air was clear, and a flood of sunrise-light reddened sea and sky. A faint purple streak in the far distance was the only sign of land. In the early part of the night a sudden squall of unusual violence had broken the Lady from her moorings, carried her out toward the mouth of the harbor and then left her to herself. The outgoing tide carried her into the open waters of the Bay of Fundy, where, with a wind off shore, she was drifting further and further to sea.

Peter was not long in guessing what had happened; the fragment of chain hanging from the bow, and the confusion of things on deck told the story. Nor was he slow to discover

the predicament he was in, nor long in making up his mind what to do.

"Sin' I canna help mysel' I'll gae below an get my breakfast," he said, resignedly. "What is to be, will be. Gin the Lord is gaein' to bury me at sea wi' the vessel for a coffin to save the expense o' a funeral on lan', he'll not begrudge me the eatin' o' the things I hae for breakfast."

He went below and prepared his meal with his accustomed care, and ate it with his usual relish. Donny accupied a place at the bottom of the table and followed his master's example, by eating his morning allowance of two nuts and as much corn cake as he chose to indulge in. After breakfast, Peter read a chapter of the Bible, quaveringly sang a section of the metrical Psalms and devoutly prayed a long prayer. Promptly, when the club clock indicated the usual hour of Sabbath worship, he solemnly placed himself in The Grand Potentate's chair of office behind the stand, and resolutely performed all the parts of a regular service, while Donny rolled himself into a ball and somnolently enjoyed his ease in one of the club chairs. Not until the self-appointed minister ceased his droning, did the squirrel begin to show signs of life again. Then he went to his master and sought to climb to his shoulder in his habitually gambling manner.

"It isna fit ye should be sae blithe upo' this day," said Peter, rebukingly; "it's not only the Sabbath day, but a day o' affliction an' woe besides. Gae to yor nest an' leave me to my sorrow." There was something hindering in his voice, as Donny was quick to discern, but inasmuch as the master offered no violent opposition, he cautiously continued his climbing till he reached the shoulder where he stood up and industriously set his pelt in order. Peter affected to ignore his presence, yet all the while was glad of his company.

The day passed drearily with no sail in sight to afford a hope of rescue. At night, as there was only a moderate breeze, and no sea to speak of, and as the sky was clear, Peter went below and slept till morning, for he had trustingly said: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

The next morning was calm and foggy. A schooner bound from Halifax to Boston lay in the mist flapping her soggy sails in monotonous idleness. Presently every ear caught a strange sound.

"What in the world can that be?" exclaimed the captain to his first mate. "It sounds like some one trying to settle a swarm of bees by beating on a big tin pan."

"It's a tin pan fast enough," said the mate, as the noise increased in vehemence; "and I guess some skipper has lost his fog-horn overboard and is using a tin pan for a fog signal."

Presently a light in the mist disclosed the *Lady of The Lake* not more than a dozen lengths distant. A bleached, sailless vessel with only a white-headed old man on board beating a tin pan with the energy of a drummer, was not a sight to reassure the superstitious, and the common sailors on the *Lucy Ann* were nearly paralyzed with fear at the appearance of the apparently spectral schooner.

"What do you make of her, Legget?" asked the captain, addressing his first mate, in an awe-stricken voice.

"I guess it's the old man of the sea," said the mate, laughing irreverently. "But rather than run the risk of neglecting some one in distress, I reckon we'd better lower a boat and board the craft. That old chap is making too much of a hullabaloo with that pan to be a regular fore-an'aft-ghost."

The mate had no sooner reached the deck than Peter, after

shaking hands with him in a very flesh-and-blood manner said loquaciously: "The Lord be praised for his mercy to an old sinner. I heard the floppin' o' your sails, an' I said, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' See Hebrews second and third. I believed ye'd bin sent to deliver me frae the sea, but wi' a' my might an' main I tried to make ye know where I was by poundin' the pan. 'Faith without works is dead,' ye ken. See James second and twentieth."

The sailor, who accompanied the mate, on hearing this kind of speech, increased the distance between himself and Peter, under the impression that he was a raving lunatic.

The mate, however, had met Scotchmen before, and several times in his life had run against that particular type of Scot that makes a Bible concordance of himself. Besides, having a sly vein of humor, he thought he detected something of the same kind sneaking under cover of the old man's piety. He was confirmed in his suspicions when, on venting his mirth, Peter laughed back at him in the sanest way imaginable, and by way of forestalling enquiries, said:

"My name is Peter Piper, but I'm sometimes ca'd Peter Pickles, or Peter Pepper, or Piping Peter, or Peter-Peter Punkin-eater, accordin' to the workin' o' the wickedness o' them that speak." And then, to the great amusement of the mate, he went on to explain how he happened to be in such a plight. "Ye'll ken the truth better gin ye'll go below an' take a luik at our insides," he added at the end.

The long room extending from stem to stern, the pompous desk, and plain chairs; the cooking and eating arrangements, the moose-horn chandelier and tangle of other curiosities; the ornamental roster and the pictures upon the walls, the long table and numerous books; and, above all, the grotesque assortment of theatrical garments and equipments hanging at

the far end of the room amazed Legget and appalled his more superstitious shipmate.

The latter was more and more inclined to believe that The Lady of The Lake and all her belongings boded no good to any one who had the misfortune to be on board of her. Whilst he was debating matters in his own mind, Donny, unnoticed by him, came up behind, and, rejoicing in the addition to the cabin company, gave a spring and ran up the sailor's body till he reached the shoulder. The man was so terrified that he uttered a shriek and started for the companionway; nor did he stop till rowing back to the Lucy Ann he informed the captain that the devil and all his imps had possession of the strange craft.

After berating the man for his cowardice, the captain, taking with him a less superstitious sailor, boarded The Lady of The Lake to investigate matters for himself. Legget was not aware of the flight of his shipmate until he saw the captain and the new man descending the companionway.

The explanations that followed, although unavoidably complicated, eventually ended in an outburst of mirth, in which Peter joined without restraint.

After making an examination of the vessel, the captain took her in tow for Boston. She was to all intents and purposes a derelict, and whatever she might be sold for, would be clear gain for the trip of The Lucy Ann.

Peter remained on board and spent the time between meals and prayers in making a cage for Donny, whose fortunes he considered as linked to his own, and whose future he intended to take care of to the best of his ability. He had sailed into Boston several times in the course of his life, though under far different circumstances. There were seven pieces of gold sewed up in his clothes and having boarded at the Mariners'

Home several times he resolved to go there with the squirrel until such times as he could decide upon his course. He knew the number of Don's place of business and treasured it in his memory as scrupulously as he did the chapter and verse of the fragments of sacred writ with which he was in the habit of interlarding his conversation.

One morning as Don was absorbed in his ledgers, all unmindful of what was going on around him, a voice at his elbow suddenly said: "The Lord be between thee and me forever.' See first Samuel, twentieth chapter, twenty-third verse."

There was no mistaking the voice, nor the well-known peculiarity, much less the person, of Peter who, hat in hand, stood with beaming face waiting for the recognition that he knew would be warmly given.

"In the name of all goodness, Peter Piper, how did you get here?" Don exclaimed, taking the old Scot by the hand and giving him a country grip and shake.

"I cam' the greater part o' the way on The Lady of The Lake; an' for the rest o' the distance, which was not great, I cam' on my ain unnerstandin's. An' I'm sae daft to see ye I'd be willin' to larn the names o' a' the descendents o' Shem, Ham an' Japhet gin ye were to require it at my hands."

"I am so glad myself that I'll excuse you from that tough task. But you do not really mean to tell me that The Lady of The Lake has gone into the salt water business again?"

"Na, not exactly; but summat so, nevertheless; forasmuch as I'm here, she fetcht me a' the way frae Barrington to Boston. Ye'll ken a' about it gin ye'll read the marnin' papers which I hae brought wi' me. 'In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' See Matthew, eighteen and sixteen."

Don laughed, for ordinarily Peter inveighed against the secular press as the abomination of desolation spoken of in Scripture, and this citation of papers as evidence of truth was something new. There was, however, this reason for the change in his sentiments. Nearly all the details published in the morning papers concerning the arrival of The Lady of The Lake were furnished to the reporters by Peter himself. The account included Don's appearance as Grand Keyman upon the roll of the mysterious club, as well as Peter's singular experience in being blown to sea without any volitions of his own. Having furnished the information, and much of it having personal reference to himself, Peter waived his scruples and purchased a copy of every morning paper in the city for future reference. He now laid them before Don as the infallible means of securing the knowledge he was so much interested in. The morning papers were already in the office, but as yet had not been scanned.

Don read the accounts eagerly, and experienced some curious feelings when one of the reporters observed: "The arrival of the weird little craft in the city where Don Donalds, its former Grand Keyman, has become so well known, is a coincidence that eclipses the inventions of fiction."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A BREATHING SPELL.

Although Peter was always cleanly in his habits, he was not particular as to the fashion of his garments which, when he appeared before Don were a medley of patches and colors. Don found it difficult to convince him that his wardrobe should be changed to suit the latitude of Boston. When, however, he gave him a suit of Scotch tweeds his natural prejudices against the vanities of the world yielded to his national pride, and he came out of the dressing room looking a score of years younger than when he went in.

In the early evening, accompanied by Bert and guided by Peter, Don boarded the derelict which lay alongside the Lucy Ann at the head of Long Wharf. The first thing he did on entering the cabin was to sit down in The Grand Potentate's chair of office and give himself up to the feelings of mingled sadness and satisfaction that came upon him like a flood.

"The things we once ran after are difficult to run away from," he said to Bert, musingly. "In one form or another they come back into our lives so vividly that the past seems to be far more real than the present. I wonder if the future will fill up as fast with the ghosts of the present, as the present does with the ghosts of the past."

In explanation of both his meaning and his sentiments he went on and gave the history of the principal objects in the cabin and of their association with episodes in his boyish life.

Bert listened to him with keen curiosity, but the grizzly old Peter listened with a sympathy quickened and deepened by the recollections of his own far-away boyhood. And then, thinking of his interviews with Sir Walter Scott upon "The brown hillside" he suddenly bethought him of the words he had quoted to Don under the apple blossoms, when he found him poring over the great romancist's air castles. He remembered the remainder of the quotation and with his heart expanding toward the lads before him, he suddenly startled them by pathetically reciting these words in unbroken English:

"Ah, happy boys! such feelings pure,
 They will not, cannot, long endure;
 Condemned to stem the world's rude tide,
 You may not linger by the side;
 For Fate shall thrust you from the shore,
 And passion ply the sail and oar.
 Yet cherish the remembrance still,
 Of the lone mountain and the rill;
 For trust, dear boys, the time will come,
 When fiercer transport shall be dumb,
 And you will think right frequently,
 But, well, I hope, without a sigh,
 On the free hours that we have spent
 Together on the brown hill's bert."

