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PEOPLE I HAVE MET

by Rev. Mr. Beverly Carradine

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PEOPLE I HAVE MET

BY

BEVERLY CARRADINE

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CHAPTER 1

PEOPLE ON THE TRAIN

We have often thought that we could write a book of deep and strangest interest, simply in the narration or description of what we see and hear on the cars in our constant travelling. The train is like a moving panorama of actual and not painted life. Sometime we are made to think of a drama, with the way stations as scenes, and the end of the long journey as the dropping of the curtain. The actors are numerous and varied enough, in the form of passengers appearing and disappearing through the side doors of depots or stations, and heightening the impression of a great Play of Life going on. Truly there are all kinds and sorts of people, from the young couple pelted with rice by a merry bridal company, to the sad-looking man holding a child asleep in his arms, while his wife is in a long cypress box in the baggage car ahead.

The boys and girls going to or returning from academy or college, are often aboard. So is the boisterous baseball club, the United States soldier or sailor on furlough, the man with a jew's-harp who insists on entertaining the crowd, and the travelling agent who quietly takes possession of four seats to give proper rest to one very little individual. Recently, when a few persons of the last named order had about monopolized a passenger coach, a burly-looking fellow who had looked around in vain for accommodation cried out in a stentorian voice, "I have made a mistake; I find I've gotten into the sleeping car." The irony as an argument succeeded, and there was almost an instantaneous drop on the floor of six or eight pairs of heels, and the sleeper became a day coach without a porter to make up the beds.

Sometimes the car scenes are amusing, then again harrowing, and on other occasions deeply pathetic.

Not long since our attention was attracted on the train by a man and woman who sat across the aisle diagonally from where we were stationed. At first the latter's conduct doubtless aroused the criticism and disapproving judgment of all who looked upon the couple. She had a way

of putting her hand on her companion's shoulder and peering around into his face. Then she gave his hat a number of different tilts on his head, and righted it with a laugh that had the tone of a woman but the character and expression of a child. Each time that the man turned to notice or answer her, we were struck with the sad, grave and yet tender lines in his countenance. He never rebuked, and never was impatient with her. When in response to touches, taps, and urgent questionings, he would turn and look upon her, the expression was so gentle, accompanied with a smile that was kind, but so faint, that we marvelled and found our heart going out in a strange, strong way to the man.

At last the woman moved and looked back in our direction, and like a flash we saw and understood all. She had lost her reason! She was not of the violent type, but reminded one more of a child's mind being in the body of an adult. How the catastrophe had happened whether by sorrow or sickness, we did not and could not know. We could only see that to the stricken wife in her childlikeness and helplessness, the husband had become everything. While to the man, in his patient acceptance and quiet endurance of a crushing life sorrow, had come a dignity, nobility and glory, that otherwise he might never have known.

On a trip from Tennessee to Missouri, I beheld a scene which at once demanded a place on the wall of memory. It was that of a baby that with but two or three distressingly brief intervals, cried all the way through half of Tennessee, the whole breadth of Kentucky, the entire Southern portion of Indiana, clear into the center of Illinois! The mother for all that eight hours was nothing but a bouncing machine. I marvelled how she could stand the exercise so long; but she did, and so up and down and round and round went the child. Now it was head upward, and now it was face downward. Next it was jogged, then rolled, and then tossed, and still it cried. We, the passengers, traveled four or five hundred miles, but the baby counting in its aerial excursions went much farther. All of us were fatigued in simply sitting still, but how must that poor mother have felt! And yet in all that tune we never saw a sign of impatience directed toward the infant. I ruminated on the scene, and thought of that child growing up to be indifferent, ungrateful and even the occasion of heart-break to the mother. And yet here she was nursing patiently the creature that should afterward bow her down with sorrow.

Well for parents is it, that an impenetrable curtain veils the future from their eyes.

Loud talking in a street car or train filled with passengers is pronounced by proper critics and judges to be an exhibition of vulgarity, or something worse. Many travelers know what it is to be so disturbed by a noisy conduct as to be unable to read, write or even think. But what shall we say of a young man who made a cornet of his mouth and blew dead marches all the way from New York to Philadelphia, distance several hundred miles, time from five to six hours. He evidently belonged to a brass band and was a blower himself or a great admirer and imitator of those who did manipulate wind instruments. Leaning his head against the side of the car, and with an abstracted gaze, he went through a number of funeral marches that I knew, and a greater number that I did not and do not wish to know.

The car was crowded, and there was no chance of changing my seat, and so already worn out with a meeting of ten days, and with nerves tightened and screwed up to highest tension, while reading and writing was impossible, I had to sit and listen to dirge after dirge, and witness, so to speak, burial after burial, until by the time I reached Philadelphia I had attended in person the funeral of every hope, the interment of all my friends and relatives, and there was nothing left but to be buried myself.

I verily believe that if that young man had followed me on the Pittsburgh train and began to pucker his mouth, I should have collapsed, or fled from the coach incontinently. The moral of this incident is that we must not only not talk loud on the cars in mercy to others, but if we know tunes of various kinds, we should refrain from whistling or blowing them. Some folks may not have musical taste or sadder still for them, may be possessed of a discriminating and cultivated ear, and therein comes the suffering.

The advantage of a wooden music box is, that you can make it play what you like and stop when you please. The awful trouble of a human music box on a train is that he starts himself and will not be hushed. He makes the people hear whether they like his arrangement of melodies or not. Neither is there any hope of relief save in the quality of the individual railroad ticket. As for the man himself, there is no need to expect anything;

for the slot! the main spring! and the crank! are all inside of him, especially the crank.

Once I was on a Coast Line Railroad, with Puget Sound on the left, and lofty fir-crowned bluffs on the right. The view is beautiful at certain seasons, but at this time there had been heavy rains for several days, while lowering clouds covering the sky with a great brown mist overhung the sea.

Suddenly there was a jolt, jar, and grinding kind of stop. A few minutes later the information spread that a "slide" had taken place just ahead. A "slide" is a species of avalanche falling from the bluff and bringing down with it not only soil and gravel, but oftentimes great rocks and trees.

We had hardly received the news when a still larger "slide" took place just behind the train. So here we were shut in on both sides, unable to advance and equally powerless to retreat. And here we remained all night from eight in the evening until eight in the morning while the storm raged, the firs bent threateningly over our heads, and the waves of Puget Sound broke with a sullen roar on the shore just fifteen feet away.

Great was the lamentation, vociferation, expostulation, indignation and exclamation on all sides as the doleful tidings passed through the coaches that there was no hope of relief for twelve long hours.

Some women said "It was just awful." Still other females cried out "It was perfectly dreadful." One indignant feminine declared that the railroad company was a "horrid old thing." Several men remarked that they fervently wished they had taken the boat. This, of course, produced a smile. One fussy old gentleman confided to a group of strangers the fact that somebody had insisted on his taking this trip; that he did not want to come; he hoped now they were satisfied; that for himself he most earnestly wished he was safe at home. A young man affirmed mournfully that his brother was waiting for him several stations away, and he hated to have him in the depot by himself so long. This was a grief located on high moral grounds; he was sorry simply on his brother's account. But partly because the highmindedness of his regrets was suspected, and mainly from the fact that all had tribulations of their own, no attention was paid to the mourning of this unselfish being.

There were others who remained bright and cheerful, passed from group to group and endeavored to enliven the despondent throng. Still others kept silent and took a new grip on faith and patience.

As the night wore on and exhaustion told on the people, it was curious to see the methods undertaken and the various postures of body indulged in by many in order to obtain needful repose. Happy the person who had a friendly shoulder to bolster himself or herself upon. Well for the inside passenger who had a wall against which to recline his head. Other occiputs jerked and bobbed around as if they would leave the shoulders to which they belonged. One man folded his hands, dropped his chin on his breast, and slept as if he was in his bed. He was the envy of all who saw him. We beheld three children leaning against each other and all locked in peaceful slumber. The men, as a rule, cut the most remarkable and ungainly figures and made the most unearthly sounds as, with heads jammed in corners, or thrown back on the seat, with mouth wide open, they panted, gasped, snorted or snored as the case happened to be.

One tall, long-limbed individual, who was sleeping with his knees pressed against a seat in front of him, evidently dreamed that he was cramped in bed by something or somebody, and so gave a great jerk to his body, in which his limbs were lifted and thrust over the top of the seat in front and his feet, clothed in a pair of No. 11 boots, were crossed just over the head of a sleeping lady. The combination of the ostrich-plumed hat and the crossed boots just above it, looking like an immense pair of ears, was very striking. Both the owners slept on peacefully and were profoundly ignorant of the amusement they were creating. It was a pity that the "New Woman" or the "Woman's Rights Female," could not have been there to cry out and say, "Behold, here in symbol what we see in reality! The foot of the man is lifted above the prostrate head of the woman. Look also how unconscious she is of her own degradation; and see how he sleeps on well content at the state of affairs! Arise, sisters, and cast off the heel of masculine tyranny," etc., etc.

At this juncture we became interested in the loud talk of a well-to-do fish dealer, who sat several seats in front. He had evidently made money in the world, whether he had secured polish of manner and other desirable things or not. And so having succeeded in a business way, he seemed to think

this gave him a right to ascend the Throne of the Universe, and in a loud voice and louder manner, which permitted no contradiction from any source whatever, proceeded to pass judgment upon all men and things.

The man's perfect confidence in his utterances was simply marvellous. He spoke as if he had been in the Councils of the Beginning and had also seen the end of all things. In addition to this, the individual had a rich, cackling laugh, with which he would punctuate and end his remarks after a manner most mirth-provoking to hear. Smiles would break out on all sides whenever that self-satisfied cackle would ascend and fill the car. The talker failed to distinguish the difference between having people laugh with, and laugh at you. In his sapient deliverances the man wiped out all parties, scored the churches, criticized the government, deposed royalty, settled social and economic questions, and literally judged the earth. Society was all wrong; education was misdirected; in fact, everything was involved in mistake, failure and in a general bad way but himself. He was severe on the customs of the Eastern States in comparison with the West. He utterly annihilated the Upper Tendom of New York with most sarcastic and withering flings at society in that city. In a word, everything had to go down before this new Daniel come to Judgment, this unrecognized Solomon of the twentieth century.

It is true that his speeches abounded in violations of the rules of grammar, that the dictionary had no charms for him, and equally evident in his monologues that he had read nothing but newspapers. But then he was so sure he was right, and his dry cackling laugh was so conclusive, that it seemed a pity he should abdicate a throne he filled so well. And so he did not, at least that night, but gabbled and cackled on until the morning. One of his many deliverances I put down in my notebook. It was in regard to the rainfall in different sections of the country. he said:

“I have saw as much rain out here in three days as some of you back East have saw is three months.”

Daybreak found us in the same place, and revealed such a state of things in the coaches as can well be imagined. Haggard faces, disordered apparel and tousled heads abounded; but as women have longer and thicker suits of hair than men, so the females looked worse in the daylight than the

masculine side of the party. We were certainly ashamed of them, and rejoiced that they were no kin to us.

We felt as did a certain evangelist's wife, who was traveling once with her husband. They had to wait several hours at a junction for a train, when the exhausted preacher propped his valise on a bench to support his back, hung his legs over one of the iron railings, threw back his head, closed his eyes, and in less than a minute was lost in sleep, while a most stentorian and unmusical snore issued from his nostrils and wide open mouth. The wife gave one glance at her unconscious consort and another at the smiling lines of observers in the waiting room, and then promptly betook herself to a distant corner, where she acted as if the sleeper was neither kin nor acquaintance of hers.

At eight o'clock a small steamboat touched a neighboring wharf, and fully one hundred of the passengers boarded the little vessel for a neighboring town, the writer among them.

The long weary night was over at last, and relief, deliverance and joy had come with the morning.

CHAPTER 2

A HUMAN VOLCANO

It must be admitted that in the midst of a world full of mysteries, the greatest of all is that of life itself. Men can carve, paint, mold, shape and build in many diverse ways, appearances and semblances of life, but with all their abilities cannot create that mysterious something within us of voluntary movement, which in the force of instinct with the animal, or in the higher form of reason in man, is beheld choosing for itself and endeavoring with endless energies to obtain the best for itself in planes and realms for which it was designed.

A second wonder is the all but innumerable varieties and expressions of life among human beings as to the character, intellect, sensibility, temperament, taste, talent, genius and acquisition of knowledge. This fact alone explains the undying interest produced on the mind and heart by the long, unceasing procession of humanity. The head of the column appears coming out of the mists of the eastern sky of eternity, and with no two in the ranks exactly alike, vanishes through the Gate of Death where the sun of an earthly existence goes down behind the country graveyard or the wilderness of monuments of a city cemetery.

It matters not how dissimilar these individuals may be as to mind, disposition, accomplishment and attainment, we have yet to see one who did not know something, or possess some knack, gift or grace that another did not have, and so had some charm, interest or power peculiarly his own.

But in addition to natural gifts, physical appearance, and variety of disposition, comes the all but endless diversity of character.

Not only every virtue, but every vice is seen in the vast column of march, and that in the course of a few years' sweep of time. Moreover, these very excellences and depravities are beheld in every stage, from the incipient or beginning, down to the ghastly end, or up to a glorious culmination,

according to the road the individual is traveling, and the Master whom he is serving.

The first time that the writer ever saw the subject of this sketch, or life picture, the man was about thirty-five years of age and so handsome that he bordered on the beautiful type that is generally accorded to woman.

He had curling chestnut hair, hazel eyes, a finely formed oval face, broad white brow, and a beard of golden brown. A clean-shaved upper lip revealed a mouth that, when not in a kind of pleasing repose as to expression, wore a gentle, kindly smile, that sometimes bordered on the melancholy. His wide-open, honest-looking eyes had a trustful, innocent gaze that reminded one at times of a child, and on other occasions of the appealing glance seen in a fawn separated from its mother and herd.

He was a college graduate, came of an excellent Southern family that had been stripped of their possessions by the war, and possessed a number of accomplishments. Chief among them was that of violin playing. We have heard masters of that beautiful human life instrument, but never listened to one who excelled this individual whom we shall call Augustine Black. He never played without much entreaty, his reluctance evidently not being assumed. But when the man consented and placed the violin under his chin, with almost the first touch of the bow the spell of his power fell on the group.

He always stood as he played, and with the brown curls falling over his forehead and shading his eyes, and the golden beard covering the upper part of the instrument, the white, graceful hand began with the slowest of motions at first to weave the strange influence that thrilled and melted every group that heard him, whether he performed in an elegant parlor, or in a country store surrounded with a cluster of gaping rustics.

He was equally gifted in almost every style of music, from first-class opera, through the simple ballad love songs, down to a corn field melody and Negro cabin break-down. But his favorites were among the classics, and of these he preferred those of the pleading, wailing, heart-breaking order. At such moments he seemed to forget his surroundings, a misty look would gather in his eyes, the mouth would grow melancholy, and his

thoughts seemed evidently so far away that he did not even note the tremendous effect his playing was producing.

Ten years before we first saw him he had come into the country on a visit and met a very rich, but exceedingly homely girl. When a child this young woman had been kicked in the face by a horse, and the whole print and shape of the hoof had been left on her flattened and marred countenance. Plain-looking before, this disfigurement made the girl's face almost hideous. But Augustine Black, after he saw the plantation three miles long, and one mile wide, owned by this same young lady, felt that he could stand the physical uncomeliness of such a wife for the sake of the great property she would bring him. And so they were married, she fairly worshipping the handsome man who had wooed her, while he could not conceal from the gaze of the curious after marriage that he not only was indifferent to her, but wretched with her.

His lack of love, painful as it must have been, only seemed to intensify the woman's devotion; while at the same time her attentions appeared to increase his irritation towards her.

From a youth he had been accustomed, so we were informed, to unrestrained bursts of temper. After his marriage they became more frequent and violent, and not only the house servants, and slaves on the plantation, but even the devoted wife and loving children became the targets and objects of his frenzy and fury.

His appearance at such times was so demoniacal as to be simply frightful. On one of these occasions the writer had stopped at the house by his request for dinner. He had ridden in from the great cotton field and was heated. He went to the wash shelf to bathe his face and finding no towel began to call and then to bawl and finally almost scream for one, accompanying his vociferations with stampings of his feet on the floor, and words of dreadful profanity. He looked like a maniac at the time. As a result of this fresh outburst two of his little daughters, a servant and his wife, each one with a towel, and all looking frightened to death, came running from different directions towards the infuriated man.

As they retired, he said to us, looking with his crimson face over the towel:

“I tell you I rule in this house.”

The writer was an unconverted young man at this time, but he felt as he looked at the now cooling off Bedlamite, that if ever he had witnessed a man captured and ruled by the devil, it was the individual before him.

That very evening we saw him stand up in a refined, appreciative circle of an old Southern home and charm the whole group with his matchless playing on the violin. The chestnut locks fell over the white brow, the brown eyes took on their far-away look, while the mouth wore an expression of sweetness and tenderness that a painter might have been uncertain as to whether it belonged to the innocence of childhood, or the purity of saint.

That night the instrument trembled, sobbed, wept and wailed with, “Ah, I have sighed to rest me,” “The Heart Bowed Down,” “Aileen-Aroon,” “You’ll Remember Me,” and “Sounds From Home.” Doubtless we would have been as much moved as the rest, but we had that very day heard “Sounds From Home” so different from those he was producing on the violin that in our strenuous effort to make the two agree, we lost the potency and spell of the really beautiful piece.

There had been a frightful volcanic eruption from this man in the morning, and here I was called to look upon sunny slopes and smiling fields in the same person and on the identical day. Where I had beheld red-hot lava and burning scoria, I now saw orchards and vineyards; and over a charnel house of death, Pompeii and Herculaneum had been rebuilt.

Through failure of crops and independence of hired labor, financial stringency struck Augustine Black with others, and to swell his purse he started a distillery. It was a small one, but big enough to corrupt and blight the neighborhood for miles around. Black began to drink himself, and the introduction of the fiery stuff into his own volcanic being, naturally increased the number of eruptions.

Every week he would carry a barrel of the liquor into a small town hard by and sell it to one of the merchants of the place. We have seen him sitting astride the barrel in a two horse wagon which was driven by a Negro, and as he swept thus along in his superb masculine beauty, with brown curls, golden beard, flushed face and loud laughter, he looked like one of the

Greek gods, and would have made a most striking picture of Bacchus, the king of wine and revels.

Meantime the explosions became more frequent and terrible, followed at much longer intervals by violin playing. As he became more and more embruted, he cared less for the old-time music, and when he did yield to urgent requests to perform, it was evident that the hand was losing much of its cunning, and something was going from the man that he could not recall.

He had so many altercations with his employes, so many terrible scenes with his tenants, cursed and abused white and Negro laborers and servants so indiscriminately, that it became more and more difficult for him to cultivate the vast and beautiful plantation his wife brought him, and thousands of acres grew up in bushes, briars and thickets of all kinds. This state of things of course did not help the Mt. Etna spirit that fairly burned and raged within him. In these days the volcano was always smoking and rumbling, and the fire within never seemed to cool down.

One day a poor white man, a tenant of his, inadvertently made him angry. Black was on his horse at the time, but transported with a blind, choking, frightful rage, threw himself from the animal and rushed towards the countryman with death and destruction blazing in his eyes. The man tried to escape, but seeing it was impossible, and knowing also that he was no physical match for the wonderful form and strength of his landlord, suddenly stopped, drew his gun, fired a load of buckshot into the breast of his pursuer, and mounting his horse, fled the country and never has been heard from since.

The mortally wounded Augustine staggered toward his house, from which his wife and children came flying with screams and outstretched arms to meet him. His wife caught him as he fell, and he with his golden head in her lap and looking up into the marred but loving, faithful face bending over and dripping tears upon him, gave one long, shuddering sigh and died.

CHAPTER 3

MRS. GRIDDLE

We are confident that though science has failed to discover the secret of perpetual motion, yet Mrs. Griddle, of the Southern Methodist Church, had come somehow upon the marvellous phenomenon. As she never seemed still a moment, was always going, it was plain that she was a wound-up woman. Moreover, every tense feature of her face, and every line of the bustling, yet wooden-like figure testified to the fact of the woman being wound up. The machinery inside gave a kind of outside impression that it could not stand another turn of the key winder. That the constant going was felt to be a relief on the tautness of the springs, and that this nervous going saved the engine and the passengers in the home and church, and the general public outside a fearful blowing up or explosion.

Mrs. Griddle arose always at the same hour each morning to the second, garbed the wooden machine in ten minutes, had breakfast ready in thirty minutes more, and expected everybody to be in their place at the table, and eat what was set before them, asking no questions. As she arose at a certain hour, she retired as regularly. At half-past nine a bell was rung, visitors were expected to leave, lights to be put out and the family go to bed. Once the ringing of the bell stopped a slow speaking young gentleman in the midst of a proposition of marriage to Mrs. Griddle's niece. The young lady, knowing her aunt so well and painfully, told the young man to go at once and finish his speech on another evening. Everybody went to their rooms and sought sleep at the sound of the nine-thirty nocturnal tinkle. As for the Wooden figure, she was always orthodoxically oblivious at ten, while the inside machinery still ran, emitting at the nostrils an internal steam, called by some a snore.

Before twelve on Monday Mrs. Griddle had what she called her "wash" all out. Before twelve on Tuesday everything was ironed. Before twelve

on Wednesday everything was patched and mended. Before twelve on Saturday everything was boiled, baked, roasted and cooked for Sunday.

Thursday she attended to secular business matters downtown, and Friday, with a well-filled market basket, she mounted a little pony that moved on stiff springs like herself, and paid charitable visits among the very poor.

It was noticeable that these last named people never asked her to return. For while she left certain pounds of sugar, tea, and sausage, she also contributed as she handed out the above named articles such a tongue dressing down that none hearing it ever forgot it, or ever desired it again. She told them that they were trifling, worthless, lazy, had laid up nothing, for a rainy day, and were now dependent on others who had thus to pay for their own thriftlessness.

The honey had all gone out of Sister Griddle if she ever had anything of sweetness in her. Her machinery ground on, and turned out packages of benevolences and the like on the unhappy individual or trouble stricken family, but her mill was a dry one. There was no oil on the flour that the Bible speaks of; no smile sent with the dollar bill, no tear dripped as the pain or sorrow was commented on; no word of tender compassionate love fell from her lips on the ears of the sad, silent, despairing inhabitants of the wretched hovel. The machine turned out its due, so to speak, and then the engineer and the engine went away.

Perhaps one psychic effect of Sister Griddle's visit was, that the persons who had received her bounty and bombarding were more reconciled to leaving the world at once than they had ever been before.

Being so thoroughly and perpetually wound up, it is not to be wondered at that Mrs. Griddle's members were all and always actively employed. Not only her hands, fluttering here and there over pot, pan and kettle; her feet tramping up and down stairs, in and out all day without cessation; but her eyes also saw everything, her ears heard everything, while her tongue — well, with one solitary exception in her life, which we will mention later, it was never known to fail.

A person once said of her that she had "a tongue like the pen of a ready writer." A listener not recognizing the scriptural language, rejoined that she had the tongue of a ready wronger. Anyhow all in the town and church

dreaded that organ of Sister Griddle's and were ready to admit without controversy that if her tongue was like a pen, still it held good that with her it was mightier than the sword.

Everybody seemed to come in for a lip castigation from her. Not a pastor of her church but she had flayed in sections and sometimes all but skinned alive. We confess that we never realized the force of the restaurant term "Grilled" until we met Mrs. Griddle.

Sister Griddle was a devoted member of her church. Was always on time to the second in her seat; had sat in the same place for twenty years or more; heard the Gospel through her left ear all that time; while she posted herself so as to keep one eye on the preacher and the other on the congregation.

She generally, as is said, rubbed the fur the wrong way with about three individuals before she settled herself for worship in the corner of her pew. Running her white handkerchief over the tops of the seats she would say to the janitor, "You have not dusted this church in a month." To one of the ushers she would remark, "Why don't you have the inner door oiled. I believe you like to hear it squeak and announce your coming as you walk down the aisle." To the pastor she next delivered herself, "Quit using notes of your sermon. Strike out from the shoulder, and you will then hit somebody."

All this was good advice, but like some medicine it would have been taken better if sugar-coated; but unfortunately Sister Griddle seemed to have nothing saccharine in her nature, and dealt exclusively in salt, pepper and vinegar, not to mention Tabasco sauce.

She wanted the Sunday morning service to end at 12 o'clock, no matter where the preacher was, whether the other side of the Deluge, crossing the Red Sea, or up Mt. Sinai and had not come down, or was under the Mediterranean with Jonah and had not come up. In spite of all such situations and predicaments, she desired everything to stop at 12 o'clock. Her dinner hour was 12:30 and heaven and earth might pass away and change, but her midday meal must undergo no postponement or alteration of any kind both now and forever.

If the church clock pointed to one, two, or five minutes past twelve, and still no benediction or doxology from the pulpit, one could see Mrs. Griddle's bonnet ribbons bristle and stand on end, hear her black silk dress crackle and something snap like corset steels. It may have been the click of the good sister's false teeth, but the way she flounced and bounced out of the church one would have thought the building was doomed by a divine judgment, and she was escaping for her life to the mountains by way of the plain, and only had a minute granted her for her flight and present and eternal safety.

One of her pastors met with the sore calamity of losing his wife. Some one slipped the engagement and wedding rings from the dead fingers and gave them to the heartbroken husband. For a couple of days he wore them in a kind of stupor of grief, and with no feeling but that they were visible links to the departed, and that the two rings brought back two beautiful days in the past, connected with the white-faced sleeper under the ground.

Sister Griddle spied them the second day, and told the sorrow stricken man, with a burst of indignation that he ought to be ashamed of himself, sporting jewelry in public.

She was right about the principle of the thing, but she could have reached the case just as successfully another way, and by a gentler instrument than a butcher saw.

A second pastor had quite a nervous breakdown in the summer, and one night, just as he was arising to give his usual Wednesday night talk, or sermon, he became so weak that he requested his audience to grant him the privilege of sitting in a chair and delivering his message. With a faint smile he added that the Saviour, the greatest of preachers, and who uttered the mightiest of sermons, did so sitting down, and that he could plead his Master's example as an apology and defence of the attitude.

Instantly from all sides he was begged not to stand, that the audience would gladly hear him speak, and all the more gladly knowing his body was not being taxed.

For a wonder Sister Griddle was not on time at this meeting, but came in just as the pastor, sitting in his chair, had entered upon the address of the evening.

The bonnet strings, glazed alpaca dress, and invisible steel supports began to snap and crackle, electricity was felt to be gathering in her part of the house, and a storm was rapidly brewing and there were signs that it was heading toward the preacher. In ten minutes it broke upon him from the irate woman who, standing upon her feet said, "That things had come to a pretty pass that preachers could not stand up to deliver the Word of God. That for her part she could not remain in such a meeting and countenance such laziness."

And she would have gone, but the sick man, slowly arising, put one arm around a marble pillar near him, and looking as white as that against which he leaned, spoke to his audience, who listened with difficulty because of their indignant glances and righteous displeasure toward Mrs. Griddle.

When that same individual, who seemed to think that she was appointed to run everything in the world and church during the Lord's absence, was told of her mistake, her sharp reply was, "Then let him go to bed and stay there until he gets well."

The next year a third pastor announced at prayer meeting that he had run across a case of great need and distress in his pastoral work on a certain street in the southern part of the city, and he wanted fifteen or twenty dollars at once. Then, as the hats went around and the silver was merrily clinking in, Sister Griddle arose and said, "I will wager my life that this new-found case of distress of yours is no one else but that trifling no account Reuben Jackson, whom I have helped a dozen times." She might have added, "and skinned two dozen times."

Again Sister Griddle was right, for, as it turned out, it was Reuben Jackson, and he was of the trifling order.

Nevertheless the preacher argued that, granting the man was not what he should be, still he was sick and without food or medicine; that we ought to help him in his present need and discuss the other features of the case later. That according to the Bible, we all had little or nothing to boast of; that the Saviour Himself had said that after we had done all, still to count ourselves unprofitable servants.

To this, Sister Griddle simply sniffed disdainfully, in the air, rustled her black alpaca and crackled her steel stays.

We said that there was only one occasion when this remarkable woman was silenced and nonplused. She was paying a “charitable visit” to a poor man who had lost a wife, whom he fairly adored, and now, heart weary and body sick, was grieving his way to the grave.

Mrs. Griddle had visited him before, handing out packages of sugar and tea, and larger bundles of tongue lashing at the same time.

On this occasion, seeing by his face that he was near the tomb, she said in her sharp, business-like tone:

“Don’t be grieving any more; you will be dead in a day or so, and then you will see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

Whereupon, to her amazement and consternation, the man turned a goaded and furious look upon her, crying out:

“I don’t want to see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! I want to see my wife!” and burst into a flood of tears.

Mrs. Griddle, who had not loved her own husband, but scolded him up to the very portal of the tomb; and in fact had no tender feeling for any one; whose warmest conception of Heaven was, that it was a vision of the patriarchs, prophets and apostles sitting on thrones; sat gasping with astonishment for a few seconds, then arose, got upon her little pony at the door, and turning the double piece of machinery due north, clicked, clucked, rattled, crackled and rustled her way back to her own spotless, cheerless, and frozen home.

CHAPTER 4

MRS. CANDLE

A great thinker and writer in Europe announced the doctrine of the law of correspondence. He declared that animal life and form, were brought forth by the power of the Almighty, not in an arbitrary, undesigning fashion, but to illustrate and confirm in this way features and facts of the spiritual life and character realm. That the habits and the very figures of the animal world revealed in a visible and concrete shape the many virtues and vices to be found in the ways of righteousness and sin.

The idea once started, it is easy enough now to see cunning in the fox; heartless ferocity in the bearing of the wolf to the lamb; while the extended bristles of the porcupine, the snail going into his shell, the ostrich thinking himself hid because his shallow little head is in the sand, and the hiss, spring and sting of the serpent — all have their meaning and thorough counterparts in people around us.

And so the moth also comes in to teach us with its short existence by nature, and how it is made much shorter by the flame of the candle, about which in a kind of fascination it flutters. Who has not seen the tragedy upon the reading table on countless summer nights. How we tried to save them, and they would not be delivered. And as some were scorched and others consumed, still others took their place to suffer and die as their predecessors before them had done.

What a number were seen lying on the velvet cloth, some with one wing gone, some with both burned off, some trying to rise and fly when the means of flight had been destroyed, some breathing their last, while over all these victims of the lamp came still others, brown, black, white, golden winged without a glance at the scene beneath, without a single thought as to what had taken place, or fear as to what would occur to them — here they came for a few waltz movements, a few bows and dips to the flame and then they added to the congregation of the dead on the center-table.

The candles that did the damage were different, some of wax, others sperm and still others tallow; and some were in gold and silver holders, and others reposed in brass and tin; but all had a fire that was destruction and death to the moth.

Alas for the human moth family, how large it is! how heedless of warnings about the flame! and how regardless of past histories, and unaffected by the spectacle of ruined men and women who were destroyed by the very fire toward which they are drawn, or about which they have entered the circling sport of death.

There are more moths than there are candles of destruction; but the latter are so powerful that each one can slay many thousands of men. They all burn; they all flame; every one can scorch wings, and destroy both soul and body in hell.

Sometimes we find sin incarnated in a man or woman. When this is the case the candle is in a candlestick, and we discover that whether in a setting of gold, silver or brass, it destroys all the same many moths of the race of Adam.

We have known fashionable, worldly women in a community, and often in a church, who will have to answer to God for the loss of hundreds of human souls.

Cultured, refined, attractive, through the possession of numerous natural and physical graces, having beautiful homes where they could entertain largely and handsomely, they became the luminaries around which silly, thoughtless moths of the town from sixteen to twenty years of age gathered, fluttered, were scorched and died, until every church felt the loss and the world and hell revelled in the gain.

One house in particular we have recalled to memory hundreds of times; for there was not a single night scarcely in the week that the building was not all alight and ablaze with some kind of Bible-forbidden and pulpit-denounced entertainment. Cards, dancing, private theatricals and wine drinking abounded.

Once as a youth we were one of a serenading party to this beautiful, popular, worldly home of Mrs. Candle. At the conclusion of the last

instrumental piece, there descended from the second-story window, tied by strong cords, some objects that glistened and twinkled in the starlight as they came, and finally resting on the grass proved to be a couple of large decanters with wine glasses. As we recall the occurrence the whole body of five young men returned to their homes that night intoxicated.

This woman went to church regularly on the Sabbath and was the most stylishly dressed female in the audience. She had a costly ivory-handled fan, and in one of its sides was imbedded a tiny mirror. Prayer book in hand, and kneeling on her cushioned footstool, we have as a youth beheld her going devoutly through the beautiful service and responses of her church, while at the same time she was studying her face in the small looking glass most intently and approvingly. smoothing her eyebrow, or removing with her lace handkerchief a tiny speck from her cheek, she, keeping up with the ritual, would in a low musical voice confess that she was “a miserable offender” and say, “Spare us, good Lord.”

This woman, the instant the Sabbath was over, would resume her work of scorching, burning and destroying, while the Moths of the town, dressed in black broadcloth and in white lawn, gathered gladly in the brilliantly lighted home where string band waltz tunes, clinking wine glasses and hysterical laughter floated out on the night air.

There many young people parted with Christ forever; and as the Bible describes such a woman temptress, she the undoer would “wipe her mouth and say: ‘Why, what harm have I done? Young folks must have fun and pleasure!’”

Among the number of youths she hurt for life were several that stand out prominently in our recollection.

One resigned a most lucrative position and went far away into the Wild West. He seemed to wish to bury himself and hide his face from all who knew him. He has never returned since the day of his departure, fully thirty years ago.

Another from the social downfall which followed his sin, commenced drinking. He soon lost his situation as head bookkeeper in a large firm, and as he was the only support of a widowed sister and her two little girls, the greatest suffering came into that formerly happy household. As the victim

of Mrs. Candle drank still heavier to drown memory and stupefy conscience, no one would give him any kind of employment, and we saw him come to rags in dress, and to a kind of giggling idiocy in his life.

As some of the cases finally got known, the eyes of many turned upon Mrs. Candle with a horror stricken gaze; but she, Eve-like, laid all the blame upon others. She accused her victims. It is remarkable, and all to the credit of these young men, that they were silent. They did not in a single instance retaliate or utter a charge against her.

But not the less were there those in the town who saw plainly who were Moths in this instance, and who had destroyed the poor, attracted, fascinated, bewildered, fluttering things in tweed and broadcloth.

So sure was her own husband of the true cause of these social and moral calamities that he lost interest in his business life, secluded himself as much as he could from the social world, got so that he walked the streets with a drooping head, and finally went down into the grave a heart-broken man in the very prime of life.

Mrs. Candle flickered on for a number of years after this, but the better class of citizens dropped away from her entertainments. She was so shunned and cut in church that she and her ivory-handled fan had to stay away. But she was a devouring fire in nature and life and went on in her blistering, burning course just the same, only with a smaller company and a coarser set of people.

One of her last acts was to assist a woman of her own stripe and character to publish a little book of detraction and slander against a prominent and wealthy Southern gentleman. Blackmail was evidently the object, we are convinced, with both women. The book was called "The Blighted Life."

The gentleman declared his innocence to a few very near friends and proved it to their satisfaction; but he would not enter into any public dispute or newspaper wrangle with the woman. Nevertheless, the volume, read greedily by the vulgar-minded and buzzard-natured, was believed by many, and led to the strict seclusion of the slandered man's wife, whom he idolized, and she, in the bloom of a young womanhood, was laid away in a year's time in the cemetery. The husband, lacking a certain moral enduring

power, and bowed in spirit over the calumny and then the death of his wife, became a confirmed opium eater, and has been dead for years.

Poor, unfortunate man! Even he became in another sense a victim moth to the destructive flame of this pitiless, godless woman. She burned and destroyed in some way to the close.

It is a blessed thought that such flames have an end at last in this world. They can burn up to the socket, and go out in helplessness. Or, like the luminary of the domestic life, they can be blown out.

Just as a strong draught of wind can extinguish the lamp sitting on the table, so a sudden blast from the other world can put out such an existence as we have been writing about. It did so in this instance. There was one night a swift gust from eternity, and Mrs. Candle went out. The blast was death, and the light was the life of the arch woman temptress of our town.

She is today under a handsome monument in the graveyard, and around her lying as still and white-faced as herself is quite a company of human beings whom she injured and ruined while in this world. It is a sad and yet strangely familiar kind of spectacle.

The cemetery is the table; the dead moths are scattered in mounds over its surface; while the woman candle that wrought the harm and destruction is lying there burned up and blown out in the midst of the surrounding gloom and desolation, and encircled by the victims she had slain.

CHAPTER 5

A MEMORITER PREACHER

The Rev. Mr. L_____, was a member of one of the Southern Conferences of the Methodist Church. He was a man of excellent mind, fine. presence and delightful manners. In the social life he was easy, free, and in a proper sense self-confident; but in his ministerial career and work he had gotten into the bondage of writing and then memorizing his sermons.

The reader will recognize at once that to commit to memory forty or fifty pages of broad letter or foolscap paper, and then speak it off as though it was being originated at the time, and on the spot, was a piece of mental toil and drudgery that made the preacher ready to vacate and escape from the pulpit any time. Then when two of this kind of labored, head-splitting and mind-exhausting performances were required each Sunday at B_____, one of the leading stations in the conference, it can be seen at once that Bro. L_____ would utilize every kind of expedient to escape at least one, if not both, of these highly finished, impressively delivered memoriter affairs.

So he had numerous sore throats which prevented preaching; several nervous headaches; while the weather also proved an any in this matter, as it was often pronounced too inclement for the people to brave in turning out to the evening service.

Our first conference appointment was called Vernon Mission, and consisted of several small hamlets extending back in the country, while we lived in the large town of J_____, just ten miles from B_____.

It came to pass that a fifth Sunday came when we had nothing to do, whereupon Dr. C_____, pastor of First Methodist Church in J_____, learning the fact, requested us to fill his city pulpit on the Sabbath, while he, in company with Bro. Thompson, another preacher of the conference, would take a day off in a kind of rest trip. The jaunt was to be made in a

buggy, the destination the town of B_____, where Bro. L_____ was stationed.

The plan of Dr. G_____ and his companion, Bro. Thompson, was to leave J_____ after breakfast, make the journey leisurely, feed the eye on the unfolding scenery of wood, field, stream, meadow and the distant floating white clouds, drink in at the ear the song of birds, and so chatting, thinking and very much enjoying themselves, arrive in B_____ at half-past eleven and enter the Methodist church, after Bro. L_____ had taken his text and could not stop, for a memoriter sermonizer does not dare to make a pause. Then after the service they would dine out with one of the wealthy, cultured, hospitable families, for which the town of B_____ was famous, have a sumptuous time of it on that line, spend some lovely social hours in the afternoon, hear Bro. L_____ preach in the evening, and return to J_____ next morning.

But through some accident to harness or buggy, our two brethren did not arrive until one o'clock, and so drove through empty streets and past the emptied and closed church.

The day was a beautiful one, with a few soft, misty, white veils floating peacefully on the bosom of the blue sky. But Bro. L_____, in making his closing announcements, stated that the clouds looked so ominous that he thought it wisest and best to state that there would be no service that night. And this he did in perfect ignorance of the near and increasing proximity to him of, so to speak, two angels and ministers of grace in a good Methodist buggy, drawn by a good Methodist horse.

In due time our two aforesaid angels and brethren, after passing the vacant church, drove to the suburbs of the town to the stately mansion of Judge M_____, a prominent church member and official.

Here they found a large company, composed of family and visitors, just sitting down to a splendid dinner, and among the guests was the pastor, Bro. L_____.

The announcement by the servant of the arrival at the door of the famous Dr. G_____, and Bro. Thompson, who had been their pastor in previous years, produced a great stir, and nearly everyone left the dining table to meet and greet the newcomers in the hall.

There was a great handshaking all around, a settling down again in the large armchairs, a merry and continuous rattling of knives, forks and spoons, and then a final pouring fourth on the veranda and to settees under the trees near the front door, the ladies with their fans and the gentlemen with toothpicks, great clearing of throats, and some with cigars and pipes, according to Southern custom.

Meanwhile Bro. L_____’s face had been a study. It was evident his mind was busy, and he was laying plans. So after dinner, while all the company was engaged in private chats or general conversation, Bro. L_____ could be seen interviewing all the boys and girls he could find, whispering something very earnestly to them, and then the next fact of observation was the flying down the walks, paths and roads of these same young folks, and their disappearance in every direction towards town.

Meanwhile Dr. G_____ had spoken to some of the company of the pleasure he anticipated in listening to one of Bro. L_____’s polished sermons in the beautiful church that night. To his great surprise he was informed that there would be no service.

In response to further questioning he was told in the midst of poorly suppressed amusement that Bro. L_____ was so alarmed at the ominous appearance of the heavens that morning that he had called off the night hour of worship.

Dr. G_____ looked up at the few snow white clouds floating peacefully in the blue afternoon sky with such a comical expression that there was a general burst of laughter.

Dr. G_____, who was a keen-eyed, quick-witted man, began to put two and two together, and calling Bro. L_____ to draw near, said:

“What meaneth this sending forth of the young people in all haste and in every direction after the manner of the Twelve and Seventy of olden days?”

“It means,” replied Bro. L_____, rubbing his hands and smiling his blandest, “that the gifted and brilliant Dr. G_____ will fill the pulpit and delight the people of this community with the Gospel at 8 o’clock this evening.”

“But what about those dreadful ominous clouds of the morning that would prevent the people from coming to service tonight?”

Bro. L_____ turned crimson, while fans covered faces in a suspicious way, and general coughing of a hacking order abounded. Dr. G_____ resumed:

“No, Bro. L_____, you cannot play any such dodge with me. I got Bro. Carradine to fill my pulpit in J_____ and came over here for a rest, and to listen to you. So if the congregation assembles tonight, they will not hear me.”

Bro. L_____, now much alarmed, coaxed, pleaded, argued and begged, but all in vain. Dr. G_____ said no, and meant it.

Finally Dr. G_____ said: “You might ask Bro. Thompson, there. He might consent.”

Bro. L_____, with a most anxious expression, crossed hurriedly over to where Bro. Thompson was making himself agreeable to a group, and made known his request, that he would delight them all by preaching that night.

“Who? Me!” cried Bro. Thompson. “Why, man, I can’t do it. I was pastor here four years and preached everything I knew to the people, and a lot that I did not know. No, sir! I’m off on a rest, like Dr. G_____. Besides, I came to hear you preach.”

Bro. L_____’s face at this moment was a picture of despair. He had summoned a big crowd to hear a big preacher, and here no preacher, great or little, would preach.

As for himself, he knew it was a mental impossibility for him to get one of his Memoriter Columbiads prepared and ready for action in the few hours left him. He could not memorize ten pages in that time; and in his present distress felt he could not commit a paragraph.

His countenance was so cast down that Dr. G_____ took pity on him, and walking over to Bro. Thompson, said:

“Thompson, you must help L_____ out of this trouble. You can preach one of your old sermons tonight you gave here several years ago. I am sure that the people do not remember a word of it. So say yes, and let Bro. L_____ smile once more.”

At this there was a general laugh.

Bro. Thompson, after rubbing his partially bald head a few times, said finally he had recalled a text which he thought would do, and he would preach; and Bro. L_____, according to prophecy, began to beam again, and that, too, in the midst of a large and varied assortment of smiles of which he had been the unconscious author and inspirer.

So here were really three pulpit Jonahs in that afternoon. For while Bro. Thompson had agreed to preach, he had the look on him all the while that if he could see an opening in the ground somewhere, or any kind of means of flight or escape, he, Thompson, would only too thankfully avail himself of it.

That night a large audience filled the lovely brick temple to listen to the eloquent and popular Dr. G_____, whom they had never heard. Instead, they saw the well-remembered form of a precious pastor, Bro. Thompson, ascend the pulpit and begin to turn over the leaves of the hymn book and Bible.

There was a manifest disappointment at first at this change of program, and then the well-bred assembly settled itself down to hear a loving, gracious message, with here and there recollections of a tender and pathetic nature; all of which would be naturally expected at such an hour, and from one who knew so much of their private and family history, who had shared in their sorrows, married their children and buried their dead.

To this day we can never recall the text Bro. Thompson took that night as reported to us without a smile. Moreover, we were informed by Dr. G_____ that the instant it was read aloud, grave and awful a verse as it is, everyone in the large congregation wore a smile of broadest and most unmistakable character.

Still looking worried, and glancing reproachfully at the preachers in the audience, every one of whom was outside the pulpit, Bro. Thompson solemnly uttered the words:

☞ Luke 16:23!

“In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment!”

CHAPTER 6

AN INDOLENT CLERGYMAN

The subject of this sketch was a man of very superior intellect; enjoyed some measure of religion and scored a number of brilliant successes in the pulpit of his church and on the platform of the camp ground, especially when there would be what is called “an occasion,” and he had time to prepare.

And yet this man, through laziness located in some region of his tripartite nature, hated to preach as one would dislike taking bitter, nauseous medicine, or as another would shrink from a surgical operation.

Dr. W_____ did not have to purloin a sermon, he possessed too fine a brain for that; but instead he adopted the plan of stealing a man who had a sermon in him, use him this way on Sunday and, having emptied the brother’s intellectual and spiritual vessel, turn him loose again Monday on the King’s Highway or Public Road.

Dr. W_____, so to speak, stalked and sat for his game. If the first two days of the week he saw no wandering minister on the street, then our preacher hunter spent most of his time at the depot, especially train times. Here, in a chair in front of the hotel across from the station, the Doctor carefully studied the arrivals, sifting out with his eye the lay from the clerical, in a style skillful from long practice. He captured numerous pulpit gentlemen this way; some of them being cordially entertained at the parsonage several days in order to get two sermons from them the approaching Sabbath.

Sometimes when there was no sign of a preacher in the outpouring of the cars, the Doctor, even then not in despair, would walk through the train, and in frequent instances there the desired divine would be, reading or meditating in a corner with no idea of “hands being laid upon him” in the way of which we are writing. There would be argument, expostulation, entreaty and downright supplication, and the nearer the Sabbath the more

urgent was the Doctor, and behold the audience next day would be regaled with another strange countenance blinking over the Bible-crowned desk at them, while Dr. W____, radiant with his new victory and ministerial captive, introduced an old acquaintance, but oftener a being none of them ever saw before, with the well-worn words:

“That he knew they all would be delighted to hear our gifted brother, whom the Lord, in His providence, had sent to them.”

One week there was when it seemed the Doctor would have to preach, as it was now Saturday afternoon and only two trains passing north and south remained to go by.

With a sickening heart Dr. W____ saw there was no fish for him in the train coming from the north.

At sundown, that orb hung hardly lower than Bro. W____’s heart; when behold, as he eagerly scanned the latest arrivals he saw the unmistakable hat, long coat and general style that declares a preacher.

Going up at once to address the party, he observed that another man was with him and holding his arm.

Turning to the one who looked like a minister, Dr. W____ said:

“Excuse me, sir, are you not a minister of the Gospel?”

“Yes,” was the quiet, subdued response of the individual.

“Well, I would like to entertain you at the parsonage tonight and have you preach for me tomorrow morning and night.”

“The thing is impossible,” broke in the other man. “Be so good as to take your hand off; he is under my care.”

“But I want him to preach for me tomorrow. Aren’t you willing?” he said, turning to the preacher.

“Oh, yes,” replied that individual, very nonchalantly; “I suppose I could accommodate you.”

“Well,” said Dr. W_____, turning in triumph to the companion, “he is willing to do so, what have you to say against it. Then I propose to entertain you both comfortably and hospitably.”

Drawing near Dr. W_____, the third man lowered his voice and said:

“I’m sorry to tell you, sir, but the man you want to preach for you tomorrow has lost his reason, and I am now taking him to the State Lunatic Asylum located in your city.”

“Oh! that doesn’t matter,” replied Dr. W_____. “You can have him again Monday morning. He isn’t wild, vicious and outbreaking, is he?”

“No,” said the keeper, “he is not dangerous like some. He is off on some things, but on other matters he is as sensible as you or I.”

Is he all right on religion?”

“Yes, indeed; that is one of his strong points,” replied the keeper.

“Oh,” chimed in the Doctor, “he will do. I will have him up twice tomorrow. Besides this, it is late for you to get into the asylum tonight, and so I will gladly entertain you both at my house until Monday morning.”

And so they stayed. And the congregation of the First Methodist Church next morning looked without wonder on still a new face in the pulpit.

The old explanation was given:

“That our precious brother, who seemed providentially sent to them, would preach for them both morning and night. That from such a man of his age, observation and experience they could not but have a great treat, and rich time of Gospel feeding and blessing.”

The congregation of First Church, refined, cultured, though not particularly religious, listened with well-bred interest to the plain-looking, gray-haired stranger, who peregrinated with them over the Scriptures twice that Sabbath, each rambling consuming an hour.

We say they listened quietly. And yet we are convinced that if that same composed looking body of people had realized the truth, that the man then addressing them was on his way to the lunatic asylum, and that the grave-faced stranger who sat close to the pulpit, and who never took his eyes off the speaker a single instant, was the keeper of this crazy man! — then I verily believe that the big auditorium would have been emptied quicker of its lazy-looking audience than any fire alarm could have done in twice the time. That very night the family physicians would have been summoned in every direction by female members of the church, and the following day Dr. W_____ would have discovered a furnace prepared for him seven times hotter than its wont by his indignant congregation, and doubtless a number of umbrellas, parasols, walking canes and riding whips presented to him after an order not usually given the ministry.

Fortunately no one discovered the mental condition of the latest incumbent. He had rambled, it is true, but they had heard many roamers after that order, and so this really gave a touch of orthodoxy to what was said.

The Doctor breathed a double sigh of relief when the Sabbath was over, first that no mishap had occurred, and second, that he had been delivered from preaching two sermons.

He smiled a bland farewell upon Brother Crazy and his keeper on Monday morning, showed the latter the way to the lunatic asylum, informed the preacher that he had given them all two capital sermons, and then a little while afterwards took up his still hunt on the streets, and his stand at the depot looking for a preacher for the next Sabbath.

CHAPTER 7

SOME BAFFLED REVIVALISTS

Before evangelists had been brought forward prominently in the South, the pastors conducted their own protracted and camp meetings with the aid of fellow-preachers who belonged to the annual conference.

As for the camps there would be from twenty to one hundred ministers present, where a goodly number did the preaching in response to request and appointment of a Committee on Public Worship. Some who were distinguished pulpit divines preached several times. Others were called to officiate only once, but even this considered quite an honor in some localities, where many never delivered even a single sermon.

In the smaller tabernacle meetings, ten out of the twenty preachers attending would do the main pulpit work, while the others would be called upon to lead the early prayer or testimony service later in the day.

In what was called the regular Protracted Meeting, held annually, on the “station” or at each appointment of the “Circuit,” the preacher in charge would depend on his fellow ministers of the “Conference” for assistance; these remaining with him one, three, five or seven days, as they could spare the time from their own works and appointments.

With such a procession of ministerial figures, not to say panorama of talent, one would naturally suppose that the best results would hardly be seen in the meetings which followed. Still we have to bear witness that in spite of this shift and change of Gospel workmen, and the limited period given to these services, few going beyond a week, we have beheld again and again as powerful and remarkable revivals as ever left heaven to bless earth. It was not unusual to see in a small town or country appointment fifty to one hundred bright conversions and almost as many accessions as the fruit of the special Gospel effort of six or eight days.

Sometimes, however, conditions would be unfavorable, the pulpit help not such as should be, or there would be other hindering causes, and the meeting would end with poor results or worse still, in a flat failure.

We recall a brother in the ministry, a Dr. A., who was pastor of a good station, which was one of a row of like appointments stretching at almost regular intervals down a great central railroad. His plan was to run his meeting a week, having a different preacher each night drawn from the towns south of him, and so wake up, shake up, and literally overwhelm and capture the community where he was located, by the pulpit talent and force thrown in studied succession upon it, as regiments and brigades are hurled one after another in brilliant charges against the enemy on the field of battle.

So Brother W., pastor in the next town, was requested to open the Gospel conflict on Monday. This gentleman of the cloth duly arrived on the afternoon train, and, being desirous of impressing his hearers with his mental freshness, imaginative ability, and felicity in presenting and handling unusual Scripture, he took for his text, "The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."

Under his fanciful treatment of the passage, the people found the sermon entertaining, even amusing, but not at all convicting.

The Rev. Mr. W. left on the midnight train very well pleased with himself and his deliverance, but Dr. A. was not so delighted.

Next afternoon Bro. F., pastor in the town twenty miles south, arrived. As a young clergyman with a reputation to be spread abroad the call of Dr. A. from his larger pastorate seemed plainly an open door of opportunity for him to enter, and not to do so would be unwise if not culpable.

Desiring to give the audience a mental surprise, with all the exhilaration and gratification attendant upon great intellectual efforts, the Rev. Mr. F. announced for his text, "The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."

If the preacher had possessed ability equal to the brother who had preceded him the night before, even then he could hardly have produced an impression measuring up to the foregoing occasion. But as the case was, the orator was not the match of his predecessor, and so, the subject even with its peculiar similarities to the discourse of the night previous, suffered greatly by way of contrast.