Don was affected almost to tears by the words and no less by Peter's manner in reciting them, while Bert, choking with undefinable emotions, to relieve himself, turned and stood before Barry's painting of the frightened purser of the man-of-war, referred to in the earlier pages of this narrative. Don explained the picture but, although the story of *The Cemetery Ghosts of Port Latour* was so amusing, in itself considered, it somehow forced him to keep in mind the other kind of ghosts he had just been thinking of so pensively, and which had been so vividly reinforced by Peter's quotation.

At this moment Wilhelm and Werner Vonberg descended the companionway, followed by the captain and owner of The Lucy Ann. The brothers having become greatly interested in the story of The Lady of The Lake given in the papers, and supplemented by Don and Peter's accounts during the earlier part of the day, had agreed to meet Don on board in the evening.

Like their namesakes in Goethe's great story of Wilhelm Meister, they had a taste for art and immediately became absorbed in Barry's painting, which, instead of having been carelessly executed because designed for boys, was painted with the characteristic skill of that famous artist, whose name was not unfamiliar to the Vonberg brothers.

The young men were also amateur sailors, passionately fond of the sea and sea sports, and their vacations were invariably spent in the vicinity of or upon the sea. The origin, history, size and shape of The Lady of The Lake appealed so strongly to their fancy that, on learning that the captain proposed to sell her with all her belongings, including the picture, for four hundred dollars, they gave him a check for that amount. They said to Don afterward that they would willingly have paid that sum for the picture alone, and that if they so desired they could sell it at a price far in advance of that amount.

The vessel was sent to dock and on being thoroughly inspected, was discovered to be in a much better condition than was imagined, having been built of selected oak throughout. In less than a month she was again afloat, copper bottomed and so transformed inside and out that she was the admiration of all who saw her. The rake of her new masts, the set of her sails, the completeness of her rigging, the curve of her lines, the beauty of her figure-head, the sharpness of her cutwater all

combined to give her the "saucy" appearance which sailors delight to recognize.

Barry's picture occupied the place of honor in the cabin, and everything of the former furnishings that could be utilized for oddity or convenience was retained. Even the roster of the old club was reframed and glazed and hung where its elaborate penmanship and mighty titles could be seen to the best advantage.

The vacation season was now at hand, and the Vonberg brothers were keenly anticipating what they called their annual breathing spell, and all the more keenly, because in preparing for their own pleasure they had intended to share it with others.

When "Old Glory" was flung to the breeze announcing that The Lady of The Lake was ready to begin her voyage along the coast, she had the following persons on board: For Captain and Sailing Master, Abner Small, an experienced sailor and coaster; for Mate, Wilhelm Vonberg; for Sailors before the Mast, Werner Vonberg and Don Donalds; for Landlubber and Roustabout, Bert Williams; for Steward and Cook, Peter Piper, with his squirrel; and for passengers and guests, Dorothy Vonberg and Nora Williams, two canaries and a maltese kitten.

When The Lady went down the harbor before a fair breeze with all sails set, and with everybody on deck, Don, who could not conceal his happiness, said to Piper: "Well, Peter, what do you think of this for a shakeup and a turnabout?"

"I hae been thinkin' o' my sins an' transgressions," said he, contritely. And then he added significantly by way of explanation: "I hae been a murmerin' piper a' my days, an' pickled peppers hae been my diet frae marnin' till night, an' frae January to July. The past hae been my god, an' the present my fear an' torment. To-day I'm that happy I feel sorry for my

sins. For why? The sound o' the waters an' the voice o' the wind are sayin' in my ears, 'Say not thou, what is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.' See Ecclesiastes, seven and ten."

"That is a confession which ought to clear your soul," said Don, smiling responsively at the grim humor with which the Scot chastised himself.

When The Lady made the offing and laid her course across the bay for Cape Cod, the rougher water drove Nora below laboring under sensations she had never experienced before.

"It is only sea sickness, my dear," said Dorothy, who, having been on the water many times before, was not affected. "It will not last long—a day perhaps, and then you will be as well salted as I am."

There are no consolations that can reach a seasick person, and Nora felt as if Dorothy's "only" was adding insult to injury. As she sank deeper and deeper into the slough of despond she provoked Bert's laughter by faintly saying: "Oh, Bert, I do wish that Miss Agincourt was in my place; she'd get paid up for all her ugliness toward Don and everybody else that she doesn't like. What have I done that I should be so wretched? Why doesn't Don come down to see me?"

"I guess you are being punished for being so spiteful against Miss Agincourt. Don can't come down just now; he is taking his watch on deck and his trick at the wheel."

"What does he have to carry his watch on deck for, and why does he meddle with its wheel? What kind of a trick is he playing it? What will Professor Krasinski say if he knows that he is tricking that gold watch he gave him?"

"You have swallowed a convention question box; I don't

wonder you feel so badly. Hadn't I better get you something else to eat?"

"Oh, Bert, I shall never eat again! Why doesn't somebody sympathize with me? It will be awful if you have to throw me overboard. Can't you stop the vessel and put me ashore and save my life?"

In five hours from that time Gipsy was on deck laughing at herself as mirrored by Bert, who repeated her questions and despairing tones and manner without mercy, and all the more relentlessly because he himself was as much exempted from sea sickness as if he had been born on the ocean wave.

It was not the intention of the voyagers to remain at sea over night, and toward evening they ran into Plymouth. The next morning they visited Plymouth Rock and waxed enthusiastic over the Pilgrim Fathers.

Suddenly Gipsy asked: "How do they know that this is the rock on which the Pilgrims landed?"

"Oh, get out!" exclaimed Bert indignantly. "Don't ask questions about things that have been settled for all time."

"Well, I want to know how it was settled that this is the very rock," she persisted.

Werner Vonberg, who was well acquainted with colonial history, said: "It is a reasonable question, that should be reasonably answered. In 1741 the Pilgrim Sons had so little enthusiasm or so little faith about this spot that they were going to build a wharf over the rock. An old man by the name of Faunce, who was in his ninety-fifth year, hearing of the proposal, caused himself to be brought three miles in a chair and placed upon the rock. He shed tears upon it and gave his benediction to it as he bade farewell to it. There were many witnesses of the scene, and he assured them that his father had again and again declared that this was the very place

where the Pilgrims landed. His words had so much weight that the people forbade the building of the wharf. They remembered that every year Elder Faunce was in the habit of celebrating the anniversary of the landing by placing his children and grandchildren on the rock and conversing with them about their forefathers. And hence, after the old man's last visit, they determined that they would celebrate Forefathers' Day with all the pomp and ceremony they could muster."

"How many children and grandchildren did the old man have?" asked Nora, glancing at the rock and trying to calculate how many could stand upon it at one time.

"I don't know," Werner replied, laughing in spite of the gravity of the subject.

"Well, how did the old man know that this was the very rock?" she asked again. "Was he one of the fathers, and did he see them land?"

"Of course not, you ninny!" exclaimed Bert.

"No, he was not one of the Pilgrims," said Werner; "but it is said that his father knew some of the Pilgrims, and they told the story of the landing. So, you see that Faunce had it quite direct."

"Then we can't swear by the rock for a certainty?"

"No; not for a certainty."

"That's perfectly dreadful! Why didn't the Pilgrims cut something into the rock to let us know that they landed here?"

"I guess they were too busy about other things to think of that," said Werner, with assumed seriousness.

"Let us go somewhere else; I don't believe that anybody knows where the Pilgrims landed, and we are humbugged about this rock right straight along, so that people can cover up their ignorance."

"Say the Pilgrims didn't land at all, and done with it,"

interrupted Bert with impatience. "History has to begin somewhere, and the history of The Pilgrim Fathers must begin with this rock." Then, after a short pause, feeling as if he had swamped all his confidence in mere tradition, and to cover his retreat he added: "Let's go to Watson's Hill."

"We would better go to Burying Hill first," suggested Werner: "that is near here, and we know for a certainty that many of the Pilgrims were buried there."

The celebrated cemetery lay directly back of the town; and after ascending about one hundred and sixty feet, they stood where so many of the Pilgrims were buried during the first year after their landing.

Seeing that Don walked among the ancient gravestones with his hat off, and believing that she was really walking over the ground beneath which reposed the dust of the venerated dead, Gipsy mused in silence. But when, after a long walk, they reached Watson's Hill, and she was told that there the first Indian Treaty was made, she again voiced her curiosity.

"Are they any surer of this place than they were of Plymouth Rock?" she asked, quite humbly.

"Oh, yes," Werner responded, confidently. "Plymouth Rock is settled by tradition only, but this is settled by record. Miles Standish met King Massasoit down by that brook you see over yonder, and brought him up here to Governor Carver. After the white man kissed the red man, they drank, as it is said, 'copious draughts of strong water, and then made the treaty.'"

"Did they get the strong water from that brook down there? And what made it strong? Was there anything dead in it?"

"Don't you know what strong water is?" asked Werner,

turning on her with the suspicion that she was trifling with him for her own amusement.

"No, I do not. I have lived in Boston so long I am awfully ignorant. I am going to try and learn something while I am out on this trip."

"I beg your pardon, Gipsy. Strong water in plain language means rum," said Werner, with much misgiving.

"Rum! Do you mean to tell me that the Pilgrim Fathers drank rum?" she asked, her face the picture of surprise and horror.

"Yes, in considerable quantities. They landed before Father Matthew got here, you remember. And on this very hill they gave rum to King Massasoit in such big doses that, as the books say, 'he sweat a long time after.'"

"What did they want to make him sweat for?"

"Well, you know that the Pilgrims were weak, and the Indians were strong. And probably the Pilgrims wanted the Indians to understand that if they did the Pilgrims any harm they would make them sweat for it worse than the rum did. The books say that when the Pilgrims first landed, they fell on their knees and then they fell on the aborigines."

"What did they fall from? And how did the Indians happen to be under them when the Pilgrims fell?"

Werner looked at Gipsy in amazement, but her seriousness was so transparent that checking his risibilities, he replied: "The historians mean that when the Pilgrims landed, they gave thanks to God for their safety and then began to fight the Indians to get possession of their land.

"Then they were robbers as well as rum-drinkers in spite of all their thanksgiving and prayers, weren't they?"

"Oh, no; they were the founders of a great nation."

"It's a pity we were not founded by somebody else. I don't

want to hear any more about the Pilgrim Fathers, nor Plymouth Rock, either. I am sorry we came here. Does all history pan out in this way?"