Besides this, the people had learned all they wanted to know about this remarkable bed which had been hammered on a full hour on Monday evening. In fact, they were nauseated with that particular piece of furniture which caused the feet of the occupant to hang out, and whose covering was so scanty as to leave a goodly portion of the form undraped. So, as the speaker labored on, the wilted audience looked as if they wished the couch being described would suddenly go all to pieces, or that the preacher would as quickly follow another scriptural injunction, and that was "To take up his bed and walk."

The third night was greatly counted on by Dr. A., as the preacher to fill that hour, the Rev. Mr. N., was one of the strong men of the Conference, and in charge of a leading appointment on the aforesaid central rail-road.

All certainly would have been well; for Bro. N. was a good preacher, but he had a way that Paul said Peter had, of "leading about a wife." He was a great family man, devoted to his home life and found it hard to assist a brother minister a single day or attend any kind of Quarterly District, Sunday school, or Missionary meeting without taking with him the partner of his joys, not to mention the sorrows.

This time Mrs. N. could not come, and what should Bro. N. do but bring with him one of his little girls, aged about four. Of course it was all well enough so long as the ride on the cars lasted; and even up to the close of the supper hour. But as night fell, and the silence of the bachelor parsonage of Dr. A. was felt, a mighty case of nostalgia, or homesickness, came upon the child, and with bitter tears and sobs she begged to go home.

So violent was the grief of the little one that she clung to her father and refused to allow any one, male or female, to touch her. So that as the first, and the second church bell rang, the one hope of Bro. N. was to rock his loudly lamenting daughter to sleep, and then, leaving her in bed, run over

and preach to the congregation that had already assembled and were now awaiting his coming and the much-advertised sermon.

But the child refused to close her eyes or mouth, and as the parsonage and church were only a few feet apart, the crying of the little daughter, the lullabies of the father, and the knocking of the chair legs on the floor as the distracted parent endeavored to jar and rock the youngster into the Land of Nod were all most plainly and painfully heard by the assembly which had now become an audience after a most unexpected fashion.

Several ladies had gone over and offered their services in behalf of the mother-sick girl, in order that the released father might fill the preaching hour according to appointment. But all proffers and efforts to relieve the situation were rewarded with fresh yells on the part of the little one, while the knocks of the chair on the floor sounded loudly and steadily on. Meantime the congregation next door listened with a mixed air of amusement and worry, and the revival planned by Dr. A. seemed farther off than ever.

In the audience that night was Dr. L., the presiding elder of the district, and a famous preacher as well. He had stopped off in his regular work in order to hear Bro. N. After a full half hour of waiting, Dr. A., the pastor, went over to Dr. L. and said:

“Doctor, I suppose you will have to preach for us tonight. It is evident that Bro. N. cannot get away from his child, and the congregation is growing restless.”

But Dr. L. was not at all enthusiastic over this proposition, from the fact that he had been pastor at this place four years, and was now serving a second term as presiding elder over the same people, and so had preached out all his big sermons to the very crowd sitting before him. Therefore he did not warm up to the suggestion made by Dr. A., but said:

“The people will be disappointed if they do not hear Bro. N.. Sing a few more hymns, have another prayer, and by that time surely that child will let up and go to sleep.”

This was done; that is, the singing and praying, but “that child,” instead of “letting up,” took a new and apparently an all-night long lease on a fresh

crying spell, while the monotonous knock of the chair legs showed that the father was still bravely “on the deck whence all but him had fled.”

At a quarter to nine o’clock Dr. A. came to Dr. L. again and said:

“Doctor, you will have to preach. I see no other help or hope.”

Whereupon Dr. L. replied:

“I have a sermon on The Rich Fool which I think I could preach; but for my life I cannot remember in which one of the four Gospels the text is to be found; nor can I even recall the chapter. But if you will go up in the pulpit and find the passage for me while the people sing another hymn, I will preach for you.”

Dr. A., in compliance with the request, ascended the platform and gave out the hymn, announcing to the congregation that at its conclusion Dr. L. would preach for them. Then, as the hymn proceeded the pastor hurriedly turned over the pages of the large Bible to find the parable about The Rich Fool. To his consternation he discovered that, like Dr. L., he was unable to locate the passage; like him he had forgotten in what book and chapter it was to be found, and so was in the same predicament as the presiding elder.

As the congregation swung into the last stanza, Dr. A., bathed in a cold perspiration, hurriedly beckoned to Dr. L. to join him in the pulpit, where, in considerable agitation, he told him:

“I cannot find The Rich Fool anywhere.”

Dr. L. replied with an embarrassed smile:

“This is certainly a grave reflection on the presiding elder of the district, and the pastor of a leading station in the Conference, that they unitedly cannot find one of the most striking parables of the Son of God. What will the people think of us?”

Dr. A. only groaned.

Then as the hymn ceased, and the audience settled down to listen to the coming sermon, Dr. L. slowly arose and said:

“As you well know, Bro. N. should have preached at this hour, but his child, homesick and mother-sick, will not allow him to leave her. Your pastor has requested me to preach in Bro. N.’s stead, and I have consented to do so. But, strange to say, I cannot find the text I want to use about The Rich Fool. Through some mental freak I cannot tell whether the parable is in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. I told your pastor if he would find the passage for me I would preach the sermon. He has just informed me that he also cannot find it. Nor is this all, for I am sorry to say that I cannot repeat it all from memory. So I am compelled to preach to you tonight from the subject itself, without reading the text, which both of us together cannot find. Under these strange and embarrassing circumstances I arise to address you this evening.”

The Doctor then, amidst universal smiling, started on his topic about the wealthy individual who refused to materialize before his eyes in the Scripture; and did the best he could in view of the situation.

But everything was against him. The wailing child and knocking chair continued their duet. The people were restless from their previous long, tiresome waiting. Then the inward mortification of the speaker that he, the leading man of his Conference and one of its oldest preachers, could not tell where one of the most solemn and impressive utterances of Christ could be found — all these things were so trying and dispiriting, that he, able man as he was, was far from being himself, and so preached but poorly.

Then there was a vague feeling in his heart, and one doubtless shared by the pastor, that the audience was thinking all the time he was preaching that if The Rich Fool could not be found that night, yet most certainly there were other fools and very close at hand, who could be discovered and hands laid on them without the slightest degree of trouble.

At the conclusion of the sermon Dr. A. arose and, before giving out the Long Meter Doxology, said in a subdued and melancholy manner:

“In view of the various disappointments and hindrances of the last three days, I feel confident that the set time to favor Zion with a revival has not arrived. And I will therefore take the liberty of

announcing that the meeting is called off at this juncture, to be resumed some weeks or months later, when we shall be favored with providential indications and leadings.”

We are certain that all the people said amen.

But we are equally sure, in these Full Salvation times, that the issue and end of this same meeting, which came to grief, would have been very different.

With evangelists who do not “lead about a wife,” nor become nurses to their children; nor take fanciful texts to preach from; but stick to the Gospel; who, trained, disciplined, toughened, experienced by a thousand battles, do not go down under discouragements; the meeting we have written about would have risen superior to far greater difficulties than those which have been described, and have swept on and up to a complete and glorious victory.

CHAPTER 8

A DEVOTED YOUNG LIFE

In one of our city charges there was a lad of fifteen whom we found in our membership. He was quite ordinarily endowed, had but a slim common school education, and was clerking for a small salary in a store down town.

It was one of the convictions of Ernest, that as a member of the church he owed his pastor stated visits. These he would pay with the regularity that the moon would turn her round, smiling face on the earth again after a lapse of so many days and nights.

Ernest was not a brilliant thinker, nor a sparkling talker; so that after a few commonplace observations about the weather, and several remarks concerning the size of last Sunday's congregation, the interest of the latest prayer meeting, he would be at the end of his mental row, and it devolved upon the other party to take up the plow or hoe, as the case might be, and keep the conversation alive, if not flourishing, until Ernest felt it his duty to leave, as he had been previously impressed it was his moral obligation to come. As he was not brainy, not a reader, not even converted at this time, and so not spiritual; and as he would invariably sit from eight to eleven, something of the exhausted mental and physical condition of the pastor can be imagined.

As he sat before us with his mild blue eyes and vacant face, the single admirable quality he seemed to possess at this time was his faithful adherence to what he conceived to be his solemn duty — viz., to bestow on his preacher the favor of a three hours' visit once a month. It was not that he himself delighted in the call, but he conceived it was a benefit that was due his pastor, and so he determined to meet the social obligation if he perished in the attempt or broke down every chair in the house.

In the third year of our pastorate came the great revival, in which we received the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and beheld many scores of souls brought to God. Ernest was one of the newly converted. The change

was most remarkable. Everybody saw and felt it. There was no creation of a new and finer order of intellect, though there was a decided quickening of the ordinary one he possessed. But the fruits of the Spirit were pronounced and evident in his life, and all could see that he had been born of God, and had the family likeness which belongs to the household of Heaven. He became active in church work, prayed in the Young People's meetings, and was decidedly more agreeable, although still not fascinating when he would conceive the idea of enriching the pastor with one of the periodic bestowments of his boyish presence, kind simple face, and a section of his uninteresting conversation.

Several months rolled by before Ernest seemed to realize the need of the second work of grace. His little cup had been well filled, and now being absorbed in his new experience and duties he did not seem to recognize or feel the deeper want of the soul in the blessing of holiness. But one day the epochal event occurred. Some sermon, prayer or conversation penetrated the lad's mind and heart, and he stood in our church study asking questions about entire sanctification with a seriousness in his face and a tremor in his voice that had never been there before.

When we had finished giving some explanations he desired, he replied, with his blue eyes filling up with tears, "I want all that God has for me."

We have often wished since that day that all of God's people, with their superior minds and greater general knowledge, would only evince the wisdom which freighted the speech of this physically frail lad, who at this time was seventeen years of age.

We gave the boy further directions about making a perfect consecration, exercising an implicit faith, and holding on to God in prayer until the Witness came. He listened most attentively and gravely, and went back to the store where he was employed.

Poor, dear lad, he did not have much to place on the altar. The whole thing, according to the judgment of the world, could doubtless have been wrapped up in a handkerchief. But what he had, and all he had, he gave to God — and the fire fell!

The boy's experience of holiness was far more remarkable than his conversion. It was truly the "transformation" spoken of in the second

verse of the twelfth chapter of Romans. He followed the exhortation there to the “brethren” to present himself “a living sacrifice,” and so “proved” or found out “the perfect will of God,” and “This is the will of God, even our sanctification.”

From this time on two things impressed us above all other manifestations of the holy life in Ernest. One was his untiring zeal in the service of God, and the other his perfect love.

He did not obtain a new set of brains, but remained ordinarily gifted as before, although full salvation undoubtedly helped what he did possess in mental lines. But the devotion to Christ and the tender love for souls he constantly exhibited we have never seen equaled by any young person, and surpassed by few of older years and riper Christian character. It became a pleasure to have the lad call, to hear him talk, and watch the holy light which a God of Love had kindled in his countenance.

He never seemed to weary of any kind of religious duty, but his special joy was to pray and labor around the altar and lead souls to the Savior.

In addition to this, he did outside work in cottage visiting, hunting up the lost, and bringing back to the church and Christ those who had gone astray. This Christian service he could only undertake after his regular business hours, so that when the store closed and Ernest had snatched a hasty supper at home, his figure, Bible in hand or under his arm, flitting along the gas-lighted streets to his mission of love became a familiar and touching spectacle to many.

He was the main support of his widowed mother; and his was no little toil during the day, lifting goods, packing boxes, and wheeling trucks until six o'clock in the evening. And yet after that he would in spite of that delicate and over-worked body, rush away to distant parts of the city in his labor of helping, comforting and saving souls.

The greatest Christian work of the boy had been going on for some time before we found it out. Three nights in the week, and once on the Sabbath afternoon, he would be seen going to a certain remote, poverty-stricken part of the city. He said nothing about what was engaging him, for boasting had left the lad, and he seemed stripped of all but love.

Finally, however, we learned that he had gathered together about forty or fifty children in a double room he had rented, and was teaching them on the week nights not only to read and write, but to pray and study the Bible. On the Sabbath he turned his little night class into a Sunday school, doing the praying, leading the singing, and thoroughly catechizing the whole body of little ones, who had become perfectly devoted to him.

To do this, the tired boy would, on leaving the store, spend but a few moments over his first warm meal of the day, viz., his supper, and looked like he begrudged even this short time spent in that way. Then he would start out on his long walk to his distant mission, his pale, loving face and frail figure, with his Bible under his arm, making a picture of pathetic moral beauty that lingers in the recollection of some of us most powerfully to this day, although twenty years have rolled by since that time.

In this kind of work we left him, when we moved to St. Louis. After a year had gone by, a letter came telling us that Ernest was dead!

In one of his night trips to his little flock he had been drenched by a heavy rain; but worked on in his wet clothes, singing, praying with and teaching the children. The result was a terrible cold, which settled on his lungs in the form of pneumonia, and the beautiful, holy life of Ernest R_____ was ended on earth.

They wrote us that on the day of the funeral there was a great storm of wind and rain and the streets were flooded with water. But such was the hold that this boy, now eighteen years of age, had upon the congregation and community, that in spite of the tempest, the large church building which seated twelve hundred, was two-thirds filled with people.

We have had in our church membership, when in the pastorate, many far more intellectually and socially gifted, but so connected with ambition, pride, intolerance, gossip, slander and hate, that there is little or no pleasure in remembering them. But for twenty years we have recalled the face, spirit and life of this naturally lacking but richly spiritually endowed boy, and the heart warms, the eyes fill, and we never fail to thank God with each recollection, that he ever allowed such a beautiful character to come into our life.

The earthly vase was broken in which God placed some of his roses and lilies, but the fragrance remains in the simple memory of the lad. So the sound of a flute dies away on the lake, but the incident of the moonlight serenade is a treasure possession of the heart for all time. The angels, after singing over the fields of Bethlehem, went back again into heaven; but the melody of their song, and their wonderful visit to the children of men, is a beautiful fact and an imperishable treasure to the earth forever. Thus was it with Ernest.

CHAPTER 9

AN AFTERNOON SINGER

One afternoon at a remote inland Camp Ground which lay buried in the fragrant depths of the piney woods of Mississippi, we witnessed a scene that we have since recalled to mind and spoken of many times.

There had been what is known as a hard pull in the service. The people from the triple cause of weariness, the heat, and perhaps too hearty a dinner were drowsy, and not in the best condition for listening, and so the meeting dragged.

A number of the workers as they took in the situation, the discouraged minister, the empty altar, the listless audience, had about concluded the battle was lost.

Just then a local preacher was not only asked but urged to conclude the service. The man came slowly from one of the seats in the corner, and stood in the altar before the people with such a gentle, patient, humble look upon his face that we felt our heart instantly melt and go out with deepest interest in this unknown follower of the Saviour.

There was something in the meekness and humility of the man which seemed to touch a number; and as we studied the holy, peaceful face and unconscious attitude of the individual, we felt here was one who belonged wholly to God, one whose thoughts and heart were in Heaven, although his body stood on earth.

Without a word of explanation or exhortation, after a few minutes' silence he commenced singing in a strangely pathetic and unctuous voice one of the old time Methodist hymns, whose words and melody have been dropped long years ago from its hymnology. The lines were as follows:

*Where now are the Hebrew Children,
Where now are the Hebrew Children,
Where now are the Hebrew Children,
Away over yonder in the Promised Land.*

*They went up through flame and fire,
Trusting in their great Messiah,
Who by grace will raise them higher
Away over yonder in the Promised Land.*

*By and by we'll go and meet them,
By and by we'll go and meet them,
By and by we'll go and meet them,
Away over yonder in the Promised Land.*

It would be impossible to describe the strange power of the Singer's voice or depict his manner, as he, in less than five minutes, sang that drowsy, apathetic congregation into a wide-awake state of intense and sympathetic listening.

Standing in the fleckered light of the old bush arbor, the Singer seemed to fix his eyes on the distant blue sky over which a few white clouds were softly floating. It looked like he was thinking of the City and Country beyond and above this world, and had his gaze fixed even then on the heavenly company of the martyrs, apostles, prophets, and the very persons about whose suffering, triumph and translation he was singing.

Watching the people we saw that the Singer, without having made any special effort, without musical knowledge or gifted voice, yet through the power of the Holy Spirit in him had the entire audience under perfect sway. On all sides numbers were bending eagerly forward; tears were trickling down scores of faces; and when after singing several stanzas the man of God reached the third line of the chorus,

"By and by we'll go and meet them,"

Suddenly a heart-thrilling cry, loud, clear, glad and exultant, rang out from a woman in the congregation, and like a flash of lightning the Holy Ghost fell on the people. For fully a half hour a perfect storm of pentecostal glory and salvation swept over the laughing, crying, shouting, hand-clapping assembly.

The victory that was thus snatched from the very jaws of defeat ran through the remaining hours of the day, deep into the night, and continued indeed to the end of the Camp Meeting. Twenty or thirty souls were brought to Christ that afternoon.

As for the Man of God so signally used in that service, he was like Philip of old, who, after discharging his duty in a certain locality, was found later in other places. Or like the prophets of ancient times who would suddenly appear when God wanted a true, devoted and fearless messenger to stand for Him and the truth; and when the word had been given, the deed performed, they as quickly disappeared until their Lord and Master should need them again.

CHAPTER 10

A YOUNG LADY GRADUATE

A girl from a Southern town was sent by her parents to a fashionable boarding school in a distant state. She left home a sweet, unspoiled lassie, and returned three years after, an artificialized Miss of Society.

A young man, a friend of the writer, called upon her as one of her former gentleman acquaintances; and after waiting a half hour, finally beheld her sweep into the parlor beflounced, bedizened and furbelowed and carrying herself as if she was the queen of a kingdom.

Our friend had intended to meet her near the door and give her a cordial word of welcome back to her native town.

But no! This was not according to her programme. She was in for first showing herself off. So she chilled his advance in the beginning with an empress air. Then advancing a few feet, she gracefully drew back with an inclined body the same distance and rendered what is called "The Courtesy Profound." Then straightening up she diagonally crossed the room and while pointing with a royal wave of the hand to a remote chair she made another salaam while backing with carefully calculated steps toward an ottoman. Here with her skirts spread out fan-like, she bowed her shallow little empty head and, elevating her penciled eyebrows, simpered out "Good evening."

Our friend said he stood watching the performance with mingled interest and astonishment and when he saw the opening services were concluded, and she had bowed herself all over the room before settling; that he quietly walked over to where the starched, silly nonentity was sitting on a cushion, and extending his broad, sunburned hand said: "Howdy!"

In like manner after we have gone into one of our large city churches, and beheld the ushers trotting all over the house, smirking and bowing members into pews which they could find as easily as an old hen would its roost; and when a lot of muslin, silk and broadcloth has smiled and

swooped itself here and there into walnut and rosewood receptacles; and some collectors have swayed and bent in the gentle breezes or stormy wind of what is called the Organ Offertory; and the choir has whip-poorwilled and William-a-tremble-toed, and whang-doodled and hemi-demi-semi-quavered clear out of musical creation, and got lost in a most unmusical chaos, crying out their distress with plaintive wails and yells of ah men! ah men! and ah men! — then it is we feel as did our friend, like going over to the palpitating, hysterical, nonsensical thing, and saying, “Howdy!”

Let the reader contrast a service held by Christ and his disciples with the flaunt and parade, the pomp and show, the berobed intoning minister, and surpliced choir, the marching collectors, the undistinguishable cater-wauling of an unconverted worldly quartette, and all called Divine Service and Worship! And then ask whether there has not been a change of some kind in these latter days in the church and Christian life!

We are not surprised that one of our devout Southern Bishops, after beholding and listening for three-quarters of an hour to a lot of such flummery and rot, stood up when his time at last came to officiate and solemnly said:

“We will now BEGIN the worship of Almighty God.”

Or like a preacher in our native Mississippi, who, after silently contemplating such a scene from a fellow minister’s pulpit, where he had been invited to preach, said as he solemnly arose:

“Let us all now go down upon our knees in prayer to God, for mercy, help, and deliverance in this time of need.”

CHAPTER 11

A YOUNG MUNCHAUSEN

We once had a little nephew named Willie, who was remarkable for a very vivid imagination. If he had been older, this mental quality would have been called by another and more mortifying appellation; but being a child he was pronounced by his elders with meaning smiles to be quite a bright precocious little fellow.

By the time he was four years of age, Willie had saved a great many lives of his kindred and friends by his dexterous and fearless use of shotgun, rifle and pistol. It would be difficult to number the wolves and bear he had killed who were trying with gnashing teeth and terrific roarings to destroy and eat up his father, his uncles and other helpless members of the family and connection. With flushed excited face he would tell how he heard them hallooing for help, and how he ran down in the woods and rescued them just in the nick of time. It generally required only one shot, and the great black beast would turn over dead. Willie's gun, which was three times longer than himself never missed in all the scores of fearful conflicts he had with wild animals in the deep dark swamps of Yazoo.

It was also truly wonderful what Willie would behold in a brief morning walk attended by his nurse.

One day he came in from a short stroll of three or four blocks and reported with eager manner and sparkling eyes, that he had seen twenty dead mules in a ditch. This was, to say the least, quite a remarkable find for an ordinary outing, and so the family looked at once to the nurse for confirmation. But she, with an amused look, shook her head. Afterwards when Willie had retired somewhere, she told us that the foundation for the wonderful story was part of the sun bleached skeleton of an old cow whose demise had taken place long months ago.

As a piece of fancy work on the part of a child, that was certainly doing well to take a few bones, and make twenty dead mules out of them, and all in a row, for convenient numbering.

Another time Willie reported that he had seen five hundred dogs on the public square all at the same time.

A certain member of the family quietly sat down by the lad and indulged in a prolonged effort to get his to drop those figures. In a couple of minutes Willie fell to four hundred dogs.

The relative, somewhat encouraged, told the lad that while dogs were numerous, yet he could not see how on such a sudden notice, so many delegates could have been secured to this evidently Dog Convention.

At once Willie dropped to two hundred and fifty, but gave signs that he would not yield another inch, or rather dog.

But under considerable reasoning, and urging and also reminding him how people needed their dogs at home, and how they were kept there behind high fences, and with chains and blocks; and after dwelling somewhat upon the dramatic history of Ananias and Sapphira, Willie fell to two hundred, one hundred and fifty, one hundred, fifty, twenty-five, ten, five, and finally to one dog.

From this standpoint it looked like we would never budge him. But blood was up, so to speak, and after several more appeals to conscience the now thoroughly humble boy admitted that all he saw was a dog's tail disappearing around the corner.

Willie is still living and has made a noble man, and possesses a lovely character. He never became a preacher, however, or an evangelist. If he had, no doubt the Millennium would have been here, and the whole world converted and sanctified long ago — that is according to Willie's figures.

We rather think his letters from "The Field," would have been strikingly like the reports and bulletins he issued from the Swamp, or rather the Nursery. The communication in the paper would have read.

"I was called to lead the meeting. Other evangelists had utterly failed. The whole thing was dead. But I opened fire and kept it up

for ten days. The result was crowded houses, overflowing altars, and hundreds unable to get into the building. The whole city or county was moved from center to circumference. Old campers declare that in the course of twenty to forty years they never saw such a camp meeting. The oldest inhabitant says that never in all his long life has he beheld such a sweeping, overwhelming revival. I write these hasty lines with difficulty, as several committees are after me wishing to engage my services for their churches and camp grounds.

Your Humble Little Brother,

Willie."

O, Willie, Willie, Willie!

CHAPTER 12

DESCENDANTS OF HAM

The colored individual, known politically as the Fifteenth Amendment, has always been a most interesting character to the writer. Born and raised in the South where they outnumbered the whites ten to one, we had every opportunity to study them, and as the years have passed by, our interest in and attachment for them continues to abide.

The unspoiled Negroes of the South uncultured and holding aloof from criminal lines awaken a pleasurable interest in a number of ways.

They are not only a religious but a remarkably musical people. Their funeral hymns, cabin melodies, cotton field songs and river chants, once heard can never be forgotten. Then they have a drollery of speech and manner on occasions, unsurpassed by any other nationality. They possess a wit peculiarly their own, accompanied with a most unctuous and smile provoking of laughs. But even more striking is their habit of occasionally using big words utterly regardless of definitions, having been mentally captured by the large verbal stranger, by some similarity of sound, or more particularly by the long array of the impressive syllables. All this is frequently attended with a simplicity of face, mind, and purpose that under certain circumstances not only fills but overflows the cup of mirth of the bystanders.

As for their mixing and entangling of words, the reader can judge best by the smile and sensation produced in the drug store when one of them asked for a box of "confounded pathetic pills;" the original and correct term being compound cathartic. And again of the amusement and wonder, when still another, of the female variety and young in years, called in a pharmacy for five cents worth of "Glory Divine." This last order was translated finally by the puzzled but smiling clerk to be "chlorate of lime."

Still another individual of sable hue asked in a grocery store for a pound of paralyzed sugar. And a fourth wanted confiscated lye. While a fifth

explaining his prolonged absence from home said that the doctors had put him in the Cantine for three weeks, thinking that he had the small pox, and after that they found that all he had was a case of celluloid. This mysterious announcement, of course, takes on light by substituting quarantine for cantine, and varioloid for celluloid. But it would be impossible to describe the look of pride in the ebony hued countenance when the speaker sonorously pronounced the words cantine and celluloid. He was willing to suffer the detention of those three weeks, if by said restriction of liberty he could enrich his vocabulary with two such splendid verbal utterances.

The writer has often heard them say flatform for platform, and this, by the way, is true according to the eye if not the ear. One hearing the term physical culture, soon rendered it physical torture, which we affirm again was not so far wrong. And still another in speaking of a preacher's sermon, said that "He dispensed with the Gospel." And this was such a decided hit at certain pulpits, all unconscious as was the narrator, that smiles broke out on all sides, and some felt that he ought to be sent to Congress.

As for naiveness of manner and genuine wit, what might be called the Turkey incident is in evidence.

One of the colored population in a Southern town was trying to sell a fowl of this kind to a gentleman who desired it for Thanksgiving dinner.

"When was it killed" he asked, feeling the bird?

"Early dis mornin', Boss."

"Is it a tame or wild turkey?"

"Tame, Boss."

"Now don't deceive me," the gentleman urged "for I cannot endure the taste of wild meat."

"No Suh, I ain' gwineter fool you. Dis am a tame turkey."

The gentleman continued to examine the bird, when suddenly his hand felt a number of shot beneath the skin, and looking closer saw that the fowl

had lost its life by a gun and not by an axe or twisted neck. Full of indignation he lifted his head and said:

“What made you tell me such a story?”

“I ain’ tole you no story, Boss.”

“But this is a wild turkey.”

“No Suh, it taint.”

“But I have found a load of shot in its body.”

The darky looked carefully around to see if any one was listening, and then lowering his voice said:

“I tell you de troof, Boss: dat load o’ shot warnt aimed at dat turkey!”

As to the “simplicity feature” mentioned some paragraphs back, we saw it in its native excellency in a certain town in Florida, ten or twelve years ago.

In the hotel where we were entertained there were a number of Negro waiters. The house was literally alive with them. Most of them were lads from sixteen to twenty. A number had a dreamy way of waiting on you at the table. In a far-away manner they received your order from the Bill of Fare and they quietly deposited before you what you never ordered. It was all done so innocently, and with such an abstracted air, that a person had not the heart to call attention to the mistake.

One afternoon as I passed out of my room into the large central hall, I saw one of these brilliant attendants knocking at a door just opposite and giving the following puzzling information to some one within:

“It’s fo’ minutes and er half past three o’clock.”

“What!” responded an excited female voice inside.

Again the remarkable statement was made which brought forth another “What!”

The boy now was thoroughly bewildered. He felt he had a problem of speech on hand and knew not how to straighten it out. I saw him lay his head against the door ruminatingly. I heard him utter the sphinx-like saying the third time and again his head went down. I heard him give a low confused laugh that sounded like “kee-hee!” He knew he was in a tangle, but understood not how to escape. Meeting him a few minutes afterward I said:

“Why didn’t you say to the lady that ‘it was four and a half minutes past three o’clock,’ and then she would have understood you?”

His reply was to show two rows of shining teeth, and give another “kee-hee!”

Coming up the Yazoo River in a steamboat from Vicksburg a few years ago, I was sitting near the back-guards of the boat in the pleasant sunshine, and watching the unfolding panorama of woodland scenes, old Southern mansions, and broad, far-reaching cotton plantations.

As we were passing one of the latter, the boat swung its stern close into the western shore, because of a bend in the stream, when suddenly a stalwart deck hand standing on the boiler deck below and back of the wheel house, called in a loud penetrating voice to a young Negro woman on the bank who was idly gazing at the passing vessel:

“Liza!”

“Yes” came ringing back in shrill female accents:

“Jim say, git word right off ter all his folks, dat dey done got him in jail in Vicksburg. And Jim say, tell um ter be sho and git all de money dey kin, and as quick as dey kin, an’ have it sont right straight away to him; dat he wants to git outen dat Vicksburg jail.”

It was marvellous that with the coughing of the steam pipes, clank of machinery and noise on the water of the big paddle wheels, how the man’s voice carried clearly and unmistakably to the woman. We saw her turn at once with the last word of Jim’s message, and start with a quick step towards some cabins across the field.

Meantime we meditated awhile on Jim in the jail, and the family of father, mother, brothers and sisters in the cabin. We said mentally, this is always the way. “Jim” runs away in his selfishness and waywardness from home restraints and duties, and by and by lands in sore trouble. Then and not until then he recollects those whom he has left behind and wronged in so many ways; and behold he remembers them only to add to their sorrows and burdens.

Who has not known of Jim; and who has not heard from Jim. Truly Jim’s message has been graven on the mind and heart of thousands, as with the red hot point of the hardest and sharpest of steel instruments.

“Jim says tell all his people, whom he forsook and wronged, that he has gotten into the toils of sin, fallen in the traps of the devil, in a word is in great trouble! And tell them that Jim wants them to straightway go down in their pockets, and add to their previous sacrifices, and take upon them new burdens for his sake. That he Jim is in suffering and calamity, and wants to get out. And he desires his folks, the deeply injured, the greatly neglected, the long suffering, and the innocent ones at home to bear the cost of his sinfulness and to do it at once. That he, Jim, says they must be quick about it; that he is tired of being in jail.”

Alas! for Jim and the jail. I utter it with a sad heart. But with a deeper sadness and sympathy, I say with a sigh, alas for those in the cabin home!

CHAPTER 13

A REMARKABLE COMMUNICANT

There had been protracted services in the church for a number of days and nights. One evening after the main audience had been dismissed, quite a number of the workers remained to labor with some penitents who were left at the altar.

One of them was a heavy set, beetle-browed man, who groaned in the most pitiful manner. Clutching our hand as we went to talk to him, he said that he felt he must partake of the Lord's Supper before he could ever gain peace of mind.

We replied that he should have it on the morrow, for it was now too late to obtain the elements.

But the man with awful groans said he could not endure the mental burden that long, for it was a case of conscience and conviction of duty with him, and that something told him if he could partake of the sacrament he would find rest and spiritual deliverance.

The news of the case soon spread through the room and quite a body of sympathetic religious people gathered about us.

Determining, late as it was, to do our utmost to bring relief to a tortured spirit, the writer sent off to a neighboring church member for a piece of bread, and to a drug store for a bottle of wine.

The communion table was brought forth and covered with spotless damask. The silver plate was next crowned with the white bread, and a large silver goblet filled with the aromatic port wine. A number of my people knelt solemnly around the altar while we read the Ritual, concluding now to make a service for all, and so a blessing to every body.

With tender heart and impressive voice we broke the bread and distributed it among the kneeling figures, commencing of course with our groaning friend. We observed, however, as we passed the plate to him, that he took

the tiniest crumb, and in the most careless manner placed it in his mouth. Moreover, he still groaned.

As we approached him a few moments later with the cup, which in view of a number of communicants, we had filled to the brim, the man's groanings ceased, and with unmistakable interest in this part of the service, he sat up, took the large goblet from my hand and began drinking. After a half dozen swallows he stopped a moment as if reflecting, seemed to approve the quality of the wine, and resumed the quaffing and gulping process.

Meantime my silence, and the stopping of the service caused numbers of the people to raise their heads. Great was the astonishment, conflicting the emotions, and varied the facial expressions of the kneeling, gazing group as they saw our groaner, groaning no longer, but with head tilted back, and the bottom of the cup pointing to the ceiling taking down the last drop of wine in the chalice.

He disposed of the whole cup!

It was curious to observe the different faces of the people. Some were indignant, especially the ladies, and plainly showed it. Others were unable to credit their senses and stared with amazement at the offender and one another. Still others were shaking with laughter, while most of the men wore an expression which read as distinctly as print: "Sold again."

The custom of the Roman Catholic Church in withholding the wine while giving the bread to communicants, had been repeated in the heart of Protestantism, or evangelical Christianity; though in our case it was forced upon us, there being nothing but bread to offer the others, inasmuch as our friend with the conscientious scruples had made away with all the wine.

Most of us did not tarry to say good-bye to our latest convert, but each man departed to his own house, possessing considerable more knowledge of the mysterious ways of men than had been expected in the earlier part of the evening.

One brother however, approached our convert as he was departing from the church, and asked him how he felt now since he had relieved his conscience? And the man clearing his throat and wiping his mouth with the back of his hand said:

“I feel a world better.”

CHAPTER 14

A LIBERAL MAN

One day a few years ago, we received a letter from a farmer in the West informing us that he lived in a hard community, that the people were not only not religious, but spiritually dead, and going to the Pit by the drove. That his heart ached that they should hear not only of a free but a full salvation, and so he was writing that he might engage us for a ten days' meeting.

He went on to say that he did not own any land, but was a renter of a score or so of acres on which he raised wheat. But while he had no property, yet if we would come he would meet all expenses of the meeting. He would pay for the rent of a hall in town, meet the song book bill, and remunerate the evangelist by giving him the same amount he was accustomed to receive in his town and city appointments.

We replied that we were loath to accept an invitation of this character, feeling as we did that the financial burden would be all on one man. Having also other calls for the same period of time that he designated, there was no imperative need to go, so that we could give more than one reason for not accepting the call.

His rejoinder was one of increased urgency, telling us that he knew what he was about, that he and the Lord understood one another, and that he "entreated" us to come.

In completing this piece of life history we would mention the fact that this brother was a subscriber to the Christian Witness and owned several holiness books, all of which he industriously circulated among the few neighbors who would read at all.

We came and held the meeting. The weather for coldness and severity could scarcely be paralleled. The thermometer ranged from ten to thirty degrees below zero. In the room we occupied at the humble little hotel, we had almost to embrace the diminutive stove to keep from freezing. We

wrote our articles and met our correspondence with writing pad on the knee, and bending down low to catch a measure of warmth from the Lilliputian heating affair which we doubt not was doing the best it could under the extraordinary conditions that prevailed outdoors.

In the hall where the services were held, the two stoves were powerless, especially during the four or five concluding days, to impart comfort to one who sat any distance away from them. The people who came out in the fearful weather of this well-remembered winter, about thirty in the day, and double or treble the number at night, actually looked blue as they sat muffled, gloved, overshod, beshawled, befurred and berugged before us.

We conducted services with our overcoat on, and yet so intense was the cold coming, not only from the walls of the building, but up from the floor which covered a great empty, wind-swept basement, that our feet felt like blocks of ice, and so walking around as we preached seemed to lessen our suffering.

When we called for seekers and penitents, the altar was so bitterly icy that we had chairs placed in a circle around one of the stoves, and arranged the little band so that their feet were in towards the fire, and heads out, so that we might be able to talk to them. And thus situated, we moved around in an outer orbit of chilly space doing the best we could to instruct and help them, while Brother W., the man who sent for us, from another position on the outside, most ably assisted us in the work by prayer and song.

Both of our voices shook from the cold, as the Jews trembled, says the Bible, from the chill rain which fell upon them. But God stood by us and put his seal on every service.

Around the other stove gathered the fragments of the congregation that remained after the preaching service. From their frozen region they stood and watched us in our struggles with ice floes, as from a frost-bound coast we labored to bring others to the mainland.

The result of this meeting was something like twenty souls brightly converted and sanctified. And it is quite significant that the only ones who got through were those who had read the paper and books Bro. W. had loaned them!

Before the meeting closed Bro. W. told us again that it was not his wish that any of those who had just been regenerated and sanctified should pay anything. He said they were new in the experience, and he preferred to meet the whole expense.

And he did! The public hall cost him seventy dollars. Then there were the hotel accounts, the song book bill, and the pay of the evangelist. Altogether it made a large amount, but pay it all he would, and did.

Many times we have spoken since then, to different people, about the appearance of the man at this time. His face gleamed with holy light. He could not mention the name of Jesus without the tears streaming down his cheeks. He was so filled with the Spirit, so drunk on the wine of the Kingdom above, that we have often said to friends that the man could not walk straight. Weights of glory from the upper world were on him, and he, so to speak, staggered under what God was putting in him and on him.

A piece of subsequent history that stands connected with this meeting is that the brother who at such a sacrifice called us to hold the meeting, told us afterwards that he thought he never would quit gathering in his wheat at the end of the season. God so blessed the land and harvest, and so rolled material plenty upon him, that the man said to me with a smile, "There was no real loss to me, God sent it all back."

An additional piece of subsequent history was that among the souls sanctified was a man who has since held many Gospel meetings and brought numbers of people into the experience of pardon and holiness. Nor was this all; among those whom this last person led into full salvation was a young lady who is already being signally used of God in drawing men and women to Christ, and is evidently a chosen vessel and marked out for a life and career of no ordinary usefulness.

Here we see a granddaughter of the first meeting! Indeed, we can count even now, down to the fourth generation of those brought to God and filled with the Spirit as the result of the services originated by the sacrifice of a single servant of Christ, and carried on in the face of the greatest discouragements of wind, weather and bitter opposition.

A third bit of history of later date connected with the meeting was, that it opened the way for another the following year, where, instead of twenty,

nearly seventy souls professed to have found the blessings of pardon and full salvation.

So the work started, and is still rolling on. But in heaven it is never forgotten who wrote the letter; and said “Come,” and prepared the way and footed all the bills, and stood by the meeting from first to last, asking for no recognition or reward, save that which he got from the skies, namely, the smile, favor and blessing of God poured richly and overflowing upon his soul.

CHAPTER 15

AN OBEDIENT MAN

We know a gentleman very well who has for half a century been a devout man. One morning before day he was suddenly awakened by the Spirit of God with the deep impression upon him like a command, “Get up, dress, and go out on the street.”

Immediately he replied aloud to the Lord, as was often his custom, “Lord, if this is your voice I am willing, but what can I do on the street before day?” Again came the impression, “Get up, dress and go out on the street.”

Still again he exclaimed, “Lord, I see it is snowing. What could I do for you on the street at such a time?”

At once he began to feel a cloud coming over him, and the Spirit seemed to be withdrawing; whereupon the man sprang up and said, “All right, Lord, I’ll go. Don’t leave me;” and instantly he felt the smile of God upon his soul.

As he dressed he became still more serene and peaceful in spirit, and when he stepped out on the street and strode down the deserted and snow-covered pavement, he was a happy man. He had trudged some six or eight blocks when he looked up with a smiling face through the falling flakes and said:

“Lord, I don’t know what you want me to do; but I am very happy walking around here in the dark for you. If this is what you want, it is all right with me.”

By this time his soul was on fire and a joy unspeakable filled him.

He went on several blocks farther, when just as day began to break, he saw a man on the other side of the street with a tin bucket in his hand.

At once came the inward voice, "Join yourself to him." He did so, and crossing over and gently speaking to the man he found that he was not a Christian. He then told him that he knew God had awakened him and sent him forth that early to meet him and talk with him about the salvation of his soul.

The speaker's own heart was burning with the love of God, and his voice was tender and kind; his eyes overflowed, and God filled his mouth with the right words. So when he asked the man if he would let him pray for him he bowed his head in silent consent and they both got down in the snow together. Oh, how God's servant prayed, and how the poor sinner wept! When they arose from their knees salvation had come to the man who carried the dinner pail.

The men shook hands and parted forever. The laborer went on to his distant factory, and the merchant returned to his bed, but not to sleep. He held a special service of praise and thanksgiving in his room an hour before the early mass of the Catholics.

In speaking afterwards of the incident, he said he believed that God saw that the man would be killed that day in the factory by some accident, or that his heart was in a ripe state for salvation, so that the case for either reason had to be taken in hand at once; hence the urgent, repeated call, "Get up, dress and go on the street." The merchant furthermore said: "I have never seen the man since, but I firmly believe I will meet him in Heaven. God would not have made me do what I did, for nothing. That morning awakening meant salvation to an immortal soul."

CHAPTER 16

A SACRIFICING MAN

One of the sweetest joys which thrills the human soul comes from the sacrifice of self. Whether we regard the bliss as a direct reward from heaven for the Christlikeness of the act, or whether we view the sweet experience as the result of getting away from one's self; or that it is the thrill realized from the exercise of one's highest and noblest powers; it does not matter; we only know that it is one of the profoundest, most exultant and exalting joys which can visit and abide in the breast of a human being.

The sinner in his search for happiness in the gratification of appetite and ambition is missing it. Pleasure is not happiness. The traveller rushing hither and thither to seaside and mountain resorts, fails as notably in what he is after; for recreation is not blessedness. And he who lives for self, and would make all things bend to be tributary to his pleasure and will, comes far short of what he wants and craves; for selfish gratification is not joy.

But the sacrifice of self will bring it. Joy is a fruit of sacrifice, and the deeper and greater the self-denial the profounder the inward spiritual thrill and gladness.

He who follows in the footsteps of the Savior, can speak most assuredly about the nature of the joy, and the method of its obtainment. Without an exception such would counsel against the self-absorbed life, the contracted life, and the existence where personal ambition and selfish ease dominate thought and action. In the words of the Savior they could say that "He who saveth his life shall lose it; and he who loseth his life shall find it."

In the early ministerial life of the writer he was thrown much with his presiding elder, who was one of the most deeply spiritual men he ever knew. It was the custom with many preachers in that office at that time to spend most of their time at home. They ran out to their appointments on Saturday, held Quarterly Conference that night, preached once or twice on

the Sabbath, and took the next train for their dwelling place in some neighboring town. This presiding elder of whom we are writing had a home of his own, an attractive and comfortable one at that, and also a devoted family circle. And yet such was his conception of ministerial duty in his sub-bishop office as overseer of a district of five or six counties, that he would be gone on his trips two and three months at a time.

He would procure a horse, and leaving the railroads, penetrate the hills and swamp country, looking up the people, spending the night or taking a meal in humble homes, having family prayer wherever he could, and talking to everybody about their souls.

The writer as a young preacher was with him on some of his overland, and house to house visiting journeys, and can testify to his passion for souls and faithfulness as a true servant and follower of Christ. Very humble was the fare he often got, and many were the hardships he had to endure, but we never knew him to murmur or complain.

Instead of sorrow he was always full of a holy joy. His countenance was transfigured. His eyes had a drunken look — the strange intoxication of a profound heavenly bliss.

We often slept together; and we never knew him to pray less than an hour before retiring. After twenty-five or thirty minutes' communion with God, his body would begin to tremble under the glory that filled his soul, as one would shake with an ague. His whispered utterances would sound at times like verbal shivers, so greatly was the physical man shaken by the power of God. At the end of a full hour, he would remove his hands from before his face to arise, and his countenance looked like that of an angel! He was tasting the joy, and realizing the blessedness of sacrifice. He was knowing more genuine happiness in his lonely, toilsome, homeless life in a single hour, than his brethren who clung so tenaciously to their hearthstone, felt in entire year.

CHAPTER 17

AN UNAPPRECIATED MAN

We had a cousin once, a splendid fellow, who in early manhood became infatuated with a black-eyed, badly-spoiled Southern girl. She had no heart, and as far as all her acquaintances knew, never said or did a noble thing in all her life. But she was stylish and brilliant and our cousin went down before her spell in spite of advice and warning given him by friends who admired and loved him.

But like the child we wrote of in another book who wanted a pretty looking wasp, and got it, sting and all; so with him. He craved to possess the fluttering, glittering thing he met at a social party, and would hear to nothing but having it as his own personal property.

Owning a handsome Southern plantation and one hundred slaves, he was a catch, and the girl allowed herself to be caught without a spark of love for the man. She undoubtedly married him for the home and position he could give her.

We saw the couple as a lad a few days after the marriage. My cousin had naturally a bright, joyous laugh, but now it was exultant, while his fond eyes fairly shone with happiness as he gazed at his recent captive. But young as we then were, we recall how she seemed annoyed at his admiration and attentions, would turn away from him, and seemed to shrink from his touch.

As the months and then the years passed by, it was pathetic to mark the change in the man; how the light went out of his face, and what a grave, sad look he wore all the time.

The woman was an insatiable novel reader, knew nothing of housekeeping, sewing, or any womanly and wifely employment, and stayed most of the time to herself in her room. He not only was allowed to breakfast alone, but times without number eat at his dinner and supper table with no one present but a faithful servant, who, as silent as the voiceless master,

served him to the various, dishes without a word. As for the wife, she seemed to prefer the company and society of any body and everybody to that of her husband.

She was not the Ring Dove he thought her to be, nor a golden-winged hummingbird, nor even a lovely-tinted moth. She was a cross between a hornet and a yellow-jacket, and abounded in stings.

She soon stung my cousin's old, hearty laugh to death. The bright look of his frank, blue eye went the same way. Then the elastic step and splendid carriage of the man departed. The whole former self died under the repeated stings of the domestic hornet he had brought with such gladness and sweet expectancy to his home.

Speech between the two finally became very rare, and repeatedly we have seen them sitting at opposite ends of the long piazza of their home, she buried in a novel, and he with a far-away look in his eyes seemed to be gazing at the cloud lines of the distant horizon.

One day, when in middle life, he told her that he was suffering peculiarly in the region of the heart. Her cold, mechanical reply was that he had best lie down on his couch in another room. He turned away without an additional word, and laying down upon the lounge, died almost instantly, and expired alone.

Here was the end of another sad life where there had been no sin committed or crime of any kind. Instead, the man was kind, benevolent, blameless in his life, a splendid provider for his household; and yet his was an existence shadowed and made wretched for twenty years as though he had been a criminal, and terminated without a single handclasp or voice of friendship or affection, and without the presence of a single loving soul in the last trying hour of death.

We have no room for comment on this actual piece of life history. We can only hope that the troubles of the man drove him to Christ, and that in the other existence beyond the grave, that somehow compensations for the wrongs inflicted upon us in this world will be found; and we will see again that God has made all things work together for good to them that love him.

CHAPTER 18

A LIVING DEAD MAN

In the bounds of our circuit resided one of the wealthiest men in the State. He had three cotton plantations, each one of which was a large fortune in itself.

This gentleman was a member of the Methodist church, and his annual contribution to the cause of Christ was, we were informed, twenty-five dollars. He was a very large man, with a dignified, even stately, manner, had a measured, deliberate way of talking, brooked no kind of contradiction or opposition, and in his majestic style made everything and everybody, so to speak, stand around when he appeared on the scene.

Before we were sent to our second year's charge this man was stricken with paralysis, and lingered in a speechless, motionless and utterly helpless condition for nearly three years before death came to his relief.

He spent many of these weary days in a kind of invalid chair made especially for him. Being a very heavy man, it took several strong men to lift him from his bed to this reclining seat; so that, owing to the pain and difficulty of said performance, the invalid spent his last year in the last-named piece of furniture, that, narrow shaped and horizontal, was the significant precursor of the coffin which was now close by.

We will never forget the sensation we experienced on being introduced as the new pastor, when we looked down at this dead alive, or living dead, man. His language had been reduced to a gurgle in the throat. No matter what was asked of him, or remarked to him, this single guttural sound was all that could be obtained. Doubtless many mistakes were made in communicating with him, but he was helpless by any sign to show when he was understood or misunderstood.

The body was large and fleshy, but every member was lifeless and motionless, and the skin and complexion that of a corpse. The only organ that declared the existence of a being under this mass of flesh were the

eyes. Their plaintive, wistful, appealing look was the only thing left to show a human soul gazing up through the ruins of a body that had fallen upon it, covered it up and was crushing it to death, while that soul itself was powerless to make known its condition and to declare what it hoped, what it feared and what it wanted to be done.

We do not believe we could have felt a greater embarrassment and profounder helplessness in trying to speak to a man with the broad Mississippi between us than we experienced as, standing by this flesh-imprisoned being, we endeavored to signal to the captive spirit within and exchange messages. But while we could see that the man inside would come to the window of the eye and look at us, we could never understand what he wanted to say, nor could we tell whether the words we uttered and the signals of salvation we waved were received and comprehended. How far off the soul seemed, though the body was in two feet of us! We read the Bible, sang a hymn and prayed, and wept as we prayed. But it was like trying to communicate with a prisoner through the thick walls of a dungeon, or making one's self heard by a man wrecked on an island miles away. We turned literally heartsick and baffled from those two anxious eyes looking out from the expressionless, mask-like, death-like face beneath us. The solitary sound nature had spurred him was a gurgle in the throat, and the only interpretable gaze left in the eye was one of wistfulness and pleading.

One of the daughters did some fancy work with the clicking, half choking sound the father made to every remark and question. Under her skillful management it became a full and complete language; but the thoughtful observer could see that the girl was going entirely by her imagination, as well as her wishes in the matter. We recall some of her queries and utterances, the actual reply received from the prisoner on the island, and her translation of the messages:

“Father, Do you want the minister to pray for you?”

“Gurgle.”

“Do you want him to sing for you?”

“Gurgle.”

“You are very fond of hearing hymns, aren’t you, father?”

“Gurgle.”

“You are too tired to hear any more today?”

“Gurgle.”

“You will be delighted to have our pastor call again?”

“Gurgle.”

“You want to go to sleep now, father, dear?”

“Gurgle.”

So she went on with her free rendering and amplification of a single monotonous guttural note. She said he was delighted, when the ashen-gray face flatly contradicted the assertion. She affirmed he wanted to go to sleep, when that anxious-looking eye gave the lie to the fancy. Once she clapped her hands and declared her father greatly enjoyed a bright speech that had been made, and had laughed over it, when the only sound he gave was the old gurgle, and his eye had that same wistful, pleading gaze which could never belong to the mood she attributed to him.

Poor imprisoned soul! The man had deliberately chosen the carnal rather than the spiritual life. He had rarely attended the church of which he was a member. He never opened a Bible, nor was he ever seen to pray in all his life. He chose the flesh rather than the manna which came down from heaven, and he obtained what he preferred. It came upon him abundantly, like it fell upon the Jews. It swept upon him in carnality, and piled upon him in flesh itself. It lay upon his body in folds and masses. It smothered his spirit, choked every beginning of a godly life, and finally fell a physical wreck and ruin upon the soul in such a manner that the real man inside could not be conversed with, helped or delivered in any way. For three years the captive came to the windows and gazed his unhappiness upon us, but he seemed to be too far away for us to understand what he wished us to know. All we could hear was a gurgle.

One day we looked for him at the casement from which he had cast such wistful glances for so long a time, and he was not there. By some unknown door he had gone away into eternity.

CHAPTER 19

LITTLE JOHN

It became necessary for the mother of the writer to add some live stock to her plantation in the shape of plow and wagon animals. She entrusted the purchasing business to a gentleman relative, who for a reasonable price bought five mustang mules. They were in an untamed state so far as work under the saddle and in harness, was concerned, and the serious undertaking of “breaking in” was appointed to take place on a certain Saturday. They had been bought, and now were to be “broken” according to farm and stable language, and ever thereafter pull steadily and faithfully in any vehicle to which they should be hitched.

As a little boy we witnessed the “breaking in” and it has remained a vivid recollection with us ever since.

It required a half dozen strong Negro men and nearly the entire day to accomplish the feat. The reader will pardon the play upon the word, but we recall the fact that we never beheld as many feet, human and animal, in the air at one time and continuously as we did that Saturday in all the course of our after life. The amount of cyclone and electric storm in those mustangs was simply amazing. It looked like the first four would never be conquered. They were taken out from the lot one by one to be geared up side by side with an old steady wagon horse. But the instant the harness was put on the alarmed and infuriated animal, he would begin to rear, kick, plunge and go through every motion of insubordination. With the greatest difficulty several men were able to fit on collar and harness, and on account of the bucking, backing and plunging forward, still greater was the task of connecting breast chains with the pole, and trace chains to the single-tree. Then when the driver took his seat and, assisted by experienced helpers on the ground, tried to make the animal pull, first by clucking, next by “get ups,” and then by the crack and lash of the whip, it was like launching a hurricane, followed by a vain endeavor to stop a tornado.

The field of operations was about five acres in extent, smooth in surface with a sprinkling over it of last year's cornstalks. Each one of the four mustangs literally took the wagon with him, the old staid horse by his side as well. The driver swayed like a drunken man on his seat, his helpers could scarcely keep up with the frantic, furious animal, while dust, clods of earth and cornstalks fairly filled the air. But finally by sticks, clubs and whips the panting creature was subdued, and in the course of an hour or so, geed, hawed, whoaed and pulled according to command and in a word behaved himself and did almost as well as the sober old horse by his side.