"Gipsy," said Bert, severely, "there is no use in trying to give you any information. You make a hanging noose of every piece of rope that is thrown to you. I am glad that there is only one of you in the family. If there was another sister like you, there wouldn't be enough of me left to be a brother to either. If you ever get married, you will hang your husband on interrogation points just as a butcher hangs meat upon shop-hooks. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for going back upon the Pilgrim Fathers, and what is more, you ought to know that it is the deadliest heresy to say anything against them. If Father Taylor knew that you were doing such a thing, he would discipline you as soon as you got home."

Dorothy had listened to the whole conversation, and although she was amused by Gipsy's simplicity, she respected her sincerity and came to her defence against her brother by saying: "Gipsy does right in thinking for herself. If there were more like her, there would be less chaff mixed with our wheat. If our forefathers had had her for one of their foremothers, that old Chief Sachem Massasoit would never have been asked to sell his birthright and the birthright of all his people for a mess of—rum."

"You see that my only sister is a good deal like your own, Bert," said Werner, shrugging his shoulders. "To save ourselves from getting into any more trouble about the Pilgrims, we had better go on board and set sail for Provincetown, for although the Pilgrims really made their first landing at Truro, we'll find no trace of them at that end of the Cape."

"There!" exclaimed Gipsy, "what do you say to that, Bert?"

What do you say to Plymouth Rock now? Werner knows all about it. Truro is the place."

"But they didn't land at Truro to make a settlement; they landed there to give the women a chance to wash their clothes. They meant all the while to settle on the Hudson River," said Werner. "It was at Truro where their first governor, William Bradford, stepped upon an Indian deer trap and was caught by the leg and flung into the air by a bent sapling."

"Is the tree still there?" asked Gipsy, sarcastically.

"And can they point out the very place where they had their washing done?" asked Dorothy, coming to Gipsy's help. "We didn't get any pieces of Plymouth Rock, nor any other mementoes of the Pilgrim Fathers; but if we went to Truro we might pick up some fragments of soap left by our foremothers, for women who wash almost always throw away their soap with their suds. Did they use hard or soft soap?"

"They must have soft-soaped the Indians or they never would have been allowed to land with their rum-drinking husbands," remarked Gipsy. "Why didn't the Mayflower go up the Hudson as she originally intended? If the Pilgrims had gone there, we Massachusetts people would have been saved a good deal of humbugging."

"The Indians on the Hudson were too numerous and healthy. Here they were greatly reduced in numbers by sickness and plagues, which, the Pilgrims said, had been sent by Providence to make way for them. They settled here to keep from flying in the face of Providence," and Werner spoke as gravely as a professor. He went on to say: "We might drop into Truro on the way down to Provincetown. The Pilgrims called it Cold Harbor, because at that time the Pamet River was full of ice. It was there they found three baskets of wheat,

a bottle of oil and a bag of beans buried under one of the sand-heaps."

"Then Boston isn't the inventor of baked beans!" exclaimed Gipsy, with a look of disappointment. "Did they use the oil instead of pork? And did they always bake them for their Sunday dinners as we do? If the Pilgrims found a bag of beans, couldn't we find a pot of beans under the same sand-hills and find out whether the Indians used oil or pork to bake with them?"

"There is no telling what is hidden under those sand-hills," said Wilhelm. "In levelling one of them not long ago the laborers found a lot of ice which gave evidence of having been buried under the sand a great many years. If the Indians used beans as we Boston people do, I see no reason why they should not have had ice cream also. And as they had no cows to give cream, they probably used cod-liver oil instead. But it is time for us to go on board again."

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CHAPTER XXIX.

AN ENLARGEMENT OF THE HEART.

When they reached the offing the wind was strong and gusty, and there was considerable sea running, yet, under single reefs, The Lady shook her head at the water and kept her decks as dry as an oven. When off Provincetown the wind veered ahead and while they were beating into port, they made their tacks in a rainstorm and in the company of scores of vessels that were also seeking a harbor for the night or till such time as they could double the Cape with safety.

When they arose in the morning the capacious harbor was a forest of masts, and the dark hulls presented a view of almost every kind of shipping, from small craft like The Lady, up to the majestic full-rigged ships whose complicated rigging and numerous spars and yardarms formed a dark network against the dull leaden sky. The low dunes on shore punctuated a landscape that was so sandy and destitute of vegetation that Nora said it was as bald-headed as William Lloyd Garrison.

"What can they raise in such a place as that?" she asked contemptuously.

"Church steeples and school towers, as you can see for yourself," said Werner, "and brainy men and women capable of making their way in any part of the world. The landscape may be bald, as you say, but the minds of the people who live here are not; they are as fruitful of ideas as Garrison's intellect."

"Were you born here?" she asked again.

"Why, no. What made you think that?"

"Because you know so much."

"I was born in Boston."

"So was I; but I might as well have been born in Africa, I am so ignorant; ignorant even of the very State in which I live."

"Yet you are picking up so rapidly that by the time you get to be as venerable as I, you will know vastly more than I do."

"How old are you?"

"I dare not tell you, lest you should begin to ask me to give you some personal recollections of Noah and his family. You know that one's age is not to be reckoned from the day he was born, but from the things he has learned. To tell the truth, I feel as though I had lived on this old globe several thousand years."

"That is because you read so much history. Don says your library is full of historical books. I should think it would make any one feel old to be reading about dead people so much. But aren't you going to let us go on shore this morning?"

"Yes; the boat is alongside now waiting for us. You must take off those slippers, and put on high shoes, for the sand is deep in Provincetown."

When they landed they walked on creaking plank sidewalks, and over crossings of sand-drifts. It was grit, grit everywhere. Yet there were handsome houses in the scattering town, and public buildings that would not have been out of place in Boston. The people whom they met instead of appearing as though they had rusted because of their isolation and constant exposure to salt air, looked as though they had

used the sand about them to keep themselves burnished to the highest degree. Indeed, what with their own seamen who sailed unto the uttermost parts of the earth, and the shipping that came into their port from all parts of the world, they were all as wide-awake as if they had done nothing but sail the seas from the beginning of their existence. And the smallest urchin who stood on the street corner, if spoken to, was more than likely to reply in nautical terms full of allusions to shipping and to the ends of the earth as well. The seafaring men who waddled through the sandy thoroughfares in great numbers, with the free manners of high spirits, added to the wide-awake appearance of the population.

"Why should people want to settle in such a place as this?" asked Dorothy, glancing discontentedly over the sandy landscape.

"Cape Cod was built in the ocean to give Massachusetts a handy place to fish from, and there were some people in the olden times who had sense enough to appreciate what had been done for them. Here, they are in the very midst of codfishdom and whaledom, not to say anything of the smaller fry that can be tossed from the water upon the gridiron or into the frying pan whenever they are wanted. Breathing so much salt air, eating so much fish and smelling so many fishy odors are among the things that have made the people so brainy and intellectual.

"To keep the ministers up to the proper intellectual standard, they used to pay the greater part of their salary in fish, and to increase their faith in Providence, they were allowed a part of every whale that came on shore. If one of these big fish happened to come ashore on Sunday during sermon time, the minister didn't stop to pronounce the benediction, but ran

a race with the congregation to the water-side to make sure of getting what the Lord had sent for their benefit."

"I don't believe it!" exclaimed Gipsy, very bluntly, for she was set for the defence of the ministry.

"I know that it seems like a whaling big story, but it is set down in the books, and what is in the books cannot be disbelieved without committing heresy. There is an old minister living here now who, in his preaching days, was pastor of the Congregational Church. One Sunday when he had just reached the sixth of the fourteen heads of his sermon, a man rushed to the door and shouted that a whale had grounded on the south shore. The minister said, 'Beloved, let us make sure of the whale now, the remainder of the sermon is so well pickled it will keep for another time.'

"They got large quantities of oil from that whale's blubber, and the preacher was so well satisfied with his share that the following Sunday, instead of giving them the other eight heads of the interrupted sermon, he gave them a spick-span new one directly out of his own head upon the text, 'They shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sands.' He described all the kinds of fish that swim about Cape Cod, and all the varieties of clams that are hid in the sands and mud-flats. Being very fond of clam chowder, he was especially eloquent, while preaching, concerning the treasures hid in the sand. Nevertheless two of his deacons complained that the sermon was two hours longer than it needed to have been, and they said it smacked so strongly of fish and clams, that it made them feel fishy and clammy all over. They thought the church ought to have a pastor who knew more about the New Jerusalem than he did about Cape Cod, and they tried to get up a faction that would assist them in securing a more spiritually minded minister. Notwithstanding the dea-

cons' pious efforts, the preacher remained pastor thirty years after the death of one of them and twenty-two years after the death of the other. And he is now maintaining a vigorous old age upon the remembrance of his triumph over the rams of his flock."

"Did he get rich off of the dead whales that came on shore on Sunday?" asked Gipsy, with great interest.

"Not very; if we may judge from the looks of his cottage where he now lives with his wife, and which we passed on our way up."

"Let's come ashore to-night and serenade him?" suggested Dorothy, with lively sympathy. "A preacher that can survive two contrary deacons as long as he did, ought to be noticed."

The suggestion was adopted with enthusiasm, but its scope was much enlarged. They were all good singers, and music was one of their chief diversions. The evening was clear and still, and a high full moon encouraged their purpose. The actors' wardrobe still remained on board of *The Lady*. After dressing themselves in the most grotesque robes, they could find, they rowed among the fleet, where their songs were received with round after round of cheers. The tars that were not members of secret fraternities supposed they were being serenaded by a delegation of Masons or Odd Fellows from the shore. The tinsel of the robes glittered so brightly in the moonlight that the ornaments were supposed to be of silver and gold, while the cut glass jewels were taken for gems of the first water.

On landing, they were followed by a crowd to the old minister's cottage. Two of their songs were merry, two sentimental and the other two, solemn. Don presented the old pastor with ten dollars from his trust fund, and the Vonberg brothers added twenty more from their private purse. The

recipient of their generosity was so moved that he felt himself under obligations to say something adequately appreciative of their courtesies. He said that he was so deaf he could not hear much of their singing, but he had sight enough left to be much edified by their brilliant appearance, and there was life enough left in his heart to enable him to feel profoundly grateful to them for their unexpected kindness toward him. Then in a half humorous, half pathetic way, he concluded by saying that, although he had nothing in the house to offer them by way of a collation, he could at least dismiss them with the best of his pulpit benedictions. He accordingly pronounced the longest one he could remember.

The next morning there was a ringing chorus of yo-heavos, a resounding clatter of chain-cables and a magnificent fluttering of white canvas, when the fleet of ninety-three vessels of all shapes and sizes made ready to round the Cape. Although they all left within a short time of each other, the differences in their speed soon scattered them into a long line upon the ocean blue. The *Lady of The Lake* proved to be the smallest, swiftest and proudest vessel of the whole fleet. Captain Small was so elated by the way she showed her heels and took the lead, that he ordered up every inch of bunting she possessed. At noon he left the other vessels and laid his course toward a low blue island that is about thirty miles from the mainland.