During all these agitated proceedings of the day the fifth mustang, called by the Negroes "Little John," stood in the barn lot quietly, but fixedly contemplating the stormy scenes in the field.

Little John was small and of slender build, and with his ears long enough for any mule, but absurdly lengthy for an animal of his slim construction, reminded one forcibly of an overgrown jack rabbit. These same auricles were directed in a gaze-like attitude over the fence, while their owner seemed to be meditating on the hard time his friends and brethren were having. Evidently he must have had this thought, and drawn conclusions, for when his turn came and the farm hands first roped and then bridled him, he made not the slightest resistance. And when collar, harness, back band, breeching and trace chains were put clanking on him and he was hitched up to the wagon he made not the faintest objection. And when the driver, gathering the reins in his hand, gave a loud cheerful cluck and "get up," Little John walked off pulling in the gear in the most orthodox manner, and was guided by the bit right and left, as easily and naturally as if he had been drawing wagons all the days of his life.

To this hour we recall the loud shout of laughter given by the Negro men. All agreed with cackles of mirth and stentorian guffaws that Little John had sense, that he was long-headed, that he had not been looking over the fence all day for nothing; that he had been thinking; that he had seen what a time the other mules had passed through, and had made up his mind he would not be beaten and mauled around that way. And so he had surrendered at the start and behaved himself from the beginning.

The original Little John was a mustang, mule, but we are certain that the reader with a slight demand on his recollection, and the smallest effort of

imagination, will behold typically portrayed in our long eared and philosophic animal friend certain well known evangelists, pastors, and laymen.

“Little John,” the fifth animal, let it be remembered saw what a grievous time his brethren had in the matter of whips, clubs and general knocking down, and so determining to escape all this trouble walked forth from the lot and into the harness and pulled away at the wagon as if it was an accustomed habit and life-long accomplishment. Little John chose not to suffer affliction with his friends and brethren, but accepted deliverance by an easier way, and one which brought on him approving smiles and loud cries of endorsement from the club and whip crowd.

Little John thus becomes a type of a class of church members and Christians who, perceiving what a struggle, and experience of suffering their brethren have who seek holiness in the old time Methodist and Scriptural way, resolve not to take any such death route. They have found a pleasanter road, a popular way in which not a lash is popped nor a missile hurled, nor a single difficulty thrown in the course of any kind. And so Brother Little John is found in the ranks of full salvation with no martyr wound, and bearing none of “the marks of the Lord Jesus.”

Again Little John is a type of still another class in the Holiness ranks who, standing in the ecclesiastical lot, and gazing with anxious eyes and pointed ears over the fence, see how their brethren are treated who testify to, preach and press entire sanctification in a clear, unmistakable way; observe how laymen are removed from Stewardships and other official positions in the chair; note how preachers are thrust out of leading pulpits into hard scrabble circuits; mark how holiness Evangelists are debarred from leading churches and are ridiculed and denounced by the secular and church press; whereupon Brother Little John, oh, how little is John! Brother Little John, we repeat, determines that nothing of the kind shall befall him.

So coming forth from his stall he ambles up to the whip and club tribe, and brays:

“Men and brethren, I am yours. I promise to behave in a way to please you. I will work anywhere you put me. I will say what you want me to say; do what you want me to do; and instead of

preaching holiness by the death route of consecration, faith and tarrying at the altar for the fire, I will go back to first principles, preach repentance of a mild type, make touching allusions to the old flag and deliver affecting discourses on Mother, Home and Heaven.”

When Brother Little John said this, the whip and club tribe smiled cordially and fraternally upon him. They admired his long ears, rubbed his narrow head, called him their own asinine mustang and said, without a disagreeing voice, that he was the nicest little mule in the whole stable.

CHAPTER 20

THE GRUMBLER TRIBE

In every church and at every camp meeting there is to be found a set of people who can most properly be called “The Grumblers.” They are few in comparison with the crowds who come to hear the Word and be taught and benefited, but they make up in tongue what they lack in number of physical bodies, and in gall and spleen what they do not possess in the line of love and truth and accurate knowledge of the doctrines, experiences, and individuals they criticize and condemn.

Studying this class of people in a psychological, sociological, ecclesiastical and religious light, they seem to be disgruntled with everything and everybody. Nothing suits them. Nobody pleases them. No sermon is right. No preacher deserves commendation. No meeting is conducted as it should be, and might be if some one they know very well had hold of it, etc., etc., etc.

The name “Grumbler” is a good one and covers exactly the cases under description. The point, however, we are making is that these people ought to have public recognition and be accorded their rights on the camp ground. They should have an hour set apart for themselves and the hour announced like the other meetings. This is a plea made in the spirit of our American institutions, which would accord to all classes recognition and representation in some way.

That the reader may see clearly our meaning, we would mention that at one of our large camps we have an excellent body of brethren who ascend a hill overlooking the camp ground, and there “groan” for victory on the coming night service. By and by this little band of godly men were called “The Groaners,” and their regular gathering on the hill was announced after this fashion:

“The Groaners’ meeting will be held on the hill as usual at 6 o’clock.”

Now the people we are referring to are not “Groaner” but “Grumblers” They are not groaning for something, but growling at everything. They are not praying for anybody, but are fussing at everybody.

It is perfectly evident that this class, which we find both in the church and on the camp ground, are with us to stay. As free-born American citizens, and church members, and attendants on the camp meeting, they have their rights and should be duly recognized and honored. So we propose that in addition to the other numerous services of the church, and especially the camp, known as the Preaching Service, the Children’s Meeting, the Mother’s Meeting, the Young People’s Meeting, the Business Meeting, and the Groaner’s Meeting — we also add “The Grumbler’ Meeting.”

How impressive it would be to hear the preacher say: “The Grumblers will hold their usual meeting at 5 o’clock.” At such a time who would not be one of them.

Of course the leaders for this service should be selected with great caution; only the sourest man or the bitterest woman on the ground should be entrusted with the care and conduct of a gathering comprised of individuals of such acidulated superlative universal knowledge, and inexhaustible and infinite experience.

There is not only justice in making arrangements for this gathering as an abiding feature on the bulletin board, but there is sound policy and wisdom in the step.

Quite a prominent Christian worker in the North has a room on the fourth floor of his big mission building which is open at all times for religious nondescripts. When they call on him, with their long-haired, wild-eyed, bitter-tongued ideas and harangues, he escorts them to the door of this room, and turns them loose on each other to their own perfect satisfaction, and to the equally perfect delight of all who do not attend the meeting. This undoubtedly saves his mission and causes its useful perpetuation.

On a similar principle Hyde Park in London is said to be the safety valve of the government and nation. All kinds of Ranters, Fussers, Discontents and Malcontents gather there and pour forth their sourness and bitterness in the presence of little groups of hearers. No matter what they say the police do not interfere. No harm is done by their frothy utterances, but

rather good. The Railer and Scolder is actually relieved by his vigorous verbal castigation, flagellation and extirpation of people who are not present at their own trial, condemnation and death. Both sides then may be said to be pleased, and Hyde Park becomes, in addition to the English army and navy, a mighty factor in the preservation of the Kingdom of Great Britain.

The government of England recognizes the wisdom of letting its discontented citizens relieve their high pressure by blowing off steam through lip-whistles and tongue safety valves rather than to suppress their bad feelings and burst the national boiler. It is better, they think, for these ranters, declaimers, denouncers and habitual recalcitrants to kill, skin and roast the government in imagination than in reality; better to have a civil war in fancy than in fact. So "The Hyde Park meeting is held at the usual hour!"

A famous preacher in New York City said once in an address he made, that when he felt that a party had wronged, aggrieved or displeased him in some way, he sat right down and wrote him a sharp letter, peppering, salting and raking him over the coals, generally. That when he had finished the document and kept it over night, he felt so relieved that he never sent it. He "held his meeting as usual," and was blessed "after his kind."

In view of all these things we insist upon the introduction and establishment of "The Grumblers' Meeting." As we have proved, it is not only just but wise. Then please let the Committee on Public Worship think of the keen pleasure they will give the Grumblers in granting them a whole hour each day in which to skin their absent brethren and sisters without fear of interruption or molestation; the equally intense joy of the aforesaid brothers and sisters in not being present to be skinned; and the great good done to the camp meeting evil in skimming the scolding, fussing element from the tents and streets and pouring it all into a jar or dish to itself, called "The Grumblers' Meeting."

This, as the reader can easily see, locates and in a sense shelves the difficulty. The inflammation which threatens to become general is, to speak in medical language, brought to a head, where treatment is simplified, while the other part of the body is relieved.

On reflection we think that the hour from midnight to 1 o'clock would be the most appropriate time for "The Grumblers," as then all the other meetings would have been held, thereby giving these brethren broader fields for review and judgment; or, to change the figure, furnishing them with a greater number of subjects for the dissection of life and autopsy of character.

We would furthermore insist, that on every camp ground all who are not members of the Grumbler tribe by blood or affiliation, whenever they hear the language of detraction, faultfinding, abuse and slander going on, should instantly address the speaker and acquaint him with the fact that his meeting does not open until twelve o'clock at night. That services on this camp ground are not allowed to overlap in consideration of the rights of others and in justice to all. So that in a word, he is out of order and must restrain his enthusiasm and overflowing nature and keep bottled his testimony until his own service begins at the witching hour of night, most capably and efficiently led by Brother Growler and Sister Fusser.

CHAPTER 21

BROTHER MOON

As we grow older we are more and more impressed with the great lack of originality with the multitude, and the tremendous amount of imitation that is going on. There is little genius, over against a great deal of talent, and more of taste than of talent. The difference is that Genius is creative, Talent is simply imitative, while Taste is appreciative.

It is a great thing to have Taste and be able to recognize an excellent thing when read or heard. But Taste often can only criticise, and is powerless to create, and often cannot even imitate.

Genius strikes out in untrod lines; not only easily evolves fresh ideas and sayings, but can bring new forms out of the old with a kind of resurrecting, glorifying power. The listener is charmed at unexpected lights made to fall on facts of nature and life, and truths in God's Word, by this peculiar ability of mind possessed by some writers and speakers. They hold you with a breathless interest and sweet delight because of the creative faculty God has given them. Like Him they make new worlds, plant gardens of paradise, and people planet and garden with forms of strength and beauty.

The names of these individuals are the Honorable or the Reverend Mr. Sun. Talent sits in the audience, listens carefully to his brother Genius, goes away to other places and by virtue of his imitative gift reproduces the thoughts, arguments, illustrations, striking attitudes and even voice of his brother. He shines with reflected light. He is not a sun to originate light and heat, but a satellite to reflect. This is Brother Moon! The pulpit Sun gets His glory from an inborn and indwelling superiority; the pulpit Moon draws his excellencies from Brother Sun.

No one doubts but that Talent is quite an excellent quality, but every thinker must see that it occupies a lower grade than Genius. The latter creates, the former imitates. Anyone must know that it is easier to learn a

song than to compose one, and to commit some sermons to memory than to originate them.

Behold I show unto you a parable. The moon sweeps grandly and serenely through the heavens when the sun is gone; but when the sun rises, invariably and without exception the moon retires.

Who has not seen Brother Moon, when Brother Sun was absent, shedding his radiance over the country, setting the dogs to barking all around, and causing good old ladies and the young people to gaze with rapt countenances at his glittering march over the platform? But when Brother Sun appeared, who also has not beheld Brother Moon pack up his borrowed beams and set; or if he did not depart, hang in a faded, misty way in the Tabernacle sky? He was there, but one had to look closely to see him, he was so changed, so different from what he had been.

If he had been content to have called himself a moon, as he was, it would have been all right, for God made moons and they have their place and use. But he tried to pass off as a sun. So there was a general smile when Brother Sun arrived and the people saw where Brother Moon had obtained his light.

CHAPTER 22

OLD BROTHER HUMBUG

There was in one of our congregations an elderly man who was regarded by the whole town and most of the church as an old scamp. He had been caught in a number of dishonorable acts, and yet he went on his way, fat, oily, bland, self-complacent, and seemingly perfectly oblivious of the low opinion in which he was held.

Strange to say, he loved to talk in religious assemblies. He had no experience, but would sermonize, so to speak, in his testimony in the class and experience meetings.

One morning at a week-day service he arose in his usual deliberate way to testify. With his face drawn to look solemn and wise, he said: "My dear brethren, I beheld a very solemn sight today. I saw a number of holes being dug for posts to be planted around the Court House yard; and as each was completed a man came up with a stick measure in his hand and accurately tested its depth, and, brethren, every one that did not have the required number of feet and inches was rejected. If it only lacked one inch it was rejected! Oh, brethren, I thought that this would be the way with us at the judgment; we will all be thoroughly examined, measured and known that day; and if we do not answer to the divine standard and regulation we will be rejected. Oh, brethren, how solemn this is!"

It would be impossible to describe the turned-down corners of the mouth and the cast-up look of the man's eyes, as he thus moralized and apostrophized the ceiling; and it would be equally difficult to delineate the disgusted faces of the audience, not one of whom had the slightest confidence in the man.

He sat down, and buried his face in his hands as if quite overcome, and for several minutes not a sound broke the stillness. Just then a most excellent woman named Mrs. W_____, who had been praying for days almost unbrokenly for the meeting, was suddenly filled with the Holy Spirit. Her

cry of rapture went to every heart, and for several minutes she ran up and down the aisle clapping her hands and praising God, and hardly knowing what she was doing. She seemed to be in such an agony of joy that only violent actions of the body gave her any relief at all.

Suddenly she precipitated herself upon the fat, oily brother of the measuring story. His head was bowed and he must have thought that a cyclone had struck him, and that all the boards and shingles of neighboring houses were raining upon him; for if ever a man got a slapping and spanking he was the man. As he was large and plump, and had on summer clothes and they fitted him tight, the slaps woke up the echoes in the church and fairly made the welkin ring. He had lifted his head in amazement at the unexpected attack, but now sunk it again, while he flinched and jerked under the stinging blows of the happy and blissfully unconscious Sister W_____.

We glanced at the audience, and every countenance was radiant. The satisfaction was general and immense. But for the sacredness of the place the people looked as if they would have given worlds to have encouraged Sister W_____ on to greater efforts; feeling that if ever a man needed the drubbing and dressing down he was getting it was old Brother Measuring Rod.

And he certainly got it, and it was about as painful as though the woman who gave it was mad instead of being glad; and as though she was an angry sinner instead of being a very happy Christian.

Two things were noticeable about Brother Measuring Rod after this.

First, he was careful never to say anything at all about any kind of measurement and things that came short. Perhaps he thought it was his forcible and happy style of illustration which brought the power upon the good sister. If so, he did not care to exercise his gifts in that manner any more.

Second, from that time on he was observed to keep a watchful, wary, and even apprehensive eye upon Sister W_____. We verily believe that if that blessed woman of God had started in his direction, he Brother Measuring Rod, would have incontinently taken to his heels and fled down the street, as if Satan and all his imps were after him.

CHAPTER 23

BROTHER BROGAN SHOES

The matter of naming each individual of the human race is no small affair. If there is considerable thought and consultation in the family not to mention worry, in the selection of proper appellations after the little ones have become a half dozen in number; certainly the task is much more gigantic to find distinguishing titles for families as well as a particular name for every member of the human race. Nevertheless, it must be done, that we may not be confounded with other beings, but be separated and distinguished one from another not only by physical features but by nomenclature.

It is easy to see how some roof-tree cognomens were born, as for instance, the Shepherds, Wagoners, Smiths and Bakers. Then the Johnson family came forth to view by being the son of John, while Benson was unquestionably the descendant of the first or original Ben.

We also can account for the Lyons, Doves, Stars, Berrys, Byrds and that smaller household known by the appellation of Rice. These names were in a sense derivations, referring to appearances, manners, excellencies and even trades of the early progenitors.

In like manner we trace the Brogans, a large and well known clan, back to a place and point where we gaze upon a certain kind of footwear that is unattractive and undesirable in more respects than any other pedal covering known.

The Brogan is made out of thick leather that looks only half tanned. It has a faint, nauseating odor to match its uninviting appearance. The shape is rough and clumsy looking, the sole is thick and the heel broad and low. As it is not a sewed but a pegged shoe, when it is heard approaching with its heavy thump on the floor, or with sharp ripping, tearing sound over matting and carpet, we obtain a memory as well as a bit of nerve suffering not soon if ever to be forgotten.

Such have been the observations, experiences and facts of the past concerning this shoe, that the brogan has become with the writer a type and embodiment of much that is embraced in the words, pain, noise, roughness, inconsiderateness, selfishness, dictatorialness and cruelty.

Nero was a member of the Brogan family, and after he had stamped the life out of one hundred thousand Christian martyrs, and trampled on the peace, liberty and rights of his subjects, he finally set fire to Rome and taking his lyre in hand played and sang while he dangled his huge yellow tans over the parapets of his royal palace in full view of the burning city and its agonized inhabitants.

The Inquisition beheld the Brogan Shoe family out in great numbers and in much power. How they kicked people into the river to drown and on the stake to burn, and ground blood, bone, muscle, brain, and every quivering member of the body and sensibility of the heart under their heavy, pitiless heels, because millions of their fellow-creatures clung to spirit rather than form, to truth instead of error; is too well described in history for us to repeat.

The Brogans ran the Feudal System and so stamped the hope and true life out of the people who were under them, that for centuries myriads of beings made in God's image were mashed even out of human shape, worked like overdriven, unthinking animals and lay wordless and unprotesting in the dust, constantly walked over by the Brogans, known in those days as barons, dukes and kings. The company of the oppressors was small in number compared to the oppressed. But the shoes that kicked the people down, and flattened them out, were so broad and thick soled that not a ray of light from earth and heaven seemed able to reach them. Not only mind and spirit were eclipsed; but hope and energy were literally crushed and beaten to death in the nations.

The first time the writer ever saw a member of the Brogan Shoe family, that individual was playing the bully and tyrant on the school playground. To this day we can recall how he ordered the small boys around, cuffed them for not obeying him at once in every particular, and lorded it indeed over every one not his equal in physical strength and fisticuff ability. Thus lad as he was of sixteen he strode about like a dictator of old, or one of the feudal barons of England, France, Spain and Germany, making everything

bend and bow to him. We have seen a half dozen little fellows of eight, ten or twelve made to weep and sob bitterly in a single recess hour, or on their return home from school by the cruel treatment of young Brogan Shoes.

Since that time I have met the Brogans almost everywhere. There is not a Congress or Legislature without them. Not a Board of Trade, Produce Exchange or City Council but lo! there is our old acquaintance, blood kin to Herod, Nero, Caligula, Danton and Marat, engaged in the ancient occupation of grinding people down, robbing them of fortune and happiness and making a way for their heavy tread and pitiless walk over the broken hearts, wrecked lives and purloined riches of the people.

We have never known a Mrs. Grundy Social Circle, but one of the Brogan daughters ruled the set. She may have been wearing, according to the occasion, white satin slippers or the latest Parisian models, but under the light of Judgment Day Truth she was really sporting Brogan Shoes. In spite of the elegant dress, costly laces, enameled complexion and superabundance of honeyed smiles and soft manners, she had only to be crossed, and instantly we obtained a view of a crimson swollen face uplifted angrily over a pair of thick-soled, hob-nailed No. 12 brogans.

Not a church congregation but has Brother Brogan sitting in one of the pews somewhere. Not a board of stewards in a city charge but lo! there is Brother Brogan with the yellow of his shoes settling in his face, the iron nails of his heel sticking deep into the hearts of the other brethren in a business meeting, and the stamp of his authority heard and felt through the entire cowed and brow beaten or rather shoe tramped membership.

But perhaps the most trying and unendurable of all spectacles of Brother Brogan Shoes is to behold him looking at and talking to us from the pulpit.

He is clothed in the regulation ministerial suit maybe, solid black, immaculate linen, clergy hat and all, but oh the horror of it! look at his shoes. He has on brogans!

Maybe he sports a beautiful white cravat, and yet he is wearing clod hoppers! Or he does not wear a cravat because he says it is wrong to do so, and yet as I live, he has on great, crushing No. 12 brogans and is walking over everybody.

The Bible talks about being shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, but he is hoofed with something hard, unyielding and cruel, that coming down on true, tender, loyal Christian hearts tears them to pieces. He wounds those whom heaven has not smitten; and grieves and tramples upon those with whom God is well pleased.

He elevates a mere form above the truth it typifies; a ceremony high over the soul's experience; and places non-essential doctrines on a plane with essential truths, and even above them. He pulls away from millions of true Christians who are humbly and truly serving God, and inaugurates something with an imposing Bible Name. Then because of the beautiful scriptural high-sounding title, he loudly proclaims that he has all and is all that is taught in the Biblical Term, and proceeds to denounce all the aforesaid millions of faithful followers of Christ in different denominations, because they do not leave the places where their fathers worshipped and where they have been blessed a thousand times, and come over to his corporal's guard of a church in which he has elected himself bishop, primate, law maker, judge, prophet, priest and king and general omniscient and almighty head and ruler. All that are not with him and especially under him are wrong, wedded to the Scarlet Woman, worshippers of the Red Beast, dwellers in Babylon, and bound for hell.

Who has not seen, and who has not heard the tread of the ecclesiastical, ministerial and fanatical brogan shoes? How ruthless they are! How they tramp coming up the church aisle! How heavy they sound in the pulpit! What tender, beautiful spirits they walk over! What consciences they have wounded! What hearts they have crushed!

The creak of the sole, the ripping, sound of the hob-nails, the thud of the heel, and the sickly yellow of the half tanned leather creed all seem to say:

“Get out of the way or I will mash the life out of the last one of you! What are your views and ideas to me? What do I care for your opinions and experiences? Look at me and my brogan shoes! Everybody is wrong but me! Everything that is not ‘brogan’ is utterly false and direct from hell! I know everything! I am the way and the truth. I have just received the latest edition of the Bible from the skies! And had the last talk with God! No one else will be allowed to speak to or hear from Him! There is to be no other

revelation! Every one will have to come to me to know what to do or be lost! Every preacher and evangelist, no matter though he has been called of God and honored by the Holy Ghost all over the land, yet is badly mistaken now, even if he is not an impostor! I alone never make a mistake! I know all things! I am the only one on earth who has the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! All who do not fall down and worship me, and all who do not wear brogan shoes just as I do, will lose the ir power, backslide into sin and finally be damned world without end!

Brother Brogan Shoes! There is not a word of truth in what you have said. Your statements are contradicted by the Word of God, by the good sense of mankind, and by the observation and experience of millions of godly men and women, many of whom were eminent for scholarship as well as piety and usefulness, living in the Spirit, dying in the faith, and leaving the world nearer to God and a million fold better for their having lived and triumphed in it. And all these died in the faith in the various branches of the Christian Church.

Brother Brogan Shoes! Change your shoes. Get a pair that are smaller and less noisy and harsh in sound. I would suggest that you get sandals. And as I continue to think about it, I don't know but that it would be best for you to go barefooted. Also that you secure a piece of sackcloth, throw it on and over your shoulders, sprinkle a lot of ashes over your head, and walk softly and humbly before God and man the balance of your days. It is the very least reparation you can make for having distorted and perverted God's truth, and for having wounded and abused better men than yourself.

Brother Brogan Shoes! If you do not get your nature changed, your spirit altered, take back what you have said, vacate the Judgment Seat of Christ and quit trying to fill the throne of the Universe, you are going to be lost and that forever. Think of it! You lost instead of those you have criticised, judged, condemned, abused, excommunicated, interdicted and then trampled upon with your rawhide boots and No. 12 brogans.

Look out, Brother Brogan Shoes: your sentence and doom has already been spoken by the Son of God!

“With what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you again.”
And “Verily I say unto you that whosoever shall offend one of
these little ones, it were better that a mill stone were hanged about
his neck and he was drowned in the depths of the sea.”

CHAPTER 24

BROKEN HUMAN HARPS

Once when a pastor, we were approached by a superannuated preacher, who was a member of our congregation, with the request that he be allowed to fill the pulpit that morning. We had other plans for the hour, the brother was nearly ninety years of age, and we felt sure that his age and feebleness would prevent his message being heard by the great congregation that had gathered, and so hesitated. But he was insistent, and looking at the gray hairs, and remembering his past services for the church, we assisted him into the pulpit.

In a sense the effort that followed was a failure. The aged servant of God spoke for twenty-five minutes in a rambling way, getting nowhere, and being heard by only a few who sat in the nearest pews. But the spirit of prophesy was on the old man, and hearts were touched and eyes filled all over the audience, as men saw the grace of preaching on one who mentally and physically was unable to do so. The fingers of the Divine Performer were on the human instrument, but the chords had lost their tautness, and the frame work of the harp was falling to pieces, so that a martial measure fell like an exhausted sigh on the ear, and an attempted hosanna had the effect of a miserere.

And yet the failure was a success, as the people with touched hearts, saw spiritual faithfulness contending with natural weakness; and beheld also the thrilling proof of the Bible statement that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

In a recent meeting, as we approached the tabernacle where the services were held, we noticed an aged white-haired preacher standing on the front steps, evidently addressing an imaginary congregation in the street. The man was over 80 years of age, was nearly blind, and quite deaf; and so, by the closing of the senses was shut in to a world by himself. But the Spirit that came upon him as a youth was still on him as an old man, and here this morning the habit and work of a lifetime was operating, and the

anointing of the Holy Ghost was in him; and so, removing his hat and taking the front step for a pulpit, he in a whisper was easing his Gospel-burdened soul by delivering a sermon to an invisible audience. A number beheld the spectacle and stopped or passed by softly. Not a person smiled. How could they as they beheld the venerable figure, the snow-white hair, the peaceful, saintly face, the moving lips, and the gentle gesticulations of an old preacher who had to preach salvation whether there was an assembly of people before him or not.

Again we saw the Divine Harper, and the broken-down human harp together once more; and once more thought of the verse, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," as having a depth of meaning not usually given to that Scripture. Perhaps in far away galaxies of the universe the servant of Christ may, with glorified mind and body, take up the work of his Master on such increased scales of might and power as to transcend the present scope of words to describe.

Be this as it may, the sight is bound to be affecting, when we behold the spirit of preaching coming on the superannuated ambassador of the skies, when the ability to give the message has departed.

In one of our Southern States an old minister of the Gospel was dying. As friends, children and grandchildren gathered weeping around the unconscious form, they never expected to hear him speak again and thought that every breath would be his last. When suddenly the dying man raised his hands, slowly uttered the Benediction, and the next moment his soul was gone!

The habit of a lifetime was on him. It was strong even in death. Once more he was in the pulpit. The sermon had been preached. The time of dismissal had arrived. And now, with the same beautiful, solemn words with which he had often sent away the congregation from the sanctuary to their own homes, he here uplifted his hands and dismissed his own soul from its trembling tenement of clay to the everlasting abode, the mansion of glory prepared for it in heaven by the Saviour he had served so well.

Who can tell but the Divine Harper becomes so attached to the human harp, through which, for ten, twenty, fifty or seventy years he has revealed his mind and expressed his heart to the church and the world; that

he will reframe it, restring and retune it to higher notes, grander octaves and more thrilling chords, and play on it again; and this time in the highest courts of glory and in the most distant worlds of the universe.

*“Then, in a nobler, sweeter song
I’ll sing Thy power to save;
When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.”*

CHAPTER 25

THE MIMOSA'S

It is wonderful how language has been enriched, and the vocabularies of earth made powerful and voluminous by the works of God in life and nature.

The creature or plant is made to stand for something, and we grasp the teaching and incorporate it at once in our otherwise lean dictionaries and poorly stricken sentences, and make the former a storehouse, and the latter to thrill, stir, melt and move according to the subject in hand or object in view.

A leonine courage, elephantine strength and serpentine manner are phrases which are pictures in themselves of superlative order because of the adjectives furnished by nature. Then when we read that the artillery flashed from the hills and the cavalry thundered across the plain, we behold in these sentences the storm of battle. Or when it is telegraphed that the orator of the day hurled his climactic argument and appeal like an avalanche upon the vast assembly, we need no other words to convince us that the speaker swept all before him and had everything at his feet.

Coming closer to the character world in our interpretation and translation of nature, we stoop down to examine a white something crawling in the dust; and lo! at our slightest touch the tiny creature retires in its calcareous house which it carries on its back and there it remains hidden until our disturbing presence is gone. Of course language is made richer by this phenomenon, and after that we say of a certain man, that when he was approached on this or that subject, he instantly "went into his shell." And moreover, we feel kindly towards the snail for helping us out, in our descriptions of people, by his own comical but most impressive way of retiring in himself.

But the character or person spoken of in this chapter is still different from the merely reticent individual. He is shown up by nature in a very

different way, viz., by a couple of varieties of a shrub known as the mimosa plant.

One of these species trembles at the approach of anything; and another at the slightest touch will curl up its leaves and blossoms, and refuse to smile upon and bless the world any more until its latest spell is over.

The word used by many to describe this indicative mood and intensely present tense in some human beings is “touchy.” We do not affirm that it can be found in the dictionary, nor do we defend it as being elegant or linguistically correct, but would simply state that as a term it is very powerful and thoroughly photographic of the case in hand. The colored people down South call it “Techy.” This expression of course is less defensible than the other, for reasons to be found in two departments of grammar known as orthography and etymology.

Both words, however, as used, stand for a morbid sensitiveness that, when rooted in some male or female disposition, transfers the mimosa plant at once into the home, church or social circle. All now that is needed is some real or fancied wrong, some imaginary slight, or objectionable speech, when lo! the sensitive plant is in full bloom, or rather, out of bloom! In an instant we see the fruit barreled up and taken away, the flowers gathered, every leaf curled and folded in on itself, and the Mimosas, masculine or feminine, young or old, have withdrawn from conversation, shut out all recognition of what is transpiring before them, and take themselves off, so to speak, to the silence and solitude of the strictest mental and spiritual retirement.

This is not the dignified, cautious, prudent Snail family that we see in their gravity and reticence; but plain Mr. and Mrs. Mimosa, whose feelings have been hurt, and who now propose to go away off somewhere and sit down, and sulk and pout to their heart’s content; and yet, in full view of the public that their aggrieved faces and insulted personalities might be beheld by those most concerned, and there “wait till the clouds roll by, Maggie.”

This retirement is not purposed to be a final St. Helena banishment, but a sort of Island of Elba vacation. The abdication was not intended to be perpetual. It was a kind of little drama enacted to break the hearts of the

forsaken subjects. For as soon as the folding up and moving off begins to take place with the Emperor or Empress Mimosa, the mind is already busied with plans about how to return to France and reascend the deserted throne, with that propriety and all that dignity befitting the Royal Absentee from the steward's meeting, social circle or home fireside.

It is very amusing to observe this spirit and practice among children. The instant the sensitive plant is touched with them, we see the king vacating the palace and leaving school and playmate subjects to languish over their vanished smiles and awful seclusion in the region of an injured silence. Nevertheless, from a remote part of the yard, or a shadowy corner of the room, they await to be entreated to return and remount the renounced throne.

Sometimes this absence on their part is marked by pouting spells, sulky moods, accompanied with rolling eyes, and occasionally mournful little ditties improvised for the occasion, that are sung for self-commiseration and gratification, and also intended to be as daggers of steel to the hearts of those who had offended their Highness and Majesty.

We knew a gentleman who had three children given to indulging this sulky performance.

He thought the matter over quietly and prayerfully, and finally planted a large post in the center of his kitchen garden which he called "The Crying and Sulking Post." There was no dedication of the wooden pillar itself, but there was a most impressive adjuration delivered to the children, who, with profound interest, watched the whole proceeding. The solemn statement and asseveration to the listening youngsters was that every child after that hour who was disposed to indulge in a crying spell or sulking mood, must make double quick time for that post, and do every bit of his pouting, weeping and wailing there. That if he was caught doing any of these things this side of the pillar of refuge, he should be threshed with a cowhide to an inch of his or her life. If mourn they would, they must mourn to themselves apart.

It was certainly curious and edifying to see these children break for the post when they felt the bad spell coming on, for they knew their father was a man of his word and would do what he threatened.

Now, as it is quite difficult to weep while running, and racing is a cheerful experience, having a tendency to divert the mind anyhow while the exercise sends the rich, exhilarating blood all through the system in a glorious circulation; it came to pass that they were healed as they went in the way, and the “crying post” was the driest spot in the whole yard and garden, save when the regular winter rains set in.

Hence the children were ready to return to public life the instant they reached the “wailing place.” Tears gone, moodiness run off, poutings ended, there was nothing to keep them longer in the place of exile.

It does seem a pity that these same kind of spells should overtake, capture and dominate grown-up people. And especially that there should be no recovering stake or pillar for them, as with the little ones. We can but wish for a crying, sulking post for the older folks.

When this strange mental affection or affliction strikes adult members of society, it comes in one of two forms, the *Mimosa Furioso*, or the *Mimosa Sulkyoso*.

The first, according to the language of experts in our courts today, is a “brain storm.” This class, or variety, does not fold up so much as they proceed after a spell of trembling to unfold, and to let out tongue, hands and feet in every direction and in a most unmistakable way.

A prominent clergyman in the Northeast said that he once knew of a horse that was so “touchy” that no one on certain occasions dared to come in a dozen feet of him. That his owner, in view of the fixed tendencies of his steed to use his heels, would tie the curry comb on the end of a pole nearly twenty feet long, and standing outside in the stable lot, would proceed to do the best he could under the circumstances for the quadruped, while the rear hoofs of the aforesaid animal would be playing a regular tattoo against the barn wall and stall partition. This interesting creature was of the class called the *Mimosa Furioso*. All of us have seen this variety in the home, church, social and business circle. We approach them from afar; and attend to certain duties and obligations in their behalf standing, so to speak, at long range.

The other class, the *Mimosa Sulkyoso*, is more numerous. Their habit, under the slightest provocation, is to vacate the throne, quit the church,

leave the board, resign the position, quit everything and everybody and go off somewhere to themselves. They seem to obtain a strange kind of double enjoyment out of the proceeding; they make themselves unhappy and everybody else around them miserable or uncomfortable.

King Saul, in the Bible, took a spell of the sulks because the women with their timbrels and songs gave greater glory to David than to himself; saying, "Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands."

At once Saul pouted, and wanted to go into his corner. He said, What is left after this? They have made David everything. I am nothing and nobody. Give me the road and let me go!

The Mimosa Sulkyoso plants are seen in many a household and community. A little neglect, slight, or overlooking, and at once they make for their corner. They are always heading for the Island of Elba with the request that they be allowed to remain there and be forgotten.

But usually they are as anxious as Napoleon to get away and come back. They seem to weary with nursing their own grief and wrongs, keeping their mouth stuck out and their eyes rolling. They are only too thankful to return even before the Committee of Invitation has arrived requesting their reappearance. It is so trying to the feelings to be forgotten. It is such a terrible blow to their self-importance to discover that acquaintances and friends, the family and the church, and indeed the whole world itself can easily get along without them. It is simply dreadful to the self-centered to take note of the fact that people whom they thought could not exist apart from them, are perfectly willing that they should leave France and stay out of France. That they actually prefer that the Mimosa Sulkyosos should go to St. Helena rather than to the Island of Elba.

In view of this state of the case, and that the royal exiles are not content to remain away in such ignominious retirement, and show most unmistakable desires and intentions to revisit the Tuilleries and Louvre, there to make wretched the children of men by their oppressive and distressing ways, what a blessed thought it is that help and deliverance can be found even for them!

There is no crying post that can be set up by human power to meet the demand, but there is a weeping altar where the beam of wood is placed not

vertically, but laid horizontally, and where mourners of the order mentioned, and all other sorrow-laden spirits can come and wail out their grief, receive a deathless, divine consolation and depart with sorrow and sighing fled away, everlasting joy crowning their heads, and now able to comfort others who mourn, with the comfort wherewith they have been comforted of God.

In other words, the Mimosa Sulkyoso can by divine grace and power be changed into a plant that, instead of folding up, will spread abroad its branches, to rest, protect and bless the weary birds of earth who are making their passage for heaven. Yes, verily; the thorny, prickly, barren thing, can become like unto another tree of life, whose leaves possess healing all the time, and whose fruit of many beautiful kinds is found every month of the whole year. Evidently no backsliding season is counted on or allowed. The thorn has become a myrtle tree. The bitter waters have been made sweet. The man has been blessed, and now blesses others, and remains a blessing through all the months of the year. July, with its “4th,” and December with its “25th,” do not change or alter him. He is established in goodness, usefulness, fruitfulness and righteousness for all time.

Let earth be glad indeed for the divine crying post laid horizontally and called the mourner’s bench and the altar. May all the Mimosas with their cousins the Furiosos and Sulkyosos in the land, make a break for it, pray through, hear from Heaven, and stop their selfish complaints and egotistical whinings and “quit their meanness” forever.

CHAPTER 26

THE MALAPROPOS FAMILY

The Malapropos Family is an ancient one. It is also quite extensive. We distinctly remember to have read of various members of this interesting household far back in earliest history, and have met a great many more of the connection in every State of the Union.

One distinguishing characteristic of this branch of the human race is a way they have of saying and doing things in an inopportune time and in a most unfortunate manner. The very speech they should not have made, they make. The very thing they ought not to have done, they do. The moment chosen by them to illuminate the world on some particular question or matter was the most infelicitous and undesirable of all times.

Dr. C. K. Marshall of Vicksburg once said of just such a man, “that he never opened his mouth without putting his foot into it.”

Children are quite remarkable for illustrating this peculiarity of the Malapropos Family. For instance, when a mother charged her four year old son most earnestly not to say anything at the table about the nose of a guest who had been invited to take supper, the result was what might have been expected. The gentleman arrived, the meal proceeded, while the child gazed like one fascinated at the face of the new corner. Finally he blurted out:

“Mama, what made you tell me not to say anything about the gentleman’s nose? He hasn’t got any!”

In still further illustration of the striking social resemblance which most children bear to the Malapropos Family, we were told recently by a preacher friend that his little boy aged five had invited himself into the parlor to see a lady caller who was quite a corpulent character. Standing off a little distance he ejaculated:

“Mrs. F_____, you are the fattest woman I ever saw in my life!”

The speech was overheard, the offender was called out suddenly, and on the back porch the father reproved him, and told him in a deeply grieved tone how he must have hurt the lady's feelings by commenting on her large appearance.

The boy promised amendment in quite a contrite way, and said he would be more careful, in the future. Quickly returning to the parlor where the lady still sat alone, he again stood aloof, folded his hands behind him, and in a kind of apologetic voice said:

“Mrs. F_____, you are the slimmest woman I ever saw in my life.”

Comment is hardly necessary.

It seems that this interesting family of whom we are writing are famous as we have said, for making unfortunate speeches, for saying right things in a wrong way and at a wrong time, and for utterances unadvisable, questionable and regrettable, not occasionally, but continually. They would not be of the Malapropos blood if this was not the case.

One of this charming household, a steward on a country circuit, hearing that the pastor would not be able to reach the appointment that afternoon, announced as follows:

“Our minister cannot preach for us this afternoon; let us all stand and sing “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

Every one smiled but the announcer. A half hour later on the road riding home, his wife informed him how the speech sounded. He gave a sickly smile and saw at once that he belonged to the ancient household whose history we are calling attention to in a brief chapter.

Of this same connection was the preacher who in giving notices for the Sabbath said:

“The Lord will be with us in the morning meeting, and the presiding elder will be with us in the evening service.”

In the Social Circle the Malapropos abound. One of them said to a grave, dignified gentleman of prominent standing:

“I believe you had a brother or nephew hung in Texas, did you not?”

Another Mr. Malapropos addressed a gentleman of purest Caucasian descent, who was genuinely and justly proud of his genealogy, saying:

“I have been told that you have Negro blood in your family. I said at once that I did not believe a word of the report, but still I thought I would ask you in reference to the matter, and get the thing settled.”

A third kinsman of this household in looking at the wife of a gentleman whom he met for the first time, was seized with quite a paroxysm of mirth. He could not rest until he told the husband the cause of his amusement. His explanation as heard by the writer was:

“Your wife with her red hair, Roman nose and head tilted to one side looks so much like a parrot I was perfectly convulsed with laughter.”

The gentleman walked away with a deeply wounded spirit and clouded brow; but this member of the Malapropos family remained behind, to tell of his rich and elegant joke, to as many others as would listen to the barbarism.

A fourth informed a person to whom he had just been introduced that he believed he observed a cancer appearing on the side of his nose.

A fifth told an invalid he would never get well. That he had an uncle who had identical symptoms and nothing could restore him.

A sixth in quite a complimentary vein confided his esteem and personal admiration of a gentleman in the words:

“You are equal to your whole family and connection, large as it is.”

If he had rested here all would have been well. But Malapropos, true to the failing of his household added:

“But the whole crowd of your people do not amount to a hill of beans.”

Perhaps the speaker never studied algebra, where we are informed that things equal to the same thing are equal to each other. Otherwise he would have seen that his remark made the gentleman he had addressed equivalent to a hill of beans.

When we come to consider the religious world we discover that the Malapropos Tribe is the largest in all Israel.

In this realm we are often compelled to notice that the characters we are writing about are not simply most unfortunate in the way of expressing themselves, but often downright rude.

As to the first instance we recall a testimony given in an Experience meeting. It was uttered by a good brother from the country. He said:

“I lost my wife a year ago; and brethren it has been the best and happiest year of my life.”

Some knew what the man meant, but the large majority of the audience smiled and, doubtless, thought that surely there must be a better way of expressing resignation and victory in bereavement than the one adopted by the speaker of the hour.

A second instance of the infelicity of speech and action on the part of one of the Malapropos family took place in a camp meeting in Indiana. We had finished preaching and was calling seekers to the altar. The Spirit of God was powerfully present and numbers were flocking to the Mourner’s Bench, when suddenly a man who was standing in the aisle some fifty feet away cried out in a loud voice:

“May I speak a word, sir?”

Thinking that some Holy Ghost inspired utterance was about to be delivered, we replied:

“Certainly, say on.”

Whereupon the man with hundreds of eyes fixed upon him and with the greatest deliberation said:

“I have been an attendant on this Camp Meeting for several days, and have greatly enjoyed the services. I am compelled to leave this

afternoon, and will take the train in a little while for home. But I want to say before leaving, that while walking over the grounds in coming to this service, I found a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles, which I will leave with the janitor, and anybody identifying them, can get them.”

With that he extended his hand aloft and held up to view an ordinary pair of glasses that may have cost fifty cents.

With an inward groan over the sight of still another member of the everlasting Malapropos family, we cried out to the people who had been stopped and blocked up in their way to the altar by Brother Spectacles:

“O, come along!”

The power in the meeting saved it of course from this unfortunate interruption; but the preacher has to this hour, a most vivid remembrance of hundreds of smiling faces, a number of preachers crimson in countenance and shaking with suppressed mirth, and a remote view of Brother Spectacles still holding up the eye glasses and trying to restore the lost property to some inquiring individual.

In addition to inaptness and inopportuneness of speech and action we have to note that still more disagreeable branch of the Malapropos household beheld in downright rudeness and incivility.

Evidently some people have the idea that to be deeply religious they must be harsh; and that devotion to duty carries with it impoliteness and positive offensiveness.

It would be well for them and the doctrine which they profess and ought to adorn, to brood over the following Bible utterances: “In honor preferring one another;” “Mind not high things;” “Condescend to men of low estate;” “Be not wise in your own conceits;” “Put on kindness;” “Forbearing one another;” “Be pitiful, be courteous.”

No profession or possession of religious experience gives a man the prerogative to be impolite and offensive to another. No individual has a right to probe with impertinent curiosity into the private and family history of another. And yet who does not recall Brother and Sister Malapropos who will deliberately begin a boring process of questions to

get at some suspected inner trouble or skeleton of sorrow in the closet. This can be done either by an unkind heart, an ignorant head, or unpolished nature. The Bible passages quoted above will cover all of these cases, if taken with some choice additional verses from the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

We have heard persons who claimed the highest experience in the Christian life, ask another to whom they had been introduced after the briefest acquaintance the following questions: "How old are you?" "How many children have you got?" "Are they converted?" "If not, why not?" "Is your wife in the experience?" "Do you own your own home?" "Why don't you live in a small town?" "You are a much older man than I expected to see." "You are breaking fast, are you not?" "Have you not a secret sorrow?" "How much do you get paid for your work here?" etc., etc., etc.

When we state the fact that we have heard every one of these questions asked our brethren in the ministry, and every one of them and others besides asked ourself, it can be understood at once how the cause of Christ is hurt and full salvation bedraggled instead of adorned, when such officious inquirers are known to be professors, not to say possessors of, the loving, tender, beautiful grace of holiness.

In such cases the words inquisitive and inquisition look wonderfully yet startlingly alike.

All this and more suggests to our mind the necessity of another wing to our colleges or schools for the prophets. Let there be a Double Department, one for Morals, and the other for Manners. The "doctrine" might be taught in one room, hall, or tent; and instructions as to the "adorning," the human beautifying of the truth could take place in another.

Those desiring this second course should apply early; for it is supposed by the thoughtful that if all come who need this post graduate degree, there will hardly be standing room in the buildings and on the grounds of the University.

CHAPTER 27

HAPPY PEOPLE

We know of a certain “Place,” as a short boulevard is called in our cities, where for two squares, either side of the street is lined with palatial homes and beautiful flower yards. Great iron gates close both entrances of the alyssum from the public. A private policeman guards the exclusive precinct. No tramps, beggars and agents are allowed in this lovely enclosure. No wagons are permitted to rattle down its smooth asphalt roadway and thereby disturb the sensitive ears and cultivated nerves of the wealthy, ease-loving, body-protecting, life-saving Placerites. And yet in spite of all their pains-taking care in this direction, they have not found happiness. We have beheld and even studied the faces of many who dwell in the park-like avenue, and we have not seen sadder, darker and harder countenances anywhere else in this trouble-smitten world of ours.

Happiness is not to be found in circumstance or locality. If this was so Solomon would have discovered it in palaces, gardens, orchards, vineyards and other haunts and retreats which he constructed with his fabulous wealth; or he would have obtained it in the society of singing men and singing women, and with “the delights of the sons of men, in musical instruments, and that of all sorts.” He added to all this, and confesses in Ecclesiastes that he “gathered silver and gold and the peculiar treasure of kings,” and “whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them.” And yet in the very next verse he affirms that he was a disappointed man; that the whole business was “vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.”

If happiness came from circumstance and locality, a young man relative of the writer’s family should have been blessed indeed. Rich, handsome, a beautiful home, not a want ungratified, no one in the house to thwart his purpose and say him nay, servants in numbers to rush and do his bidding, flatterers and sycophants around him to say only pleasant things and help him to spend his money, why not be superlatively happy.

Any yet a more miserable young man we never knew! He lived a profane, drunken life. Lost his best friends by his folly. Spent most of his fine fortune in excesses. Wrecked his health by his dissipation. And died in a fit of delirium tremens, raving and screaming, and trying to cut his tongue out with a razor, imagining it was a dog trying to choke him to death.

Happiness is only to be found in moral condition. The Blood-washed soul, with the indwelling Savior, has found serenity, contentment and gladness no matter what may be the temporal circumstances or environment.

In every pastorate the writer served, he always found one or more of God's happy children. In a certain city he used to visit one who lived in a perfect shanty at the foot of a hill, which towered so as to keep the sunlight from it almost every hour of the day. On the graded summit of that hill a stately mansion shone by day and twinkled with lights deep into every night. A rich and worldly family lived in the palatial home. As a pastor we found sin and gloom in the sunlit dwelling on the eminence, and as invariably light and happiness in the lowly dwelling under the cliff. In many visits to this humble and shadowed cabin, we never found its occupant in any but a peaceful and joyful frame of mind.

Recently in one of our evangelistic appointments, we met another happy man. And again it was spiritual condition and not circumstance that filled him with joy, for circumstances had all been against him.

He informed us how his crop had failed after a hard year's work, and how it had driven him to God and made his soul rich in grace. He wiped the blissful tears from his face and with a choking voice said, "Hallelujah."

He next told how he had a fine blooded horse for which he had been offered seven hundred dollars, but feeling he was worth more, he was holding him to sell the animal for that higher price and pay debts and buy necessities for his family, when suddenly the horse sickened, "pointed his toes up and died." As our happy friend uttered the last sentence he laughed and clapped his hands as if he had just obtained religion.

When he had finished his tearful but joyous laughter, over this additional stroke of misfortune, which he said made him a still better man, he then narrated how he had taken a wagon load of corn twelve miles to a town to sell its contents and buy some provisions. Round and round, and up and

down the streets he went trying to dispose of the load and could not. Judging from his failure that the Lord had another design in the matter, he quietly picked out a poor citizen of the community and gave it all to him.

Of course there was more smiling, laughing, crying and hand clapping as he told of this failure-success, and the relief and gladness it brought the poor man. He was some hours, he said, finding the person whom the Lord wanted to have the corn, but he found him at last, and went back home shouting God's praises in an empty wagon but with a full soul.

These were only a few of the incidents that this brother related to us, showing how God by a series of misfortunes, had taken away his fortune, driven him out of business, and led him finally into the active work of the Gospel.

After we parted, taking different trains, his shining face, overflowing eyes, smiling lips, unctuous praises, bright presence and victorious life seemed to go with us. We thought of him much that day, and since. And how we rejoiced to feel that the salvation which sustained Habakkuk in a time of famine and calamity is still on the earth today. That as long as there are those who will allow their hearts to be cleansed by the Blood, and to be filled with the abiding presence of the Son of God, there will be beheld happy men, in the deepest, truest sense of the word in the midst of an unhappy and despairing world.

CHAPTER 28

HOPEFUL PEOPLE

Hope is defined in the dictionaries as confidence in a future event; a desire of some good accompanied with expectations of obtaining it; or the recognition of better things in store attended with all due effort to gain them.

Of course this mood or exercise of spirit is beheld in different grades and intensities according to temperament, education and character; but in every instance the hopeful man will be revealed to view as possessing confidence in some future happening or event, and so enduring present deprivations and discomforts in expectation of relief, or some kind of bonanza that is out of sight, but only just a little way ahead.

We heard a story when a lad which bore reference to the condition of the roads in the swamps of Arkansas. Intended only to be a satirical description of the highways of the Toothpick State, yet later we saw in it a revelation of hopefulness itself which evidently escaped the original teller of the tale.

The narrative stated that a traveler was pulling his way along one of the boggy thoroughfares that threaded the wilderness, when suddenly he saw a hat lying on the ground before him. As it was unmistakably a good article of headwear, he dismounted from his horse, stooped down and laid his hand upon it; when suddenly a voice underneath cried out, "Let my hat alone." Of course the traveler was much startled and said:

"I had no idea of robbing you, my friend. I never dreamed that there was anybody underneath it. I am shocked to see you so bogged down and in such a condition. Will you allow me to help you?" Then the voice replied somewhat testily and angrily:

"You need not worry about me. I am not in such a bad fix as you imagine. I am not on foot. I am on horseback, and I let you know there is another man on horseback below me."

This remarkable and of course most veracious history, while revealing very powerfully the state of Arkansas swamp roads, yet as clearly exhibits the beauty and power of hope under what might properly be considered decidedly discouraging circumstances. The man in the mud was unquestionably a most sanguine individual.

It is certainly very edifying and often entertaining to observe in people the manifestation as well as cultivation of this fancy or power, which is said to spring eternal in the human breast.

We had a pastor in the Mississippi Conference who had a city congregation that was perfectly lifeless in a spiritual sense. One day this minister asked all in the large audience who wanted a better religious experience to stand up, and only one man arose out of an assembly of eight hundred church members, and he was known to be godliest man in the community. Immediately this preacher wrote to his church paper and among other praises and encomiums he bestowed on his pastoral charge as to attendance on service, liberality, etc.; he said that he had recently made a proposition in a Sabbath service that all of them who desired a better religious experience to stand, and only one out of the large throng stood. That all the rest were perfectly satisfied and had all the religion they wanted.

Here was surely a most hopeful individual. Some people might have called him by another name, but that view of the case we will not press.

Recently we received a letter from a friend in the far west, who has charge of a small church and feeble little membership. He said that there was no question but that they were the tail end in all that a church should be and do. That some would at once despair at the condition of things over which he had been placed in ministerial authority. That perhaps he would be discouraged himself; but only lately he had come across an Old Testament prophesy and promise "That the tail should be the head," and now he was full of comfort and expectancy and was overflowing with joy.

Here again we see the beauty of hope. And once more we hear the voice under the hat saying:

“I am not in such a desperate condition as you imagine. I am all right. I will soon be out of the mud either in the America or China direction. So go your way, and tell them that you saw me.”

Perhaps the most sanguine man we ever knew was a member of our church in a certain large city. We often thought he must be a lineal descendant and blood relation of Micawber, the famous character of Dickens.

This brother whose name was L_____, was ever on the eve of making a great fortune, only he never did. Something always happened to blight the plan, or mar the enterprise, and so what looked like a towering cedar on Lebanon at one hour under the ardent speeches and glowing fancies of Brother L_____, would in a few weeks through the revelations and dealings of matter of fact time, be as humble and dejected looking an object as a dust-covered toadstool on the side of the highway.