"What country is that?" asked Gipsy, when the steeples and houses began to loom against the sky.

"That isn't any country at all," replied Werner; "that is Nantucket. Have you never heard of it before?"

"Nantucket! Why, that is my father's birth place!" she exclaimed with delight. "I would rather go there than to go to Jerusalem. And I would rather have been born there than in Boston."

"Why?" asked Werner, with interest.

"Because—Oh, because; you know!" she replied flounderingly.

"Because it is so far removed from the mainland and its hypocrisies and follies that its distance lends enchantment to the view?" said Werner, coming to her relief.

"Of course, that's it exactly!" she retorted sarcastically.

The celebrated old whaling town was not at that time the busy place it had formerly been, nor was it yet the fashionable resort it was destined to become. It seemed to be in the last stages of abandonment and decay. Costly and attractive houses were sold for a mere song, and not a few of them were being removed piecemeal to the mainland. Old whaling ships saturated with oil and redolent of blubber and scraps—ships that had voyaged to the far Pacific and had made comfortable fortunes for their former owners, were now ignobly rotting at their docks. Warehouses and stores that were once packed with goods of great value were given up to the reign of rats and mice. Arrivals, once so numerous, were now so seldom witnessed that when *The Lady of The Lake* crossed the historic sandbar and tied up to the dock, half the juveniles of the town rushed pell mell to see her. Not a few of the older people of both sexes trailed down after them and in their quaintly quiet way, welcomed the visitors to their "island home." On its becoming known that Gipsy and her brother were of island stock, all the Williamses on the island claimed relationship, and thenceforth the latchstring was out to the whole party to go and come as they pleased. Receptions followed in such swift succession that it became a relief to the young people to get on board again. But these receptions must not be confounded with the functions that pass under the same name in the later phases of society. Our receptions are occasions on

which people promiscuously "gather, gabble, giggle, gobble and git." They are a sort of annual washing in which the guests allow the hostess to make use of them as the soap by which she washes her hands of her annual social obligations. After "the social event" she goes to bed so much fatigued that, like other washer-women, she dreams the whole night long of washing-boards and suds, and is haunted by the fear lest the clothes-line should show a deficiency in the final listing. An old-time Nantucket reception was characterized by the grace of cordiality, the refinement of sincerity, the charm of simplicity and the spontaneousness of nature. It was a spring bubbling from the heart and not a system of Holly water works by which courtesy is forced through the iron or leaden pipes of fashionable customs.

Even the quakers, those saints in drab, whose ancestors were whipped at the tails of the carts of our forefathers for choosing to serve God in their own way, did all they could to add pleasure to the stay of the young visitors.

Bert, who was a good violinist, went into a shop of one of these quaint folk and enquired for a piece of rosin. "Not a very large piece," he said, "for I only want to rosin my fiddle-bow."

"Thy fiddle-bow!" exclaimed the quaker shop-keeper, with hesitation if not displeasure. "I cannot sell thee rosin for such a purpose. But there it is," he smilingly added as he placed a conveniently sized piece upon the counter; "if thee chocest to take it for nothing, thee will be welcome to the responsibility."

"It was the most delicate way of getting around an inconveniently conscientious corner I ever heard of," said Bert, relating the incident when he returned to The Lady. "And he looked at me so slyly from his great eyes, that I had to put my hand to my mouth to keep from giggling in his face. He

said 'come again' in such a kindly way that I wanted to sit down and have a long chat with him. I wonder what he would say if he were to hear me scraping off some of those jig tunes I play. Gipsy comes at me like a porcupine when I lay them. He probably would rebuke me solemnly with his mouth, and at the same time laugh at me with his eyes."

An old song which relates the experiences of two young lovers says: "They loved one another for they'd nothing else to do." Perhaps a somewhat similar reason accounted for the abounding hospitality of the old time Nantucketer. There seemed to be nothing else to do in the way of employment or amusement, and hence, for the benefit of the young visitors, there were clam-bakes and chowders, codfish fries and bluefish feasts, catboat trips along the shores, and horsecart excursions upon the moors and to the wild surf beach at seven mile Sconset. Curiosities and bric-a-brac, shells and whale-teeth were given to the guests in such generous profusion that the cabin of The Lady of the Lake looked like a small museum.

Alas for the sad transformations wrought by time and civilization. There is a new generation at Nantucket now. A change has come over the spirit of its dreams since it became a watering place and a resort for city people. A stranger happening upon its shores now is charged a nickel for a yes or no, a dime for a direction of any kind, a quarter for a step or two of guidance, a half dollar for the lifting of a trunk, a dollar for an hour of time, and the portable curiosities that are exhibited for sale are held at church-fair prices. Go to Nantucket if you want to see something new—or rather, something old—under the sun, but go prepared to be estimated by the fatness of your pocket book and by the amount of squeezing you can undergo. The ancient glory of Nantucket has gone the way of all the earth.

It was in vain that the Vonbergs protested that they were only clothiers, and that Don told them he lived in an attic, and that Bert avowed that his mother kept a boarding house, and that the attention they were receiving was altogether disproportionate to their rank and circumstances. They were well-bred young people loving the sea which held the island in its embrace, and they practiced the sailing art by which so many Nantucketers had circumnavigated the globe, and this was recommendation enough for Nantucket society which, by the way, was famous for its intelligence and refinement as it was for its warmth and simplicity.

The United States mail reached the island when weather permitted. In winter, weeks passed before any tidings were received from the outside world. Boston papers arrived in bunches and were as scrupulously preserved as if they were sacred writings. The "Nantucket Metropolitan" reproduced the Boston notice of the departure of *The Lady of The Lake*, and the "Transcript's" announcement that she carried the *Grand Keyman* of the new club which had taken the place of the old one. Withal, there were quotations from Boston papers containing other items concerning Don and his friends. All Nantucket began to search its old files for matter referring to Don's adventures and experiences, and they so pieced the incidents together that the whole island was agog with the idea that they were "entertaining angels unawares."

"We must get out of this as soon as possible," said Don when the old news had taken a fresh start in Nantucket circles and was producing an additional and an intensified round of festivities and civilities. When Nora asked why they should get out, his reply was: "We are getting altogether too much cream for the amount of milk we carry in our pans."

The wharf was crowded when the vessel cast off her lines,

and after Nora had almost dislocated her arms waving her adieus to the inhabitants of her father's birthplace, she said to those around her: "Nantucket has given me such an enlargement of the heart that hereafter Boston will be too small to hold me."

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CHAPTER XXX.

AS THEY SAILED, AS THEY SAILED.

So runs the refrain of one of the old songs that celebrated the doings of Captain Kidd and his pirates bad and bold. And so ran the refrain of the song of memory when the participants in the trip of *The Lady of The Lake* began to wrinkle up under the too familiar touch of *Old Father Time*. Those remote days which seem to be as far away as the days of Eden formed the golden age of their existence.

As they sailed out of Nantucket into Martha's Vineyard Sound, they found themselves in the company of more than a hundred coasters.

And as they sailed over the glittering waters, gently rising and falling with the swell of the sea, and slightly careening to the push of the wind, and gradually sighting the blue coast line of the southern coast of Cape Cod and the northern one of Martha's Vineyard, Dorothy and Donny, and Nora and Bert experienced such an elevation of feeling that the enthusiasm of their language exhausted all the superlatives at their command.

Donny, the squirrel, had the freedom of the deck with the rest of the passengers, and, delighting in the clear sunlight and bracing breeze he leaped from the companionway to the mainboom where, working his way to the throat-rope of the mainsail, he scampered up the sail, nor stopped until he reached the crosstree, and, steadying himself by the topmast stay, flipped his tail in triumphant glee, notwithstanding the

anxious glances of his friends below. With such transcendent things as masts and ropes within reach, he was no longer dependent upon such puny conveniences as passenger-legs for climbing facilities. While those below were ventilating their knowledge of Captain Kidd and Commodore Paul Jones, and Admiral Drake and Admiral Frobisher and other warriors of the sea, and were growing romantic over Captain Cook, the great circumnavigator, and Columbus, the greater discoverer of America, Donny in his lofty lookout held his peace, for the gentle swaying of the mast set him to thinking of the trees of the forest and of the rustling songs of the woods and streams. And truth to say, some of his thoughts, like those described by the poet Wordsworth, were "too deep for tears." Yet, if he had been in the woods some fool of a brainless boy at the butt of a gun might have been aiming its destructive muzzle at him for the sake of amusing a mind too mendicantly poor for an infirmary, or too idiotically weak for an insane asylum.

All night long they sailed in the entrancing moonlight. Not till 'the wee sma' hours' began to make their eyelids heavy did they cease to watch the lights along the shore, and those also that glimmered from the riggings of the fleet of coasters. But for the dark lines of the coast which served to anchor them to reality, the white spectral sails of the vessels would have made them feel as though they were voyaging to the land of dreams and ghosts.

When they came on deck in the morning they were passing the western shores of Elizabeth Island.

"Elizabeth Island, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket!" exclaimed Nora, whose eyes dilated with inquisitiveness. "How did the islands get their names?"

Werner seldom confessed to ignorance of anything, but in this case even his inventive powers were at fault and he was

obliged, like some other wise ignoramuses, to say: "I don't know."

Captain Small, like every other coasting captain familiar with those waters, was ready with his answer.

"Well, it was this way, miss," he said: "There was an old chap who lived in New Bedford who once owned all three of the islands. He had three daughters; one was named Elizabeth, another Martha, and the third, Nancy. When he was about to die, he gave Elizabeth the first choice of the islands. She chose the one that was nearest to New Bedford, and the island took her name. The second choice fell to Martha, and she took the next nearest, and as it had a great many wild grapevines on it, it became known as Martha's Vineyard.

"The next morning after the old man's death a distant relative asked Martha what was done with the third island, and was answered testily and shortly: 'Nan tuk it.' And ever after the island was called Nantucket. The whaling aristocrats of the island added the 'c' to the spelling to make it look like an Indian name."

"Really, now, is that why my father's birthplace was called Nantucket?" asked Gipsy, intently.

"I wouldn't swear to it, miss, but that is the way every coaster accounts for the name. Sailors in general are apt to tell yarns, but the coasters are famous for telling the truth. If any one can catch me lying he is at liberty to call me a liar. If it had been known that your father was to have been born on that island, it would probably have been called Williamsport or Billtown. Names is mighty queer things, you know."

"They should have called the place Petersport," said Wilhelm; "for the people are the descendents of Peter."

"Peter who?" asked Captain Small.

"Peter the Apostle; he was a fisherman, you know."

While Small was getting ready to wrinkle his face by way of a feeble smile, Gipsy interrupted him with: "Did Peter catch whales, like the Nantucketers?"