Once he took us aside and in the most eager and excited manner informed us that a great pile of money was in sight for himself and family. That he had purchased the State right for a Street Signal Machine which attached to the cars announced by a printed placard the name of the next street to be crossed. That all the railways in every city would be eager to purchase, because such a convenience to the public, not to mention the care taken from the mind and the strain from the voice of the conductor in calling out the different names of the thoroughfares.

After an absence of six months from home, we returned and met Brother L_____ on the street. At once we asked him about the extent of wealth realized by the street railway signal. A look of momentary dejection passed over his face and he replied:

“Oh, the thing did not work right. It would not show up the name of the street until the car had gone four or five blocks beyond it. Of course that would not do, and just as I was ready to send it back to the factory to be worked over and regulated, I found out that another man had gotten a patent on the same thing six months before I bought, and so I am out a thousand dollars on the transaction.”

“But,” he added, and his face gleamed, “I have a sure thing on hand now. There is undoubtedly a Rothschild income in it.” “What is it?” I asked.

“Well, you know that a certain kind of base is needed for all paints. A gentleman in the southern part of the State has just struck in his county the very soil or element that is essential. It is not merely a strata, but Sir, it is in hills several hundred feet high. We have enough of this ‘base’ to meet all demands of the painters trade in this country and Europe for centuries. We have bought the land, myself and two others making the company, and will rush work and shipments at once. There is no question but there is millions in it.”

A year later we met Brother L_____ in a large hall where a Church Union Business Meeting was being held. He drew us aside in a kind of curtained alcove and informed us with a most confident manner that he had the scheme of his life on hand in which the best and most immediate financial results of any enterprise that he ever knew of was an absolute certainty.

“Do you refer to the base for paints?” I inquired.

“Oh no,” he replied with a look of disgust. “That was a complete failure. For after a thorough examination as well as effort to sell the stuff, it turned out not to be what we thought it was, and nobody wanted it.”

“So you are referring to another business embarkation,” I asked, “What is it?”

Looking around carefully, lowering his voice that others might not hear the precious secret, Brother L_____ took the lapel of my coat in his hand and said with the deepest earnestness:

“The plan I now have on hand is certain to make me a rich man in two or three years at the farthest.”

He paused as if the communication was too mighty to give all at once. So I asked again:

“What is your plan?”

With a smile of supreme confidence he advanced his lips close to my ear and whispered:

“It is food for diseased hogs. I bought the recipe for one hundred dollars. So remarkable is this diet for sick swine that in a half dozen meals the hog is perfectly well, and in a week or two is rolling fat. Now there are always diseased hogs to be bought in the Stock Yards and on farms as well. They can be purchased for a tithe of the value of the animal when it is well. I have made arrangements to buy several hundred this week. Will get them doubtless for a dollar a head. Then in a few days feeding they will be restored to perfect health, in several more they will be in fine condition for the highest sale, and will bring from ten to twenty dollars apiece. This will make a clear gain of from six to fourteen dollars on each one, and on three hundred head I will average three thousand dollars a month, which will aggregate over thirty thousand dollars a year.”

A few months after this I met Brother L_____ in the Post Office. He was looking downcast. Approaching him as he was gazing silently out of a window at the passing street cars, I said:

“Well, Brother L_____, how is the sick swine business?”

With a solemn funereal manner he drew me aside and said:

“Would you believe it? Of the first lot of one hundred hogs I bought, every single solitary one of them laid down and died the first meal I gave them of that mixture. By good luck I bought only two lots of hogs which I divided into two droves of fifty each. I tried two days in succession the “Food Medicine,” as it was called, but which I now see would be better named ‘Fool Medicine.’ As I told you the first fifty went down to a man or rather hog, on the first meal. The second batch got their funeral breakfast the next day, and went to their long home wherever that may be.”

Here Brother L_____ looked meditative, sadly reminiscent, and even disgusted, as if he was counting dead hogs and departed dollars; when suddenly brightening up, he said:

“Well, it’s all right. I only lost one hundred head of swine. And since then I have run across something much more promising and profitable. In fact I have three irons in the fire and am expecting a good thing out of each one of them.”

Since then I have not seen Brother L_____. I cannot tell how the “irons” turned out, whether they were transmuted to gold, or entered into his soul according to a time-worn saying. I only know that the name of Brother L_____ has not yet appeared in the list of millionaires of the land.

I also know that as our hopeful friend spoke to us on our last meeting, that it seemed the episode of the Arkansas swamp road was repeated; — and behold, a voice proceeded from underneath the hat, and it said:

“Don’t worry about me. I am not in as bad a condition as you think. I have still several splendid business plans and projects ahead of me. I am on top. Give me the road and let me go.”

CHAPTER 29

KIND MEN

The Savior drew an immortal picture of a kind man in the Good Samaritan. A traveler had been desperately wounded and lay bleeding on the side of the highway. Two men, a priest and Levite, saw the man's distress but walked away. Doubtless they felt sorry for the victim; but they were in a hurry, and calculating the loss of time and expense, and that it was none of their affair anyhow, they crossed over to the other side, and left the unhappy, helpless being groaning behind them. Then came the kind man, who went to the prostrate sufferer, poured oil and wine into his wounds, placed him on his own beast, brought him to a tavern, secured help and proper treatment for him, paid for it out of his own pocket, and became responsible for further expenses.

There are many kind of wounds in this world. And verbal stabs go deeper than dagger thrusts. Then there are social, financial and ecclesiastical wrongs. There are secret innuendoes and public denunciations. There are whispered attacks and open-mouthed slanders. There is betrayal of trust, forgetfulness of past benefits and favors, and worse still, grossest ingratitude.

So life is very full of pain and sorrow, and there is pressing and everlasting need for the kind man. We could get along better without any one else it seems. We have yet to see the place where he would not do well and make everybody feel happier, and everything work easier and better for being there.

His presence at the schoolmasters desk makes many a child's heart glad, and gives to the recollection of school days, a sweetness and charm that lasts through the whole journey of life and breaks out in many a heart warming and eye filling anecdote. The kind man at the boarding house table in his considerate attention of others, especially the newcomer, lights up the bare unattractive room more than the ceiling lamp swinging overhead, and the vase of flowers on the mantel.

Every pastor knows the comfort and strength of having a kind man on the Official Board. The same character in the presiding eldership causes the hearts of fifteen or twenty preachers to abide the issue of an annual conference with restful confidence, as they know there is one studying their interests, and who is animated with the pure desire to do them good and nothing but good. A hard appointment loses its bitterness when coming from the hand of such a presiding elder or bishop.

The home may be a very lowly one, but if a man feels that the wife is a friend, as well as legalized partner of his life, it is wonderful the beauty that house takes on, the charm it exercises and the power it exerts to pull him past all other dwellings and land him a happy captive there.

There are children today, those hearts are starving for words of interest and affection. There are multitudes of young men in our cities who are plunging into sin from sheer desperation. The face of kindness bent over them, the oil and wine, the helping hand, are all lacking, and then comes despair and the deeds of despair.

We could but wonder where are the kind, thoughtful ones of the different households here represented. Do they know the loneliness and temptation that comes to one living in a large city among strangers. Have they forgotten the distant son, brother and husband? Are they so taken up with their own companionship and home comfort that they have dropped from memory and the sphere of duty these men who may be toiling for their maintenance, or sadder still, may be without maintenance for themselves. Truly the priest and Levite abound these days, and the good Samaritan needs to travel on many roads; for the wounded men by the wayside were never more numerous.

Once when a lad a horse threw us against a large cypress log and we were left stunned and for a while breathless late in the evening at the edge of a large Yazoo swamp. For a full hour we could not move, the pain of the body was so great. A man named Kilby, a Negro overseer by occupation, saw us in this condition, remarked that we were in a bad plight, and deliberately rode on. Christ's picture about the priest and Levite was not overdrawn. Later the escaped horse arriving at home gave the alarm by its presence, and deep in the night we were found by family servants and carried home in a wagon.

A few months after this, we were on a train in Alabama, and a desperately sick lad. People all around saw there was a sick boy in a corner seat, but no one felt called to relieve or assist him in any way. The priest and Levite were on the cars. Finally a Methodist preacher in passing saw the silent, white-faced sufferer, came to him with a cup of cold water, put a cool bandage on his burning and aching head, and arranged him a seat that he could lie down. He did not at first know the lad; he only knew that a wounded person was by the roadside and he was able to relieve. The recollection of his kind, pitiful face bending over us with gentle speech and loving touch abides in grateful remembrance unto this hour.

We know a preacher whom we have met many times, and in very different circumstances. In all these meetings, and in all the conversations held with him, and that we have heard held with him, we never yet knew him to say an unkind word about and person. Once while in a room with him, a third party brought up a damaging report or rumor relative to some distant brother. We will never forget the expression of pain that passed over his face, while with a gesture of weariness and accent of sorrow, he declared that he took no pleasure and placed no credit in the whisperings of tale bearers. We have heard this man branded and classed among formalists and the backslidden. But the fact remains that through all the years of our acquaintance we have never heard an unkind speech fall from his lips about any one, not even those who called him backslidden. If this be backsliding, it would be well for many we all know, to backslide.

When a young pastor we became acquainted with an elderly man who owned a small farm in the country and ran a little market in town. This man adopted and raised during his life no less than twelve orphan children. He gave them all a fair education and set them up in life. The writer was on a circuit that was unable to provide for him. So for months he and his family lived without meat. This man heard of the young preacher's need, and from that hour sent him two beefsteaks every day for six months, and would not receive a single cent in payment. The man who did this was a full-blooded Jew. He was a poor man himself, and the town had hundreds of well-to-do Gentiles in it who could easily have done what he did, and not missed the money. But they did not. They failed to observe the needy man in their midst, Anyhow they passed by. The Good Samaritan in this case reversed the parable, for he turned out to be a Jew.

Colonel Moorman, of Louisiana, was, after a defeat of the Confederate troops, trying to escape. Shells were bursting and balls striking in every direction, when a plaintive cry reached him from a field near the side of the road. It was a wounded Federal soldier begging for a drink of water. At the risk of being captured, and in peril of his life, the Confederate colonel stopped, went up to the man, lifted his head and gave him all the water he had in his canteen. Then gently laying the man's head down again, he resumed his flight, and escaped. We believe that heaven itself rejoiced over this sight, while the earth on which the beautiful, unselfish act occurred became a nobler world for the very transaction.

Mr. Wesley greatly disliked to sit for his portrait; but being promised five pounds for his beloved poor if he would pose for an artist, underwent the martyrdom, and with his new-earned currency went out one afternoon to see how much good he could do with the money. The history of that section of a day reads like a romance; while the practical good done could not be related properly under the limits of this chapter. Suffice it to say, that on this brief journey of systematic and persistent kindness, he got a man out of the debtor's prison; restored a heartbroken wife to happiness; had a dying woman cared for; rescued a man from starvation and death; afterwards saw him saved; got him into business; beheld him prosper and become wealthy, and still later found an institution for the relief of ruined business men, such as he was when Mr. Wesley discovered him in his afternoon trip of love and benevolence.

How well it would be for the world, and how blessed for ourselves, if all of us mapped out just such religious expeditions for morning, afternoon, evening and night. There is no lack of wounded travelers down the road. And they are dying while we tarry and debate. And they are passing away while we are saying we are so sorry, that we would like to help them, but we have griefs and burdens of our own and must hasten on.

Alas for the wounded man. Woe to the being who wounded him. Shame upon the priest and Levite who pass the sufferer by. All honor to the Good Samaritan coming up the road, who lifts up people he never cast down, pays bills that he never made, heals wounds that he never inflicted, and leaves comfort, peace and life where he found pain and trouble and death.

People fancy that the need of the day is the millionaire, the orator, the legislator, the statesman, the general and the admiral. But to our judgment the world's mightiest want as well as greatest glory is the Kind Man; the Good Samaritan bending over and helping the wounded being by the roadside.

CHAPTER 30

SILENT MEN

It is an old proverb that “speech is silvern, and silence is golden.” And not one of us but have beheld repeated evidences in our lives of the benefit and victory achieved by calmness and stillness, and the discount, defeat, contempt and shame that have as certainly attended the person with overmuch talk. In political and national realms we have seen a man of ordinary gifts elevated to highest office mainly by the virtue of silence, and another man who was the idol of the hour, utterly destroy his high official future, in the line of presidential aspirations and possibilities, by the too voluble use of his tongue.

Of course we do not mean to decry the noble, crowning gift of speech, and advocate silence in all things. This would be to prevent justice, perpetuate wrong, and stop the spread of truth and the Gospel itself, and so to argue and plead for something absurd and impossible.

We are simply calling attention to the power of silence at proper times. That there are moments, surroundings and circumstances when the wisest, best, noblest and divinest thing a man can do is to be still. That there are occasions when a voiceless bearing patiently and faithfully observed, becomes a synonym for strength, endurance, self-control, self-conquest, the greatest moral virtues and highest spiritual states known to the human soul.

We were once, when a city pastor, called in to talk, reason, and pray with a man who had been drinking heavily for weeks. The wife was a very handsome young woman, and the only child remarkably attractive. The woman sent for us, and at once entered into a voluble complaint of the conduct of her husband, and a lengthy Jeremiad over the sorrow and suffering that the intemperate individual had brought upon her and the infant.

At her request we walked into a handsome room, where the man lay a picture of mental and physical woe upon the bed. We commenced in a kind voice to persuade the unhappy-looking being to give up his sin and suicidal course, and wound up with the words:

“With such a beautiful child, and loving, faithful wife, Mr. B., how can you act so?”

He never uttered a single word in reply; but turned upon us such a look of indescribable anguish, that to this day, nearly twenty-five years after the scene, we have never forgotten that face and its silent gaze. It was weeks before we got the key to the look. And the explanation cannot be given here. Only this, that the real criminal in the case was doing the talking, and posing as the injured one; while the victim, a man that she had deceived, entrapped and ruined, was lying silent on the bed before us.

In the same city we had a gentleman friend, a business man, who had the misfortune to arouse the wrath of several unscrupulous men. Furious over his discovery of them, and his discharging them from his great store, they began to whisper and circulate the most damaging reports about his character and past life. By and by they got paragraphs in the papers about him, and finally a two or three-column printed attack, charging him with the most fearful crimes. Our friend had these three men in his power through a United States postal law, which makes such personal printed attacks a penitentiary offense; but he refused to use the advantage they thus gave him, and never opened his mouth in reply. There came a pained and melancholy look upon his face, but he kept sweet through all the trouble, and never broke his calm, dignified silence.

In due time the attacks of his enemies seemed to react upon themselves, and one after another went down. He, their intended victim, stayed up, commanded the respect of the community through the darkest hours of his trial, and dying a few years ago, was publicly honored and lamented by every leading paper of the city in which he resided. This was the man to whom we sent a telegram in the midst of the storm that had broken upon him,

“I still believe in you.”

The recollection of this man's silence under calumny and insult and wrong, is one of the most pathetic, grateful and inspiring memories we have of a busy and crowded past.

In the same city there was a pastor of one of the leading churches who aroused in some way the hate of a handsome, stylish lady member of his church. In a spirit worthy of the great enemy, she quietly began to drop hints reflecting on the man of God. It was impossible to get a definite charge or accusation from her, but with a most refined cunning she kept the hoop of innuendo and insinuation trundling with the lightest occasional touches from her hand. The preacher soon saw the evil influence in motion, recognized the growing coolness of some, and the falling away of others from his side and out of his life, but as the months rolled on he never opened his lips on the object.

We were informed that when the shadowy attack first took some kind of form and was told him, that he was astonished, and then for a few moments an indignant, man. After that, if ever the matter was mentioned, he smiled and seemed to be an amused man. But through all he was a silent man.

The writer was a pastor in that same city at the time, and finally the rumor reached him. It is likely that coming as it did, it might have affected him as it had done others, but strange to say that only a few days before, this same woman had been suddenly proved in entirely a different matter to be a consummate liar. So the report died an instantaneous death the instant it reached the portals of our hearing.

This occurred twenty-six years ago, and the woman traducer is a wreck in health and good looks, a bankrupt in purse, and writes numerous letters to friends and acquaintances begging for money. The man she tried to injure, went silently and peacefully on his way, God blessing him, and every church he had charge of flourishing and prospering spiritually under his ministry.

Today he is pastor of one of the leading churches in a Southern Conference, beloved by his congregation and respected by all who know him. And remarkable to say that all this has resulted without a word of

accusation, retaliation or self-defense on his part. He happens to be another of the silent men of whom we are writing.

At a session of one of the Southern Methodist Conferences in the "eighties," or nearly thirty years ago, a preacher in the enjoyment of full salvation was suddenly attacked on the Conference floor by three members of that body. His name and character were up for examination and passage, according to the custom, when these three ministers charged down upon him in the way already mentioned. They accused him of heresy, of dividing the church, deceiving the people, spreading false doctrine, and one in a voice trembling with anger, and shaking his hand at him, likened him to the devil.

In all this exciting tumultuous scene, the man they attacked never opened his lips. He heard them charge him with things of which he was as innocent as a babe just born, and yet never uttered a word in self-defense. He listened to them saying he was preaching false doctrine, and heard them couple his name, spirit and life with the devil and his works, and spoke not a syllable in reply. He was silent throughout; and a prominent man present, in commenting on the occurrence afterwards said, that he was the quietest man in the Conference, and his face the most peaceful of all in the room.

The men who attacked him that morning have been in their graves over twenty-five years, while their would-be victim is in good health, good spirits, still fully saved, and seems farther from the cemetery gate than ever. He did not have to wield a single weapon to keep back his enemies, nor cast a stone in retaliation, nor speak a single word to vindicate and clear himself. The attacks of his adversaries turned upon themselves like boomerangs. They fell into a pit which they had dugged for another. The stone which they tried to crush him with, rolled back in a fearful retributive way upon them. The voluble assailers of God's servant are today motionless in the graveyard, while the silent martyr of that boisterous, pitiless morning, is singing, preaching and praising the beauty of holiness in the very counties and communities where his cruel and unreasonable enemies lie buried.

CHAPTER 31

SOME STRANGE BEINGS

No truly enlightened individuals are what is called superstitious; anyhow it is warmly affirmed they are not. Sensible persons do not believe in ghosts. Nevertheless it is a curious fact that when people are gathered around the fire on a winter night and the wind is howling through the trees and moaning around the eaves of the house, and the fine snow is pecking like spirit fingers at the window pane as if for entrance, if some one, then and there, is asked to tell a ghost story, at once everybody becomes still, and one can hear a pin drop.

As the tale proceeds and the climax is being, approached, you can hear indeed amused laughs and loud protests of unbelief, but the careful observer will note that the laughter sounds forced, the protest is too noisy, while a certain unmistakable interest in the narration, with flitting expressions on the face, show the vein of superstition is there in spite of every disclaimer.

A picture in an illustrated paper of late edition reveals a group of little woolly-headed darkies, to whom the "Old Auntie" or "Granny" of the cabin has begun to tell a ghost story. The quick, stealthy glances over one another's shoulders at the black shadows in the yard, the growing white's of the rolling eyes, with the loud declaration, "Who's skeered o' ghosts," proclaimed the inward fear and secret belief in a manner to remind one of certain white people who with greater intelligence and therefore should know better, yet possess the same misgivings about visits from sheeted wanderers from the grave and the other world.

Still it is not to visible ghosts that we refer in this chapter, when we use the term and talk about "strange beings."

We refer to occurrences and happenings of various sorts in which they figured, that are impressive, solemnizing, mysterious, hard to account for, and some that are never explained in our present lives.

One of these smaller mysteries took place when the writer was a boy. It was the custom of his mother to take a walk each afternoon about sunset with the children. One evening on our return we were told by the servant that a gentleman had called in our absence, walked into the parlor, took a seat in one of the large high-back cushioned arm chairs, tilted it back, fell over backward with it, turned a complete somersault on the floor, rose up, went to the hat rack, took his hat and departed without a word and without leaving a card or his name.

All our questionings could get no more than the facts just narrated from the deeply impressed servant girl, who saw nothing amusing in the occurrence, though some of the family laughed quite heartily.

To this day the incident remains a profound mystery in the family history. If it happened to one of our gentlemen friends, he never allowed the fact to be known, so that the strange occurrence was handed down through the years as that of an unknown man falling backward out of the big arm chair, rolling on the floor and then departing without a word. "The man who rolled on the floor out of the chair" became like a member of the family in some respects; but it was also noticeable that we children did not care to be alone in the parlor after dark, for a long while afterwards. Who could tell but the same chair would go over again when the room was dark and no one but a little boy was around. And what if he should see a human body tumbling toward him on the floor, and flinging back somersaults as it came. No indeed, this was not to be thought of for a moment, and so the children agreed unanimously that it was best to withdraw from that part of the family mansion after nightfall and though they insisted they were not afraid, yet with all that, it seemed wiser, more prudent and certainly safer to stay away.

Another strange occurrence took place twenty years ago in one of our Southern States. The circumstance can be vouched for by a dozen reliable people. A certain very prominent clergyman died at the age of eighty. He passed away in a town in one State and was to be buried three hundred miles away in the capital of another State. His family of sons and daughters, now in middle life, prepared to attend the funeral. One of these sons, whom we will call George, lived in a town midway between the two places. As he had recently come from a western city the family had not

seen him in twenty years. He was duly telegraphed as to the time the train would pass the town of H_____, where he lived, with the body of his father and with several of his brothers and sisters on the way to the city of J_____, one hundred and fifty miles farther south, where the interment was to take place.

As the train stopped at H_____, George came on board just as they expected. He kissed them all, and sat down first by one and then another of his brothers and sisters, asking a number of questions about his father. As they had not seen him for years they were surprised to find him so little changed.

Just as the train started to go, he arose and said good-bye. The entire family party were astonished and told him they thought he was going with them to J_____ to the funeral.

He replied that he would meet them at J_____, and they saw him, after saying this, get off the cars at H_____.

Four hours afterward, as the train dashed into J_____, they happened to look out of the window as they rolled into the depot and saw George leaning against the building as if waiting for them. When, filled with wonder, they went up to him they discovered to their amazement that he looked twenty years older than he did when they saw him a few hours before in H_____.

He welcomed them kindly; and when with rapid utterance and wondering eyes they asked him how he could be in J_____ when they had left him in H_____, he quietly replied that he had not been in H_____.

All kinds of investigation have been unable to clear up this mystery. Those who have heard the strange circumstance have put the very questions the reader will.

First, was not the man who came on the train at H_____ George's son, who looked like his father? No, for George had no son, and more than that his brothers and sisters knew him, and he spoke of his dead father.

Second, may not George have jumped on the train after getting off and gone on with them to J_____? No, they noticed him when the train pulled out and saw him walk away. Moreover if he had come on the train, how

could he have been at J_____ leaning against the depot building waiting for them.

Third, may he not have taken another train and beaten them to J_____?

No, for they were on the fast train and there was none other for eight hours. Besides if this had been so, what was it that put twenty years upon him in four hours' time?

It has been one of those happenings of a weird, mysterious nature that has not yet, and may never be cleared up in this world. People most interested in the matter have been unable to do anything with it as to its solution or explanation. It is one of the strange things of life.

Another most mysterious occurrence took place during one of the writer's visits to a southern town. It transpired in a dwelling which sat back from the street, in the middle of the block, having a number of large magnolia trees almost hiding the front view. It was a spacious building, two stories in height, with a heavily pillared front porch running the entire length of the house. The shadows about the mansion were dense even in day time, by reason of the magnolias in front, and the forest trees filling the side and back yards. Some shrubbery struggled for life, in battle between the weeds beneath, and the sun-hiding branches of the trees above.

For many years the house had been occupied by a middle aged married couple. After the husband died the widow, to dissipate in some measure the loneliness of the old shadowy homestead, allowed a young couple with their infant child and a sixteen year old nurse to board with her.

For awhile the silence and gloom of the dwelling, its large empty rooms, its long, winding front veranda disappearing around a distant corner of the building, greatly depressed the new comers; but after a few weeks they became in a measure accustomed to it all.

One night the three adults of the house went out to a public speaking in the central part of the town, leaving the baby asleep upon the bed, and the colored nurse girl in the same room to care for her. The other servants had gone to their own homes in a distant part of the town, and the big house was locked up.

In leaving, the young mother promised the nurse not to be gone long, and so intended, but the exercises were lengthier than she had anticipated, and so when they returned, clicked the front gate behind them and walked up the graveled path overshadowed by the dark magnolias, the town clock was solemnly tolling the hour of twelve.

On bidding the elderly lady good night in the hall, the young mother turned to her bedroom, and glancing at once toward her bed where she had laid the baby failed to see the child, but instead noticed that the covering had been drawn down and then thrown back towards the pillows, so that the child might possibly be under it.

The lamp had been turned low and was burning dimly, so that the room was full of shadows. The nurse was sound asleep on the floor on a pallet. Walking quickly to the lamp the mother turned up the light, passed to the bed and pulling back the cover was horrified to find her child bespattered with blood, and on taking her up in her arms discovered she was unconscious.

With a wild scream that rang through the house she brought the child closer to the light, and saw on the right cheek the marks of a double row of teeth that had sunk deeply into the flesh, had almost met, and been withdrawn, leaving the cheek with the appearance of an apple that had been bitten into, and yet the piece not removed.

At this new discovery the mothers shrieks became so piercing and frequent that the nurse awoke, and soon after the lady of the house came rushing in. The nurse was unmistakably shocked and grieved, and was sent flying to give the alarm to the nearest neighbors. Meantime the husband had come in, and he with the two women labored with the child to restore consciousness, and in so doing made two other startling discoveries; one was that the child's clothing was badly torn as if she had been dragged through the shrubbery, and on the left temple was a contusion as if a blow had been dealt the little innocent.

By the time a number of neighbors in various stages of dress and undress had arrived, and partook of the horror and pain which filled the hearts of the family. The nurse could give no explanation of the strange and awful occurrence. Her sleepy eyes, unquestionable amazement, and evident

sorrow and the condition of the body removed every suspicion from the mind that she had anything to do with the ghastly deed. Moreover a glance at her mouth and teeth showed that the bite could not have been given by her. The imprint or rather deep incision of teeth on the child's cheek showed that a much larger mouth had done the work.

In due time physicians arrived, but could throw but little more light on the matter than was already possessed. The baby had been struck on the temple, bitten on the cheek and dragged or carried through the briars somewhere. In addition to these facts evident to all, the men of medicine were able to state that the biter was not an animal but a human being, and not a small, but a large person. After this, all else was a deep, dark mystery. Questions arose to every lip which could not be answered. Some were these,

“What could possibly have been the motive leading to the crime?”

“What could have torn the clothing of the baby?”

“If, as it seemed, the garments were rent by briars, why was the child carried through the shrubbery?”

“Why was it borne from the house at all?” That it was carried off was evident from the clothing.