"I don't know for a certainty," Wilhelm retorted; "but I know that the prophet Jonah caught a whale, and so far as I can judge, Peter was a better fisherman than ever Jonah was."

"I thought that the whale caught Jonah?" said the captain, a bit uncertain in his Scriptural knowledge.

"It is my impression that they were both badly caught," Wilhelm replied, imitating the captain's hesitating speech.

"Wilhelm Vonberg!" said Gipsy, in her most solemn manner, "Father Taylor says that the man who tries to use the Bible for a peg to hang his jokes upon, is sillier than the witless woman who tried to hang her washing on the horns of the new moon." She would have said more but for the squirrel, which sprang from the deck into her lap and began to tease her for his morning's ration of almond nuts that she always carried in her pocket for him. Not content with this, as soon as he had disposed of his allowance, he crept under the corner of her cloak and drawing it tightly around him, laid down for a nap.

"That is a sure sign of foul weather," said Don, who was observing his movements. "When he does that this early in the day, you may depend upon having a storm before night."

"He agrees with the barometer, but it's mighty curious how a critter like that knows anything about salt-water weather," said Captain Small, dropping his eyelids and squinting professionally all around the horizon. "There's an eastern wind somewhere for sure, and a sort of a snorter at that. But being fair for us I shall not go into port so long as the rest of the fleet keep on the course. Not one of them shows sign of dodging in thus far."

At two o'clock the "easterner" came along hale and hearty, snorting like a grampus, spouting water like a whale, and playing with the waves like a porpoise. It made The Lady come to a double reef in her sails and drenched her as if she needed washing, but withal it sent her bowling through the water like a swordfish. The fleet put itself in trim for the visit and danced along as merrily as if it were sweating through the last figures of a cotillion or waltz. Not a vessel swerved from its course.

Dorothy and Gipsy remained on deck with the sterner sex until they began to get chilled, and then they went below, where, in their berths, they were lulled asleep by the cradle-like motions of the vessel and the measured rhythm of the swashing waters as they passed by the hull.

When they again awoke, The Lady of The Lake was off the Palisades on the Hudson River. The majesty of the cliffs, the sheen of the waters, the variety of craft, the freshness of the air, the beauty of the hills, the blueness of the sky, the brilliancy of the sunlight and the magnificence of the dwellings and grounds on the eastern shore filled Gipsy with astonishment and delight.

"Is this Heaven?" she asked of Captain Small, who stood at the wheel, trying to get the better of a saucy little coasting schooner which had shown an inclination to outsail The Lady of The Lake ever since she first hove in sight off Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard.

"No, miss, this ain't Heaven; it's only the Hudson River; and, according to my reckoning, it's a good ways off from Heaven," said the captain, in a matter-of-fact way, and keeping a sharp lookout on the cute coaster which was doing her best to get abeam so as to blanket the sails of The Lady and thus steal a chance to forge ahead of her.

"That's a pesky craft," he added, but addressing himself to

Werner. "Hoist our topsail, and staysail and then if The Lady doesn't forge ahead of her, I'll have to say that she doesn't know her business."

No sooner was the extra canvas up than the rival vessel put on every extra stitch she could muster, notwithstanding it was so squally that light sails were likely to be blown away at any moment. But The Lady soon showed her superiority over the coaster and passed ahead, her lighter bulk giving her the advantage over her competitor.

"When did we pass New York?" asked Dorothy, now that the excitement was over.

"A little after four o'clock this morning," said Werner. "We had both the wind and tide with us when we entered Hell Gate and got through that awful place without the least trouble."

"Why didn't you call us so that we could see the city as we passed by?" Dorothy asked with some disappointment.

"I did think of doing it, but Wilhelm said no; and I guess he was right; there was nothing to be seen but a lot of masts, roofs, chimney pots and steeples, and I should think that you, who were born and brought up in Boston had had enough of that kind of scenery."

"I would rather wake out of a morning slumber and find myself sailing in the midst of such scenery as this than to look upon any city in the world," said Gipsy, with great sincerity. "People who live surrounded by so much beauty and grandeur ought to be good enough to be translated directly to Heaven without any change," she added, with deep earnestness.

"Which the same they ain't by no manner of means," exclaimed the captain forcibly. "I've sailed up and down this river seventy-three times, and I know it as well as I know the corns on my toes. Every prospect pleases and only man is

vile, as the old hymn says. This ain't no Nantucket, where everybody tries to do you good. The river pirates are so thick that if we didn't keep a sharp lookout they'd steal everything from us from stem to stern in no time; and the land sharks are so eager to take advantage of you that they charge three prices for everything they sell and every favor they do to you. If you was to fall from them Palisades and should happen to be picked up alive, the first thing they'd ask would be how much you'd give them for carrying you to a doctor. It's a regular road to Jericho. Seeing as how there are lots of churches along the river there must be some saints among them, but none on 'em shows themselves to us coasters; leastwise, not very often. It seems to me that where the people is thickest and the country oldest, there the sinners is the wustest and the vilest. They say this country was fust settled by the Dutch; I don't know much about that race, but perhaps that accounts for the lot of cussedness that's laying round loose all the way up and down this river."

"Dorothy and Wilhelm and myself are closely related to the Dutch," said Werner, laughing at the blushes of indignation suffusing his sister's face; "but we do not feel particularly wicked on that account. I know that the Connecticut Puritans on being asked why they cultivated tobacco when they were so much opposed to its use among themselves said they were raising it to 'sell to the Ungodly Dutch who lived on the Hudson River;' yet those old Knickerbockers were the salt of New York as the Pilgrims were the salt of New England."

"The Dutch were fine table salt, and the Pilgrims coarse pickle salt," said Dorothy from whose cheeks the colors of indignation had not yet faded away.

"If the Dutch were ever the salt of the earth in any shape they've lost their savor," the captain retorted. "Them that

I've run afoul of was mostly made up of hard cider, lager beer, and forty horse-power tobacco, and kept from vanishing into nothing by hoops of rusty genealogy and ancestral vanity. They are so stuck up that they have formed a little denomination all by themselves, and they call it The Dutch Reformed Church. If you go into one of their meetin' houses you'll see their coat of arms hung up by the pulpit, done up in orange and black, and with so many animals pictured in it cuttin' up so many antics it looks like a circus poster. And they have a catechism of their own cut up in fifty- two parts so that there can be a dose of it for every Sunday in the year. They say the Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer and The Apostle's Creed every Sunday of their lives, but in their opinion that circus picture knocks the stuffing out of all of them. The fust time I saw that escutcheon, as they call it, hanging by the pulpit as though there was no place for the cross where it was, it stuck in my crop like a herring bone. And I jest said to myself, if there wasn't another church this side of the New Jerusalem for a feller to get into but the Reformed Church I'd go into a smoke house and get my religion there before I'd tie my hawser to a concern what's towed along and kept afloat by a yaller escutcheon or any other kind of scutching."

Don was indignant at the captain's tirade, and all the more so because he knew that, although the Vonbergs were members of Doctor Beecher's church, their father and mother were originally members of the Dutch Reformed Church, and still had a great reverence for that denomination, notwithstanding it was so small numerically. It was therefore with considerable heat he said: "Captain Small, your prejudices have swallowed your common sense; the Dutch Reformed Church is the best and most influential denomination on the Hudson

River, and its history is far more interesting than the history of the Pilgrim Fathers."

At this shot, Dorothy clapped her hands with vigor, which so offended the captain that he sealed his lips hermetically, notwithstanding both Bert and Gipsy did their best to start him off upon another controversial flight. Wilhelm and Werner were as much amused by Small's sudden reticence as they had been by his previous volubility. Withal, they were grateful to Don for dropping such a hot shot into the captain's vest pocket. They were an exceptionally broadminded pair of young men, but they revered the faith of their parents altogether too much to hear it lightly spoken of with indifference.

For awhile there was golden silence, punctuated only by exclamations of enthusiasm and admiration elicited by the magnificence and sublimity of the scenery by which they were surrounded. Besides the glorious vistas of landscape opening up on every hand there were the innumerable jaunty coasters with their white sails flecking the river in every direction, going and coming, some loaded and some light. An immense river steamer passed by loaded with a great crowd of passengers. Pleasure craft of every description flitted to and fro like birds skimming the brilliant waters, and countless row-boats darted hither and thither like water-bugs upon a meadowy brook.

Presently Gipsy's sentimental thoughts and emotions were snuffed out like a candle by the sight of a floating village which notwithstanding it was over a quarter of a mile in length, was being slowly towed down the river by five puffing, wheezing steam tugs. The village consisted of canal boats, of which she counted one hundred and twenty-seven, fastened together by hawsers. Nearly all had entire families on them who carried on their domestic avocations with as much freedom as if they were in cottages on the land. The day being sunny, not a few

were washing their clothes in plain sight despite the commandment which forbids such things. Other boats were trimmed from stem to stern with the fluttering lines of clothing that had already gone through the purifying process. Here and there men and women could be seen stepping from one barge to another making calls upon one another, and doubtless exchanging such gossip as might be peculiar to the watery town.

To Gipsy the floating village was at first a mystery; then it seemed the most romantic of all things; but by and by it appeared tragical that so many people, young and old, male and female, should be living such an unsettled floating life. At last, however, under the touch of Wilhelm's humor, the quaint combination resolved itself into a grotesque oddity and a ludicrous comedy. The old fashions of the women, the peculiar amusements of the children, the lordly listlessness of the men broken now and then with snatches of broken dialect, wild songs and rollicking revelry, and the picturesque groups of sleepers scattered in confusion here and there, kept the hinges of Gipsy's mind swinging back and forth between unbounded astonishment and irrepressible amusement.

Three of these floating villages were passed in the course of two hours; two were bound down, and one, up. The barges belonging to the one going up were without cargoes, and looked so light that they resembled an island of immense wooden bubbles seeking some place where they might burst into nothing.

"If Father Taylor were to see a fleet like that," said Bert, "he'd find his salt-water dictionary entirely inadequate for his needs. He could no more turn those canal boats into figures of speech for sailor sermons than he could turn hog-troughs into Indian canoes. I have heard of 'the raging canal,' but I

didn't know that they had a rage for turning out such floating nightmares of giant coffins roped together in that style. It is enough to give one the delirium tremens to look at them.

He was better pleased by the scenes at West Point, where a day was spent in roaming through the grounds and surroundings of that famous military school. But all minor objects of attraction were reduced into insignificance when, continuing their voyage, they followed the river to where it cleaves the mountains and stormy old Dunderberg from beneath his nightcap of cloud looks frowningly down and with spiteful gusts of breath marks his displeasure against the endless fleets of money makers and pleasure seekers that throng through the wild pass that he in his selfish isolation would have consecrated to everlasting solitude and silence. So severe were his aspects and so threatening his rugged cliffs that the Lady of The Lake voyagers felt as though they were intruding into a sanctum sanctorum which Nature had reserved for communion with herself.

On reaching Catskill they left the vessel and spent four days upon the purple heights of the Catskill Mountains, where, four thousand feet above the sea, they climbed, wandered, wondered and dreamed among the glens, the woods and clouds with such lightness of soul they almost felt as if in a disembodied state they had reached the shores of another world. When, on the descent, they halted at the old Rip Van Winkle House and rambled up the darkly shadowed glen where, as it is alleged by Irving, Rip met the little men and by sipping from one of their little kegs, was put to sleep for twenty years, they were more than half inclined to think the story literally true. They had done so much dreaming themselves that they felt that they were twenty years older than when they started from Boston, and they were almost afraid that when they

returned nobody would be able to recognize them. It was with relief that they descended from the clouds and felt the deck beneath their feet again and sailed into matter-of-fact Albany and listened to the hum of an every-day world once more.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

ON HANNAH SCHIRRECHUM'S ISLAND.

Don and Bert went into a barber's shop to get their hair cut. Don did not take particular notice of the man who was clipping his locks, but the man took notice of him from the moment of his entrance. After snipping off a lock with an emphatic movement of the scissors, he drew back a step or two, and looking his customer in the face with a keenly scrutinizing glance, said: "Methinks I've seen this face and head before. Yet my memory is a false mistress that plays me scurvy tricks. But stay! Wast thou ever guest to a jailor, or listener to a just judge who spoke thee well, though thou wast garbed in rags and clasped the hand of Sorrow in a prison cell? Ah! speak not. I have it! Have it as I have the vagabonds of thought, that with vague hints of things that once have been come back to give me torment 'fore my time. Give me thy hand, thou partner of my grief, for thou art Don Donalds, who erstwhiles heard me sing the song of memory in prison, and parted from me because the pangs of hunger bade us part."

It was the actor with whom Don spent the night in prison, and Don was glad to know that he had at last settled down to something tangible, although the language he used seemed to have lost nothing of its gaseousness. This last, however, he soon discovered was only assumed as prompted by the associations of the past.

"I am making a good living," he said, laughing like a sane man; "and what is a deuced sight better, I have married the dearest girl in all the world, and she has so much good sense that I haven't made a fool of myself for more than a year and a half, if you will except the manner in which I spoke to you just now."

Reminders of Don's former trials in Albany met him at every step, but neither sting nor shame attended them. And when his companions insisted upon being shown the places where he had suffered, he complied without hesitation, and carried them to the prison cell where he passed a night, and to the old church portico where he lodged with a stray dog, and to the shop of Abraham Isaacs, the Jew pawnbroker, where he had been turned away as a thief for inquiring after the contents of his stolen trunk. The old Israelite happened to be standing in front of his door as they passed by, and Gipsy gave him a glance from her dark eyes that was indignant enough to frighten a stone, and she would have halted to give him a lecture had not Bert hurried her on by main force.

"I am not sorry I became so hard pushed in this city," said Don. "Boys are apt to be thoughtless and selfish; I am sure I was before I came here. Albany gave me lessons it was necessary for me to learn, and I would not have shown you where I learned them had I not been desirous of reminding myself of them again. I am going now to see if that drinking fountain is still in order. It is on the other side of the river, and too far away for a walk of pleasure. Bert may go with me, and the rest of you may wander where you please while we are absent."

But his companions insisted upon going with him to the roundhouse, where they found the fountain dedicated to the memory of Jake Cullum and Bob Flanger, looking as bright as

the day it was put up. The men made conscience of keeping it in order. There was no one present that Don knew, and as the visitors gave no explanation of their presence, they caused no small amount of wonder and curiosity.

Don, now accompanied only by Bert, called on the Flanger and Cullum families, which, notwithstanding the death of the bread winners, were getting along quite comfortably. Don received a welcome that made his eyes water, and the assurance that the assistance he gave them at his former visit had so tided them over shoals that ever since they had been able to make their own way without difficulty.

When they returned to the vessel Don found a pair of reporters on board, and as a result, and in spite of his own reticence, the arrival of The Lady of The Lake with the "Boy Philanthropist" and his party of Boston friends was chronicled in flaring headlines of long locals.

That afternoon the party left for Saratoga, where three days were spent at the springs. When they came back Peter Piper had a long story to tell of his trials during their absence. The newspaper notices had caused a great influx of visitors to The Lady, and both Peter and the captain had been subjected to numberless interrogations. Small said that so many questions had been asked that he hadn't a single civil answer left.

"Americans live more by the questions they ask than they do by the sweat o' their brow," said Peter. "They hae kept me gaeing frae marnin' till night. Some were that spierin' they wanted to know if we had ony lovers in the company. On a' sich I frowned and glowered mightily. To more than one I says: 'A talebearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.' See Proverbs eleven and thirteen. They didna mind the hot Scripture shot no more than if it was a feather, but when I at 'em wi' see Proverbs

eleven and thirteen, they spiered at me as though I was some-thin' uncanny, an' cut for the wharf as if the de'il was ahind 'em."

"Yes," said the captain, laughing immoderately, "Peter's reference to chapter and verse was as good as a new broom. It swept them ashore by the half dozen. And now," he went on, "if you are ready to give the order, I'll put The Lady where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

"Cast off as soon as you please," replied Wilhelm, promptly, "for I am longing to get to some place where human nature is scarce."

On the down trip they would have stopped a day or two in New York, but when they were abreast the city the heat was so great they crowded canvas for the open sea. Nor did they pause in their voyage until, after threading a tortuous channel, they dropped anchor off Cotuit Port, a small hamlet on the south side of Cape Cod.

The mystery of the captain's ability to pilot his way among so many crooks and shallows, was solved to Don, when he learned that Cotuit Port was Small's birthplace and home, and that he was so enamoured with this part of Barnstable County that even its defects were virtues in his sight.

Disembarking with their tents and equipments, they rowed over to "Hannah Screechum's Island," which lay opposite to Cotuit and was distant about three-quarters of a mile. Here was a pine covered tract of eight hundred acres surrounded by a narrow belt of water that gave a crooked shore line about five miles in extent. They encamped under the pines of the south shore close to several heaps of oyster shells which in the long ago were formed of the leavings of the aboriginal inhabitants. The ground was soft and dry with the accumulations of grey moss and brown pine-needles. The air was sweet

with the odors of the pines and of the broad green leaves of the trailing arbutus, and cool and bracing under the shade where ocean breezes played at will. The Seapuit River, a narrow tide stream, and Dead Neck, a narrower strip of sand beach, gave a touch of variety to the isolated scene without interfering with the view of the gloriously amethystine sea. Fifteen miles away they could discern the shores of Martha's Vineyard, and if there had been ambition enough left to climb the tallest tree, glimpses through a glass would have revealed the whereabouts of redolent Nantucket.

"You are nine miles distant from any railroad or telegraph," said Captain Small, with evident satisfaction. The people of Cotuit Port are so accustomed to minding their own business that there need be no fear of them. A mile or so north of you is the Village of Osterville, whose people are so slow that they will never take the trouble to come down here. So here you are as much out of the world as if you were clams in a mud-flat. There won't be even a reporter to pry into your shells. And by the way, them Ostervillians is so stuck up in their notions that they've been trying to call this Paradise Island and all that sort of hifalutin thing, and the next we know they'll dub Dead Neck, Blue Bell Terrace because the wild peavines blossom there. Some of them has relatives in Boston and that's where all them notions come from. I 'spect that one of these days them Bostonians will come down along this coast like the frogs went into Egypt and then their cologne-bottle cottages will spile every nateral thing that we've got. But don't you forgit that this is Hannah Screechum's Island, and that that there spit of sand is Dead Neck, and that they'll carry them names till every mother's son of the old settlers is dead and buried."

"But how did the old settlers come to give such curdling names to these places?" asked Gipsy.

Small was rather nonplussed by the directness of the question, but managed to say: "Oh, there was a hidden treasure and a murdered man, and a killed woman besides, whose name was Hannah, and who set up an awful screeching every time anyone tried to find the treasure. There must have been some truth in the story, 'cos if there'd been no sech thing, there'd be no sech story."

"Does Hannah ever do any screeching on the island now?" asked Dorothy, who betrayed little respect for the captain's narrative, and less for his logic.

"No. Mrs. Abby Kelly, an Ostervillian spiritualist, asked her why she'd given up screeching, and Hannah answered that she'd got tired of it, 'cos the folkse had become so all-fired cute and intelligent that they paid no attention to ghosts and didn't believe in anything else that belonged to another world. Abby Kelly would have taken Hannah into partnership, so as to convince the people that sperrits could tip chairs and knock tables; she would have given anything if Hannah would have screeched at her sittings, but Hannah said she had more than she could attend to in the other world without bothering herself with this one."

"Thank you," said Dorothy with a great show of gratitude; "all I wanted to be assured of was that Hannah wouldn't do any screeching while we are here."

"You needn't trouble yourselves about the treasure," Small continued, "for although the old settlers ransacked the island from stem to stern, they never found anything but the oyster shells the Indians had forgotten to take to their Happy Hunting Grounds, when they cleared out to make room for the white man."

"But there is other treasures that'll be of some account. There's quauhaugs if you're a mind to wade for them, and clams that can be had for the digging, and lots of scup outside Dead Neck, and oceans of bluefish besides. When you get ready to go fishing, I'll take you out in one of our fast sailing Cotuit boats. We can anchor for scup fishing, but you have to keep scudding like the dickens if you want to get hold of a blue fish. They're to be caught only by making believe to run away from them."

It was not long before they verified this part of the treasure story to their full satisfaction, though it was at the cost of tender feet, soft hands and sensitive faces, which persisted in protesting against the exposures to which they were so ruthlessly subjected.

The camp was named Castle Indolence, after one of Thomson's poems, but the occupants kept themselves so busy with one thing and another that little time went to waste. They liked their camping on the island better than they did their voyage up the Hudson, because they could keep themselves so busy doing nothing, though they would not have missed the river trip for anything.

Hearing that there was a settlement of Indians at Marshpee, not far from Cotuit Port, they hired a team at the Port and made an excursion to the relics of the lost tribes. They found the tawny faces, the high cheek bones, the straight hair and the black dull eyes that characterize the Indians, but these were about all that was left of the once famous tribes of Massachusetts.

"They live like white people, with their cottages, school and church, and white manners and meannesses thrown in, and that takes all the romance out of them," said Bert, discontentedly, after his return. "I went around and tried to find

something in the shape of an arrow, or a tomahawk or a scalp to buy, and they looked at me as if I were a heathen, and talked religion at me so fast and pointedly that I left them as soon as I could. One old squaw—I mean, lady—wanted to pray for me. I told her I had no objections to her doing it after I was out of sight. And then she looked at me so sadly I said she might go ahead at once. But for some reason or other she didn't see fit to take up with my offer."

"She knew that you were an uncivilized, heathen white boy," said Gipsy, indignantly; "that's why she didn't give you the benefit of her blessing. I wish I had been there in your stead."

"You might have been if you had not been so busy hunting after eagle feathers, and bead wampums and other vanities," Bert retorted laughingly.

They had not been in camp after their return more than an hour when a boat-load of company came into their little landing to make a call. They had come down from Osterville. Three of the ladies belonged to Boston, and two to the village. One of the gentlemen was from Boston, another was the editor of "The Barnstable Patriot," and the third was from the village where he officiated as pastor of the Baptist Church. The Boston ladies knew all about Don's career, and one of them was one of the anonymous contributors to the fund he had set aside for trust purposes.

The editor was there to write up the party. With this exception the visit proved more than pleasant. The exception, however, arose more from the modesty of the interviewed than from the intrusiveness of the interviewer. And in the end, the subjects of the editor's search suffered little from the account he gave of the party.

When the campers returned the call they discovered that

Osterville consisted of about three hundred inhabitants, whose houses looked as if they had been originally planted by a Cape Cod gale, so promiscuously were they scattered.

"The people look as sharp as razors," said Dorothy, "but what surprises me is that they have not invented more names for themselves. When you have said Crockers and Crosbys, Hallets and Lovells, Scudders and Hinckleys, you have exhausted the whole list of names."

"That's because they marry one another so's to keep their names at home," explained Captain Small, who was bound to say all he could in disparagement of the rival village. Jealousy ran high between the two places. Every stray egg that could be hatched to the detriment of each other was immediately set upon and incubated.

On Sunday Don rode with the Cotuit minister, who was to preach an afternoon sermon in Osterville. He was much pleased with the quality of the sermon and the character of the congregation. But during the services a Sunday school boy of the "Scudder persuasion" resolving that a Cotuit horse should not be tied to an Osterville fence, cut the exchanging minister's new harness into three times the number of pieces it was originally designed to have. Without a murmur, the minister put things together as best he could and drove home talking as cheerfully as was possible under the circumstances. The boy, although well known, escaped punishment for his offense because his father was a local church official; he never, however, got rid of the criminal disposition which prompted his act. Folly was bound up in his hide and he was an object of contempt to all who had the misfortune to know him in his subsequent life. The very nails with which he was in the habit of scratching people, turned inward and proved his sorest punishment.

On meeting Captain Small, Don asked him how he liked the Osterville parson who had exchanged with his pastor.

"Only middling well," Small replied, pursing his mouth and lifting his eyes to the clouds. "Fact is, though he may do for Osterville, or some place out West, like Chicago, he could never fill the bill for Cotuit Port. We must have the best of preaching in our place."

"How much do you pay," Don was curious enough to ask. "Three hundred dollars and a donation."

"Where does he live?"

"In Cotuit, of course. What makes you ask that question?"

"You pay him so little, I didn't know but he lived in Heaven during week days."

Captain Small walked away, looking grieved to the heart.

"Look here, Captain Small," Don called after him, and causing him to return; "that man is a christian, besides being a good preacher. He took the cutting of his harness without complaint, and didn't say a word to me about the meanness of his parishioners who force him to go into the pulpit looking as seedy as a moulting bird. I shall get him a new harness, and take his measure for a new suit of clothes which I will have made for him as soon as I return to Boston. But if you charge these things on your donation account I'll set the Boston reporters after you, and they know how to flay mean people to perfection."

"If you'll give him them things, I'll give him a barrel of flour and not let even my wife know anything about it," said Small, joyously, for he loved his pastor, and practically was his best friend.

And so the time passed away, almost every day bringing with it some new pleasure and some new incident revealing

queer phases of human nature, both juvenile and adult. Having the theatrical garments on board *The Lady of The Lake*, Wilhelm and Werner sifted a medley from *The Midsummer Night Dream* of Shakespeare, and, forming a corps of assistants from the club and from the bright young people of Cotuit and Osterville, blended them together in a nocturnal festival in which lanterns gleamed, songs abounded, tableaux figured, recitations resounded and dancing and clam chowder came in last, but not least in the round of innocent merry-making.

The people on shore who thought it a crime to black boots or to wear a ribbon, were shocked, and wished that Hannah Screechum would do her duty by "the ungodly carousers" and bring them to their pious senses by one of her most piercing "Scratches."

Although unaware of the benevolent wishes of the "unco guid," people of Cotuit and Osterville, the occupants of *Castle Indolence* on the night following the festival had reason to believe that Hannah did not intend to let them depart without giving to the most incredulous evidences of her existence and of her old-time "scratching" ability.

The lights were out, the trees were silent and not even a breath of wind wandered through the dense shadows of the island. It being half past eleven, and the campers having been on the sea all the afternoon blue-fishing, they were wrapped in a profound slumber. Suddenly there was a sharp titinabulation of a bell not far from where the camp was situated. Again and again the bell rang out, seeming to gather force with each repetition, to the unbounded horror of the trembling campers who hastened to light their lights. Whilst they sat cowering and listening to the weird sounds ringing through the woods, peals of high-keyed laughter pierced the air and was immedi-

ately followed by shriek after shriek that sounded so discordantly terrific that the very trees began to shiver, for the wind itself was being aroused and sighed through the pines with a low undertone that but added to the general alarm.

Peter, half clad, hugging his Bible with both hands to his breast, and shaking as with the palsy, fled from his own tent, and ran into the tent of the other campers crying out: "The Lord hae mercy on us all for a' our iniquities an' transgressions!" He had been sadly tried by the doings of the preceding evening, notwithstanding he had avoided remonstrances, and had heroically performed the duty of waiting upon the pleasures of the guests. He felt sure now that supernatural causes were at work to punish them all for having such a merry time. He tried to stay himself with some Scriptural quotation suited to the emergency, but his mind was so clouded by fear that his memory refused to serve him.

Dorothy, in her terror, clung to Bert, while Gipsy cast herself into Don's arms beseeching him to keep "Hannah" from harming her.

Don began to laugh in spite of Gipsy's fears, and while Bert was holding Dorothy very tightly to prevent himself from trembling, the untimely mirth increased till it seemed but the echo of the sounds that came up from the surface of the Seapuit.

"There is no Hannah in this hubbub," he said, as soon as he could control himself. That was only an owl that made those shrieks and that mocking laughter is made by a loon that's down there on the river, and the bell is our dinner bell. When the tide is up you have noticed the shoals of menhaden fish that swim about here. While watching them after supper I saw three small sharks following them and I planned to get one, if possible. I baited a cod-hook with a piece of fresh

beef, and after putting on a good float, threw it into the river, and tied the shore-end of the line to a small sapling on the top of which I suspended our dinner bell in such a way that it would ring if the bait was taken. Something is at that line; the line has started the bell; the bell has started the loon, and the loon has stirred up the owl and we have had a great scare for nothing. I am going down to the shore to see what has swallowed that bait."

"If you are sure it isn't Hannah, I will go with you," said Bert bravely, and the Vonbergs, though still shaking, as with an ague, declared that they would follow.

"But what if you should be mistaken, and Hannah should come here while you are gone," said Gipsy, tremulously.

"Peter with his Bible will be a match for her," answered Werner, beginning to realize the absurdity of their alarms.

But Peter, mortified by the groundlessness of his fears and the dishabille of his person, had retreated to his own quarters where, after depositing his Bible, he said to himself: "The wicked flee when no man pursueth. See Proverbs twenty-eight and first."

On being called he returned looking humble and crest-fallen, and saying: "I might hae keened it was but an owl an' a loon had I not been clean fasht by the bell. And to think it is the same bell I hae been ringing every day, is cneuch to make me believe that I hae become as daft as that loon that's laughing at the bell."

The shark was securely hooked and required hard pulling to get him on shore where he thrashed about in the sedge and snapped his jaws as if he had swallowed Hannah before taking the beef. He measured six feet three inches. The bell having ceased to ring, the loon and the owl relapsed into silence, leaving the shark-catchers to do the laughing and shrieking.

As soon as the sun was up they began to extract the teeth of the shark for mementoes, and as there was nothing more to fear from the manes of Hannah Screechum, Gipsy said with evident disappointment: "I wish it had been Hannah instead of the shark. There would have been seven of us to prove the ghost story which would have made a lovely ending to our wonderful trip."

"I'd rather catch a shark than a ghost any time," exclaimed Bert, with fervor. "We have got the shark, and we have had the scare. If an imaginary ghost can play such havoc with us, I wonder what a real one would have done?"

They tried to keep the story to themselves, but Gipsy having told it to the captain, the captain told it to his wife, and so the "Darnstable Patriot" brought it out with trimmings and embellishments galore, as did the Boston papers also when they reproduced it from the Cape papers. Notwithstanding the facts were so widely distributed, there followed a real revival of The Hannah Screechum superstition and the island for years was given a wide birth at night. Having, however, received a new name, and being made accessible by a fancy bridge which gives entrance to driveways of surpassing beauty, and being frequented by the costly equipages of Boston people whose summer houses occupy the adjacent bluffs, the superstition is fast passing into the shades of oblivion.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A PARTING LOOK INTO THE KALEIDOSCOPE.

In after summers, The Lady of The Lake made other vacation trips, but never another richer in store of pleasure and variety of experience than that first one which is now only a precious memory to those who had the good fortune to participate in it.

During the vacation, Don had many an hour in which his old air castle habits asserted themselves with redoubled power. Indeed in the whole of his after life, he was seldom content with piling up mere wood and brick and stone according to the rules of the prevailing forms of architecture. He was not averse to hard pan, but as a general thing, he had a strong preference for Dreamland; and the castles he shaped there were far more to his mind than any he could shape on earth. True, they appeared only to disappear, and many of the appointments of his imagination proved but disappointments to his hopes. Nevertheless, though bright clouds changed into grey, and sublime airy shapes became transformed into shreds of vapory rags or fragile tracery that only served to cob-web the blue sky, miniature globes of moisture were distilled from them that made the earth the richer for their descent.

Much to his own surprise, Don finally found himself in the pulpit. Doctor Beecher, his prudent and steadfast friend, urged him to preach a trial sermon in his desk.

"I, preach a trial sermon in a pulpit where first and last all

the men of the Beecher family, from the father down to the youngest son, have preached?" Don exclaimed with astonishment. "And would you tempt me to preach a trial sermon in Boston where there are so many great men and grand preachers? The very thought would be the essence of temerity. No; I'll go down home, and if I really do get courage enough to preach a trial sermon, I'll try it upon the country people. In any event, it will be a great trial to them as well as to myself."

Although the good doctor smiled benevolently and urged strenuously, he failed to turn Don from either his opinion or his purpose.

When he descended from the bird's nest pulpit which hung near the ceiling of the meeting house where his first sermon was preached, it was with such shame and confusion of face that it seemed as though all the air castles he had ever dreamed of had been demolished and the remains packed in the skin of a mustard seed.

While vainly endeavoring to retreat from the valley of his humiliation, Peter Piper, who had returned to his old haunts with all his old habits, met him with the words: "And ye shall go forth, and grow up as the calves of the stall. See Malachi fourth and second. Ye are but a calf o' a preacher now, lad, but accordin' to that Scripture there's a chance for ye to grow into a regular roarin' bull o' Bashan."

On reaching home his mother corrected him for saying first, of the first head of his sermon, instead of firstly. An elder brother, who had survived the ordeal of his own trial sermon, chided him for using the word analogy, saying that such a word could neither be intelligently used by the speaker nor understood by the people. Three younger brothers frankly declared that they themselves could have excelled the

sermon by a number of degrees. His only sister reproved him for making a sweat spout of his chin when he might have removed the moisture by timely applications of a handkerchief, which she herself had carefully placed in the right pocket of his coat. His father, the pastor of the flock, remained eloquently silent, and for this Don was profoundly thankful, for he knew that he might have opened his mouth and spoken terrible things in righteousness.

What his old schoolmates and the people thought of his first effort, Don never cared nor dared to learn, but what he thought of himself, and it, is sealed with seven seals. Many years afterward Doctor Beecher tried to elicit an account of his emotions on the occasion of his first clerical flight—or more correctly speaking, his first clerical descent—but the seven seals remained unbroken even to him, the best advisor he ever had. The most vital movements of the body are concealed from view, and the same holds true of some of the adverse experiences of life which deposit the successive layers of human character.

Three rather strange things happened in connection with Don's clerical career. A time came when he preached inside of that church edifice where outside the main entrance he formerly lay penniless and sick in order to shield himself from the drenching rain that added horrors to the forlornness of his night. A time came also when he occupied the desk of Tremont Temple, where he had once been compelled to make his midnight lodging in a dry-goods box in the attic of the building. The sexton who discovered him in that position was still alive when Don stood in the desk, and was woefully perplexed by the quickly discovered resemblance between the looks and voice of the speaker and the looks and tones of the lad whom

he found dreamily murmuring in his sleep fragments of lessons learned in a pious home.

In these two instances the audiences were at liberty to go or stay, but the third audience to be mentioned in illustration of the revolutions of the wheel of life, was spell bound; it could not turn its back on the speaker for the reason that the hearers were penitentiary convicts in The Charlestown State Prison. Among the convicts listening to Don's sermon were four 'long-time' men, prematurely old, and with every vicious trait of their characters becoming more and more legibly written in their crime-hardened countenances with every passing year. Two of these men were the thieves who burglarized the Vonberg house, and who were convicted in consequence of Don's discovery of them in Copp's Hill Burying Ground. The other two were the men concerned in Don's subsequent abduction. The recognition was mutual. The preacher pitied them, but they would have killed him without hesitation had circumstances favored the execution of their vengeance. There comes a time in the destiny of men when, because of the invincible force of habit it must be said: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still."

But to turn to less serious things. The Lady of The Lake, after having been in commission as a pleasure craft for several years, was turned over to Father Taylor, who converted her into a floating reading room for the benefit of the sailors. A September gale of wind that was no respecter of vessels finally wrested her from her fastenings and hurled her against the stone dock of The Charlestown Navy Yard with such ruthless force that, like The One Hoss Shay, she crumbled into nothing and vanished away.

Several of the original members of The Lady of The Lake Club are still alive.

"Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool, sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

One of them, Arnold Doane, wandered far and saw much, but with the great longing of a tender nature he returned to the scenes of his youth, where by his own ingleside he musingly recalls the words that were more than once recited or read in the cabin of The Lady of The Lake:

"The boast of Heraldry, the pomp of Power,
And all that Beauty, all that Wealth e'er gave,
Await, alike, th' inevitable hour;
The paths of Glory lead but to the grave."

"Time has taught me many wholesome lessons and has weeded from my heart many noxious things," said The Rev. John Paul Lovejoy with deep sincerity to Don, whom he had met at a great religious convention. "It has taught me that I did a great wrong when I turned you from my door so impatiently, and has weeded from my heart that selfish pride which made me more ambitious of preaching great sermons than of helping the poor and the needy."

Don looked at the veteran with brimming eyes and responding heartily and forgivingly, said: "Now that I am in the ministry myself, I realize what temptations focalize themselves upon the pulpit. And there, if anywhere, one should sincerely pray: Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Your present disposition makes ample amends for any mistakes you may have formerly committed."

"If they could be amended as easily as you forgive them I

should experience less pain whenever I see you or hear your name mentioned," he sadly replied. "Every mistake is a nail driven; we may withdraw the nail, but we cannot efface the mark it leaves."

A very handsome and elegantly dressed young woman standing near seemed to be waiting for the conversation to end, seeing which both men paused.

"I must apologize for interrupting you," she said, addressing Don, "yet I cannot refrain from speaking to you, for I am the eldest daughter of that family you saved from freezing and starving to death during the great snow storm. Thanks for your timely aid and subsequent fidelity we have prospered ever since. This is my husband, who is with me, and he wishes me to introduce him to you."

McElwin, the husband, a delegate to the convention, and a fine looking fellow, joined his wife in her acknowledgements, and begged him to make their house his home while he was in Providence.

Doctor Lovejoy could not but hear the conversation; and that which was the occasion of supreme satisfaction to Don, was a painful reminder to himself. Don was finding the bread he had cast upon the waters in his youth, while the Doctor, having sown so sparingly, was reaping nothing but the thistles of regret.

The three days Don spent with the McElwins in no wise diminished the satisfaction he experienced when they first acknowledged their indebtedness to him, although he took good care to let them know that but for the noble people who stood back of him he could not have rendered the substantial aid he did.

"But," said Mrs. McElwin, "if you had not braved that storm, I should not be here to-day, for when you entered our

room, the deadly numbness which precedes freezing was already stealing through my veins. And notwithstanding my efforts to keep my sisters covered, they also complained of the symptoms that were seizing me."

Her father was doing well, and with his family also lived in Providence. Don visited them with the daughter and received a welcome that was as warm as the fire that he started with the bundle of tracts on the day of his first visit.

"I have often laughed at the zeal with which you distributed your tracts in that stove," he said, alluding to the incident, "but am always sobered by the thought that, after all, they wrought the salvation that my family and I stood most in need of at that moment. We were saved as by fire literally; two hours more and we should have frozen to death."

"Yes, I have already told him that," said his daughter.

"Well, it can't be told too often," remarked Amelie, the second daughter. "The saving of seven lives in one day ought to have secured for Mr. Donalds a medal of gold."

"I have already received more than gold can measure," Don responded. "Success in helping our fellow beings is its own best reward." And as he spoke he recalled Bert's objections to his going forth on that eventful morning, and his confessions when informed of what had been done.

And now it is time to say that Bert married Dorothy Vonberg and finally removed to Chicago, the Chicago which he had always thought of with fear and trembling, and spoken of with the most depreciating words he could cull from his vocabulary. He has a book establishment of his own in the city and firmly believes that sooner or later Chicago will become the literary center of the United States. He is as extravagant in his praise of The Western Metropolis as he formerly was in its disparagement. And whether the temperature be hot or

cold, and the air currents calm or cyclonic, he maintains against all comers that there is no place like Chicago. He even goes so far as to say that her stock-yards and elevators, and her cliff buildings, parks and boulevards are the wonders of the world, while the hearts of her citizens are as big as her Ferris Wheel, and as nimble as the highest grade bicycle. Dorothy shares his enthusiasm, and when her father, the major, accompanied by Colonel Wickworth and his wife, visited her on Sylvan avenue, they, highly seasoned Bostonians though they were, quite readily conceded that Chicago was by no means the worst city in the world.

"Colonel Wickworth and his wife!" exclaims the reader. "How did that superannuated old bachelor happen to get married?"

By taking Bert's mother to Don with a license made out in due form, and having The Reverend Don Donalds unite them according to rites and ceremonies made and provided for such emergencies. He began his journey towards matrimony by visiting Don in the first place, and continued it by visiting the widow, in the second place; and completed it by taking her and going to Don, as aforesaid. Old as they were, Don performed the ceremony with great satisfaction, for he knew that two hearts which had showered unstinted kindness upon him would not be lacking in kindness toward each other. Besides, he had performed the ceremony for Professor Krasinski and his bride, the daughter of his friend, Deacon Snow; and why, therefore, should he not rejoice to do the same for the colonel and the widow?

Gipsy's satisfaction arising from the union was palatably seasoned by the reflection, that, now that her mother and the colonel were one, neither Miss Agincourt nor Deacon Wickworth, in the event of the colonel's departure for another

world, before they were ready to go, could by even the most sanguine stretch of expectation hope to derive benefit from his demise. In her judgment it was poetically just that Don, who had suffered so much through their instrumentality, should perform the ceremony which turned their hopes into despair. Bert sympathized with her views and so did Dorothy and the major and his two sons, Wilhelm and Werner. If, in some instances variety is the spice of life, in others unanimity is the wine, for even Don himself chuckled when he thought of Arabella's and the deacon's chagrin and disappointment.

But the reader is waiting for the announcement of the union of Don and Gipsy in the bonds of matrimony. That announcement cannot be made because it did not take place.

What! Not married? Did they not love each other? Yes, certainly. Did they not kiss each other? Yes, but only on two occasions. Did not Gipsy throw herself into Don's arms when Hannah Screeclium was supposed to be in camp? Yes; but she got out of them as soon as it was known that the bell-ringing and weird laughter and ghostly shrieks were all owing to the struggles of an unromantic shark whose love of raw beef had gotten him into a peck of trouble.

But they did not marry each other for three good reasons. Their love began too early, and consequently they outgrew it as boys and girls outgrow their knickerbockers and their short dresses. The everlasting loves of callow youth are apt to prove the neverlasting crudities of mere sentimental impulse—the morning cloud and early dew which vanish away under the rays of the rising sun of the maturer life.

The second reason was that Gipsy became a teacher in a female seminary; and teachers in female seminaries get to be so good and learned that they dry up and are blown away. At

any rate, after Gipsy went into the seminary, Don lost sight of her altogether.

And in the last place, as the preacher says, and generally to the great relief of his listeners, Don married another—a daughter of the man whose family he had been the means of saving from starvation and death—the sister of Mrs. McElwins, whose beauty, modesty, amiability all blending with an indescribable piquancy of character captured him in enduring bonds while he was at her father's house in Providence.

But here we must end, for their love for each other is another story.

THE END.

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