“Then, if taken away from the house, why was it brought back?”

“Still again, why was the child so entirely covered up with the bed clothes? Was it to smother its cries, or was the intention to kill by suffocation?”

These and other questions were asked by the horror-stricken group of friends and neighbors of one another, and there was no one who could answer them. There was abundant speculation indeed, but conjecture is not facts, and it was facts that were wanted. At this juncture the doctors made two other discoveries that only heightened the mystery. One was that the blow on the temple was evidently not made to kill, but to stun. The other was that after the infliction of the bite, there was unmistakable evidence of suction by lips.

The last feature of the case brought forth from the large assembled company not only expressions of horror and disgust, but explanations about Voodooism, etc..

But there were the stubborn facts before them of a house with barred windows, and thick heavy doors safely locked, with not a soul in the building but the baby and girl nurse, and not a sign of a broken window, wrenched fastening or forced portal.

The clothing of the nurse was carefully examined for thorn rents, but there was not a vestige upon which to hang suspicion. Whoever carried the child through the briars, one thing was certain, that it was not the nurse.

Of course there was a prompt and thorough search of the grounds. Aroused and indignant men went into every dark corner of the magnolia grove, penetrated the shadowy side and back yards, beat the shrubbery, examined every outhouse and visited the cabins in the neighborhood, of suspicious character, especially among the Negroes.

But it was all in vain. The night-horror remained a mystery then, and continues such after an interval of over thirty years.

The occurrence cast a profound gloom over the community for quite a while. Mothers clasped their little ones to their breast with a blended feeling of protecting love and fear. Few of them for a long time after that would leave their homes after nightfall. Imagination pictured a human monster creeping over walls and crouching in gardens at night, with the mad desire of kidnapping babies, biting them, and sucking their veins dry of blood.

Officers of the law and private detectives worked on the case with the greatest zeal and ingenuity. Old Negro men and women were viewed with the same readiness to fasten guilt upon them, as in the days of the Salem witchcraft craze. But no one was able to find a single clue to lead to the discovery of the human dragon or vampire. So after many months of surmisings of all kinds, and efforts of every description, all hope of detection died, and the night occurrence in the old house in the magnolia grove became by common consent and judgment one of the dark mysteries of time, and only to be unveiled and made known at the Last Day.

The matter however led to the removal of the family from the house, and for all we know it is still empty. A gloomy building before as barely seen through the great, solemn, rustling trees, it became gloomier. To many it seemed positively uncanny.

No one liked to pass along its long paling fence after night. A feeling that something grisly and ghastly was hiding among the trees, or looking out from the darkened windows of the room where the baby had been attacked, made numbers cross the street and walk on the other side.

The old magnolia trees grew thicker and taller after this, and shot their branches over the path in such a downward and interlacing way, that any one looking from the front gate toward the house could only see the lower steps leading up to the gallery. However there seemed to be few indeed who cared to look; and so the old mansion was left to the gloom and silence, and to the possession of the fearful secret of that memorable autumn night.

CHAPTER 32

SOME COLLEGE STUDENTS

We heard a great lecturer say once that to be educated meant “to know something, to do something and to be somebody.” Under these three heads or points he spoke very edifyingly for an hour.

Again we have read that as a man has a tripartite nature, it requires that each should receive its just attention in order for the individual to be a civilized being, useful citizen and a cultivated, intelligent gentleman. That devotion to the soul exclusively, regardless of the body and mind, makes a fanatic; that attention to the physical nature alone turns out an animal while development of the intellect by itself, ignoring the soul and careless of the body, will bring forth in due time a devil. We will enforce these very points by a glimpse at a past college history.

Among the hundreds of youths and young men at the University of Mississippi was one who, with plenty of money in his pocket, a thoroughly deceived father at home, proceeded to ignore every claim of mind, soul and body, and in less than one year evolved before all of our eyes a perfect hoodlum.

He took no care of his dress and person, and so was a slouch. He never studied a lesson, but sat with interlinear on his lap in the Greek and Latin rooms, regularly “flatted” it in mathematics, and in a class of seventy ranked as number seventy, or in other words, stood at the bottom. So he continued an ignoramus. As for his spiritual life, he acted as if he had no soul. He was never seen at a church and was involved in or was the originator of every scandalous outbreak on the Campus and in the dormitories.

With a boon companion one night, he caught a horse belonging to the Chancellor and another owned by one of the professors, and had what he called a Tournament. Blowing horns and galloping around the grounds like mad, they made such a din and uproar after midnight that every one was

aroused; hundreds of students came to their windows, while the Faculty made some very amusing and entertaining efforts to head off the law breakers.

Seeing the approaching danger T_____ gave a final blast on his bugle, announced in a stentorian voice a continuance of the performance next night, which of course did not take place, and putting the horse he was riding, at full speed through the lower hall in the Northern Dormitory, made him leap out of the back door and vanished in the woods. Soon after he appeared among the students on the great grass covered Circle of the College and anxiously inquired, “What was the matter? that he had been sleeping soundly, and had just heard the noise!”

There was no proof against him, although suspicion was strong, and so after a little the matter blew over.

The pranks and misdemeanors of this youth were beyond description and enumeration. He was repeatedly warned by the faculty, and finally after first being suspended, was expelled in disgrace from the college. He took three degrees in less than a year — Slouch, Ignoramus and Lawbreaker. The whole could be summed up in the word hoodlum.

In this brief time T_____ spent enough money to have carried him through the four years’ course, board, tuition and all. Instead he did not complete a year, learned nothing but vice through his night pranks in the town, financially crippled his father, got his hall in the dormitory in such bad repute that other students left it, brought reproach on the town from whence he came, and left generally unregretted.

We were informed that he went West. But we have never seen or heard from him since his sudden departure from the college.

Number Two was from the same State, and resided in a lovely town not over thirty miles from the university. His name was L_____.

At first this youth agreeably impressed everyone who was introduced to him. He had the dress, and seemed to have the manners of a gentleman.

As his life became known it was evident that he cared no more for his soul than did T_____, the first-named individual. Nor did he feel any interest in the filling and training of his mind. In his class he stood or ranked almost

next to the indolent T____. His one thought and idea seemed to be in reference to his body, its dress and appearance.

All this to many would seem harmless enough, and to a certain degree commendable. Certainly there was no public wrongdoing, no visible outbreking act in the young man's life Christless as he was. But an idle brain is said to be the devil's workshop; and to meet the endless wants and vanities of the body, sin is certain to rise up and break forth.

It was noticeable that L_____ became very reserved, stayed much to himself, and frequently changed from one hall to another and from one dormitory to another as well.

At the same time there was much complaint among the students about the loss of money and valuables. It was afterwards remembered that fresh losses always took place with one of L_____ 's removals. But no one dreamed of suspecting this faultlessly dressed, nicely spoken young man, with his immaculate linen, well-fitting clothes and seal ring on his finger.

The Negro servants about the college were the ones who were supposed to be doing the thieving, and were so accused. But they vigorously denied the charge asked to be searched, and their cases would be dropped.

Three of the robbed students called their servant into a room, locked the door and, drawing an empty pistol on him, demanded that he should confess. Immediately two Saturn-like rings of white encircled his eyeballs and he declared with heavy breathing emphasis that he "had not tuk a single solidtarry thing." The boys, with a laugh, released him.

And still the thieving went on. The writer one day found all the buttons cut off of his overcoat. Another day a diamond and emerald ring disappeared which had been given him for rescuing a young Southern girl from imminent danger.

A day student of the college lost his saddle as it hung in the gymnasium. A number of watches vanished. The professor of chemistry complained that quite a collection of gems had been taken from his glass cabinets. The librarian stated about the same time that over a hundred volumes in the college library were gone.

And yet no one suspected L_____.

One morning the revelation came like a thunderclap on the college. One of the students had just received \$90 from home, the amount sufficient to close up his accounts, when, stepping out of his room into another across the passage, left his money on a table in a roll. He was gone only several minutes, but in that interval the currency disappeared. He was heartbroken and gave the alarm. As the boys came running upstairs and down-stairs from the floors of the hall, all deeply sympathized with the afflicted Johnson, and all eagerly offered him the privilege of searching their rooms, and insisted upon it — all but one. This exception was L_____, who locked his door and said to the students congregated before it that he was a gentleman, and would not be insulted by any such procedure.

An officer was sent for, and while he was coming L_____ leaped out of a back window, darted in a neighboring strip of woods and reached the railroad depot just in time to catch a northbound train.

The door of his apartment was broken in, and there was found six or seven trunks filled with stolen goods of every description. The college jewels were in the tray of one of the trunks. The lost saddle was discovered inside a nailed-up closet wherein were other valuables. A large box held the stolen books; while watches, rings, a peck of brass buttons, great bundles of shoestrings, clothing, hosiery and everything that could be enumerated were boxed, bundled, stowed away and made ready for a soon-anticipated departure.

Of course the money was not there. But the next day the broken-hearted father arrived and replaced not only the \$90 but wherever any student had reason to believe that L_____ had robbed him, the father, down whose face the tears kept dripping, offered to make the loss good.

There were quite a number, who, after giving one look at the crushed parent before them, never dropped the slightest hint of their own personal wrongs or disappearance of property.

A third student was named M_____.

We are certain he gave no thought to his soul. He gave very little attention to his body, as to its dress, pampering and gratification. He devoted every energy and almost every waking moment to his mind.

He had enough money to stay three years, and by rigid economy on one hand, and studying hard on the other, he took the four years' course in three. By taking no vacation for two summers he crowded the freshman and sophomore into one year.

He studied late at night. Many a time we have seen his lamp shining at one o'clock. He studied hard, so that his face became colorless as marble. He seemed to care little for the table, and was careless about his attire. His clothing looked threadbare and was hung on, rather than fitted to his form.

He had come to get through college in three years, and he did. He had matriculated to succeed, and stand in the foremost rank at the university, and he did. The first year he ranked fifth. In the junior year he took second honors. In the senior he was first honor man.

According to the definition of education with which we started out, our friend M_____ completely overlooked and neglected two of the three natures with which God has endowed man.

He never went into any flagrant vice that we ever heard of, but he took poor care of his body, and if he had a soul we do not remember that he ever mentioned the fact.

We understand he is now Judge of the Supreme Court in one of our States, but we feel that while he in his life is unspeakably ahead of T_____ and L_____, yet still there was a better way for him.

A fourth student from Mississippi was named G_____.

To this hour we can recall his well-kept body and tasteful, gentlemanly attire. Repeatedly we would see him in healthful exercise before his dormitory or on the campus, and as often met him in the gymnasium.

As to his intellect, he had a superior one to begin with, but this gift he used and did not abuse by indolence. He was a faithful, hard student, and stood high, close to the top, in all of the four classes of the college.

In addition to this, he guarded his moral life and character. He attended church, and when a protracted meeting was held, he found time in his studies to go to the night services and was soundly converted to God.

After his graduation he became an itinerant Methodist preacher, though he could have graced other professions and won distinction as a lawyer, lecturer and statesman.

His promotion was steady in the Mississippi Conference until he occupied its highest stations and appointments. He was then chosen to be editor of the New Orleans Christian Advocate, where he showed as distinguished talents as he had revealed in the leading pulpits of the land.

Finally the General Conference of the M. E. Church South elected him bishop by a splendid majority.

His name was Charles B. Galloway of Mississippi.

CHAPTER 33

CAMP MEETING CHARACTERS

At the Camp Grounds we continually meet personages who affect the mind and heart in many different ways. Some are gracious, pleasing and blessed, while others are odd and amusing. Some are wise, and some are otherwise. Some are benedictions, others are studies, and still others are wonders. Moreover, we are glad we encounter them all.

One is before us now as we marked him at a large tabernacle meeting. He remains in memory as if etched by an artist hand, or carved by the chisel of a sculptor.

He was an old gentleman of sixty-five, wore closely cropped gray hair, had a clean shaved face, and rather ruddy complexion. His suit of clothes was a business one of a snuff brown color. He was the picture of primness and neatness from his well tied cravat to his polished shoes.

He invariably sat in a chair directly in front of the audience, facing the speaker, and with one leg crossed over another. He never looked at the preacher, but sat as described with a toothpick in his mouth, his hand covering the top of an old-style ivory-headed walking stick, and his eyes never lifted higher than the knee of the minister in the pulpit. He had but three motions, a slight chewing on the goose quill, a soft rubbing of the ivory head of his cane with the palm of his hand, and a change in the leg that was crossed; this last, however, occurring but rarely.

The most impressive thing about him was the air of wisdom which actually covered him as a veil would a bride. The face was that of a judge and senator combined. Sphinx-like, it seemed to have swept over a desert of years, had beheld all that had to be seen, thought all that could engage the mind, and now, feeling the vanity of words, preferred to listen as in a dream to speakers who were laboring with problems of all sorts which he had long ago wrestled with and solved.

At first the man awed us. We perceived also that all the gospel ambassadors who held forth before him were deeply impressed. It was evident that they were drawing heavily on their treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in fact, endeavoring to be at their best because of this silent, meditative listener of the revolving dexter member and the slow-moving ruminative under jaw.

After a few sermons we became somewhat accustomed to him, as the traveler does to Mt. Blanc, towering in the distance.

But suppose we should solve the mystery and tell the reader who and what this decorous, dignified individual was; which explanation of the case would be most agreeable or the most disappointing! That he was stone deaf and never heard a word! Or that he was mentally dislocated, was a harmless lunatic, did not require a keeper, but simply wanted a walking stick, toothpick and a place to cross his legs?

One of these two statements of the case was the truth. The peruser of these lines can make his choice and abide by it, as we will make no farther effort to illumine his mind.

Another character at a protracted meeting held under a large tent, was a burly looking, portly man of fifty. He must have weighed over two hundred pounds, and in his quietest moments looked apoplectic.

Withal this he was a deeply religious man, and if ever the writer saw one who seemed to eat the Word and drink in the Gospel it was this individual. Moreover, it became apparent to all that he was not only receiving, but fairly swelling, with the truth, and could not hold much more.

As it had happened before in his case, subsequent events agreed with the antedating appearance, and the brother overflowed!

But the strange part of it was that he never manifested his gladness as one would have supposed and expected, but after imbibing all that his capacity could contain, he, with cheeks distended and face perfectly crimson, would take a solemn and dignified walk through the straw clear across the breadth of the large tabernacle several times, meanwhile emitting little puffs from his lips, as if it was escaping steam, while his feet, throwing up the dry

hay right and left, brought up the fancy or picture of waves cloven by the prow of a vessel.

He always reminded me of a steamboat swung loose from the wharf, loaded down to the guards, heading down stream with a roaring fire in the furnace, a full head of steam in boiler and cylinders, the pilot at the wheel, the captain on the hurricane deck, and the craft sure of making a successful trip and glorious landing.

The man was so manifestly oblivious of the attention he aroused, so completely taken up with the celestial voyage he was making, that the effect on the observant audience was all the more powerful and remarkable.

We are confident that the brother never made the trip, so to speak, until it was a physical and spiritual impossibility to sit still. It was evident he had to go, or blow up.

A third personage met in our work was at a camp meeting. This individual was a good sister who had a daily shouting spell. By the expression "daily shouting" we do not wish to be understood as implying that there was anything mechanical or false about her rejoicing. On the contrary, God placed His seal of approval and indorsement, not only on the voice and words, but upon the face also of the overflowing sister. It was genuine.

Generally the shout we are speaking of, and oftener continued peals of happy, holy laughter, would burst forth about nine o'clock in the morning. Family worship over, the dishes washed, the tent in order, when lo! the fountain which had been welling up in her heart for quite awhile would suddenly change from a trickling spring to a first-class geyser, and aim for the stars. There was no working up of the gladness, but the tearful shouts and the heart-moving laughs were full from the start. There was such a genuine ring in every cry and utterance that everybody felt that the coin she was throwing around came direct from the mint of heaven.

Another feature about these morning scenes was that the good sister would run a couple of hundred yards, sometimes encircling the tabernacle. Almost without exception she had a towel, dish cloth or a piece of white goods of some kind in her hand, which she would wave like a banner, and sometimes pop like a whip as she praised God and ran. It looked at times

wonderfully like she was in a chariot of glory on her way to the skies, and was hurrying up her invisible steeds. On other occasions the banner feature would prevail, and we saw the flag bearer of an approaching gospel army.

Whether the overflowing joy filled her as she was engaged in domestic employments, and while holding a dish rag, dusting cloth or piece of goods of some kind in her hands; or whether in her ecstasy she would catch up anything to wave as she started on her triumphal tour, we cannot tell. We only know that we never saw her without her banner at such a time. In fact, we would have been disappointed if she had left her pennon behind.

We never wearied of this sister's daily march around Zion. We would first hear a few opening ringing shouts, look out of our tent and see her coming with a white cloth circling over and about her head, while from her lips pealed rapturous cries and that holy laughter, which cannot be described and could never be successfully imitated.

Whether meditation on the last sermon heard, or the domestic occupation of washing and cleaning her dishes suggested the purifying power of the Blood of Christ and brought on the outburst and outbreak, we were not informed; we only know that this fully saved woman could not pass "the third hour of the day," which is nine o'clock in the morning, without boiling over, rushing from her Upper Room, and filling the streets of Jerusalem, so to speak, with the praises of her glorious and glorified Redeemer.

Perhaps no one on the camp ground enjoyed these scenes more than the husband of this woman. Every line of his countenance and look of the eye showed his perfect confidence in his wife, and his hearty, unqualified indorsement and approval of the whole proceeding.

As for the dish cloth or dusting rag used in these triumphal processions in and around about Zion, we have to say that they have ever since been exalted, and in a sense glorified, in our mind.

A ram's horn, a bush by the roadside, a rod cut from a thicket, a dry bone in the dust, a lamp, pitcher and trumpet have all been invested with a charm, power and glory because of the devoted hands that touched them,

and because of the great Name and Holy One in whose service they were used.

In like manner the dish towel and dusting cloth of the home have, by the manipulation of consecrated hands, been swept up to the highest planes of honor. Waved in His name, who suffered, died and ascended for us, they are no longer rags, but are numbered and classed among the numerous and beautiful pennons and banners of Full Salvation.

CHAPTER 34

JANITORS AND USHERS

There are two functionaries of the church who, while not graded in the first official rank, yet none the less consider themselves as in very high and important positions, so in a sense are indispensable.

We, while unable to discover their office recognized in the Bible, and failing to find them mentioned by St. Paul among the gifts of the Spirit to the church in the complete and well-known list of “apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers,” yet are compelled to admit that they are with us now, no matter who gave them and they have an influence most potential and formidable.

The converse of the statement that “Christ gave us apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints,” could properly read “And He did not give us presiding elders, lecturers, stewards, trustees, ushers and sextons, for the wearying, worrying, trial and despair of the saints.”

Nevertheless, they are with us, brought into being by the church of today, and we are called upon to recognize and yield to their autocratic sway.

The sexton is almost without exception a melancholy, hard or cross man. Whether by ringing the bell the iron has entered his soul and then reappeared in the facial surface, or whether his proximity to the rope suggests gloomy reflections of the hangman’s platform and noose, we do not know. It may be the endless talk of warming a cold church, the impossibility of pleasing the congregation as to heat and ventilation, the humiliation of blowing wind into an organ from a little dark corner or closet and unable to see what is transpiring on the outside. We cannot tell we only know that nearly all the sextons we ever saw — and we have met many hundreds — seemed to be gloomy about something, soured at some one, and displeased and mad with everybody.

Next to the adversary, this official of the bell rope and furnace can most injure a gospel meeting.

First he can cut off the supply of oxygen in the shape of pure, fresh air, that is as needful for the brain and body as salvation is to the soul. Most sextons seem to have a peculiar veneration for ancient atmosphere — the older it is the more highly it is valued. The air breathed out and used up by the stewards, trustees, elders, deacons and other dignitaries is evidently to them quite sacred and should be preserved.

The effect upon the audience of these carefully bottled lung exhalations, from which all life-giving properties have been removed, can well be imagined. The sermon also is counted a poor, lifeless affair, when in fact the discourse was good and all that it should be, but the poisoned atmosphere acted as a damper on the preacher and a deadener on the congregation and made impossible the gracious results that otherwise would have been.

Once in a large city church we held a single night service, as the opera house where we were holding revival meetings, had been previously engaged for that evening. As we entered the stately stone edifice we were struck with the chill and deadness of the atmosphere. As it was a close, sultry night, we asked the janitor if he would raise some windows. He replied that they were not made to raise. We next asked him where and how we could get some fresh air for breathing purposes. And in reply he pointed to a small circular opening in the wall, about thirty feet from the floor. It was a foot in diameter and looked like a hole in the side of the building near the roof. At once we thought of the “Black Hole of Calcutta,” and began to feel suffocating symptoms. The sufferings of the following two hours may be easily imagined.

Again, by virtue of being so much alone in the building, and summoning the people to the place of worship, the sexton somehow falls into the idea and assumes a corresponding bearing, that he owns the church.

The Sunday School children are oftentimes in terror of him, and so are many of the church members. Repeatedly we have received orders from these worthies through the pastor that I could not hold service on Saturday because they had to sweep and dust. To them the Gospel was

nothing, a battle for souls not to be compared in importance with the rearrangement of an auditorium.

Let the reader think a moment and say which he thinks God would prefer, a meeting in which Christ would be held up and received, or a church dusted and swept. And yet we have had to contend mightily at times for the faith before we could break through the janitor's power and rescue the house of God from an unspiritual and inconsiderate person, and use it as God intended, for the salvation of souls.

The second functionary of the church who stands next to the janitor in power to afflict the preacher is the usher.

We are convinced that, like the general, statesman, orator and poet, this most interesting individual must be born for the office. When this is the case it is an unspeakable relief and pleasure to the pastor and evangelist to observe the readiness, swiftness and yet quietness, tact and good sense with which the man seats the audience.

But oftentimes a person gets into this office who is unqualified for it in almost every respect, and as we have beheld him trotting up and down a the long carpeted aisles, his smiling self-complacency sailing through and over-riding the billows of constant mistakes and blunders, we have wondered with an exceeding great wonder.

It is a sight never to be forgotten to see one of them showing members of the church to their seats and pews as if they could not find the place if left to themselves, when, in fact, they know the spot as well as an old hen is acquainted with her roosting place in a tree or the chicken house.

It looks to the thoughtful observer that a lot of physical energy is needlessly wasted by such proceedings, but it must be remembered that the practice of this impressive, spectacular performance is productive of mutual delight to both parties, the escorter and the escorted. To the latter there is a sweet, proud pleasure of being heralded, headed, guided, protected, guarded and safely delivered into one's pew as though very precious goods or royalty itself was being handled. It creates such a pleasant glow of self-importance of being somebody above the ordinary, that the congregation would rise en masse to protest against the

discontinuance of the office of Sublime Grand Master of the Aisle to the Supreme High Mogul of the Pew.

As for the usher himself there is a double job in the escorting business. First he shows himself off to the congregation, not once, as the pew-holder, but frequently. It is as though the sun rose many times in one day. It had hardly set at the far end of the aisle when lo! here it is rising again in all the glories of white standing collar and necktie of blue, green, crimson and gold.

Again there is the pleasure experienced by the usher in presenting to each church member on every Sabbath a nicely cushioned and foot-stooled pew. He leads the way to it, smiles genially at those going into it and turns away with a look as if he had made a present of the walnut or mahogany receptacle to the party or parties he has just seated. So no wonder he looks pleased and feels well. With these constant acts of benevolence on his part, not to mention the blood exhilaration springing from this pacing, trotting and loping exercise in the aisles, he is bound to be in a genial frame of mind. Indeed he feels so good, and is so well pleased with himself that he actually thinks he has got religion.

Sometimes as we have watched this most interesting character as he came sailing up the aisle with a church member in tow, he would remind us of a little steam tug drawing a barge up stream and landing it in a side door. These periodic trips make the occurrence far more interesting than the half-hour movements of a regular city ferryboat; for our steam tug of the aisles comes splashing and panting up the little carpeted channel every minute or so, to the utter distraction of the pew inhabitants on the banks. It is simply impossible with most of them to keep up a spirit of Holy meditation and prayer, because of the fussy little tug, and because of interest in the name and freight of the last barge he brings into port.

Sometimes we have thought it would be better for the steam tug of the aisle to become a switch engine. For, while the engine does back a number of cars, loaded and empty, into their proper side track before leaving them, yet many times we have seen the big mogul go but a little ways with the box car, and then giving it a shove, leave it to find its way alone to the proper place.

This would save much time and labor for the usher if he would adopt that plan, pushing only richly laden cars — I mean people — to their depots — I mean pews — and simply giving a shove at the door to ordinary folks who have not much on board and are light weight.

But the usher, as a rule, prefers to be a steam tug, make many trips and land everybody in his or her dock. And this preference arises from facts already mentioned.

One of the brilliant ideas of this character (good ushers always excepted) is that a late-comer should be honored with a front seat. According to this judgment, and action on his part, a discount is placed upon prompt attendance, and a premium on late coming to the house of God. Oftentimes these tardy attenders are seated with great impressiveness in chairs directly in front of the pulpit, and in full view of everybody. The congregation cannot but feel the injustice done the faithful by rewarding the most dilatory and faithless with the best seats in the auditorium.

Then when these people are seen to be worldly, frivolous and utterly out of sympathy with the meeting, the utter lack of wisdom in putting such individuals at the front is recognized at once. The sight of these cold-faced, roving-eyed late arrivals is anything but an inspiration to the preacher and will not infrequently cause him to “Labor,” as ministers call it.

And yet if ever some ushers look like they are doing “the thing” it is when they are escorting a young, simpering, worldly couple up the aisle stamping out five minutes of the sermon while placing two pair of yellow tan shoes, a bunch of ostrich plumes and a rattan cane in front of a serious, thoughtful, religious body of people. The preacher and audience are fairly sickened, while the usher retires perfectly radiant from perpetrating an insult upon the Word of God, a discourtesy to the man in the pulpit and an outrage upon the rights and feelings of the congregation.

The average usher never seems to have learned that if the mental connection between a speaker and his audience is broken, that it is not easily reestablished. And so this thoughtless servant of the church, Sabbath after Sabbath, and service after service, will at the most important and critical part of a discourse, suddenly appear traveling up a long aisle with some vacant-eyed, unspiritual individual in tow, and after several

minutes' loss of time in seating him, depart in triumph to repeat in a few seconds the same performance. In the meantime the word of God was interrupted, the chain of sympathy between minister and people disconnected, the speaker's heart burdened and hundreds of people wronged by this act of consummate folly.

Sometimes it is a late young couple, giddy and giggling, that the usher brings forward and places on the very front seat. The preacher, with an inward groan, glances from the female apparition of a feather duster crowned head to the young male escort by her who possesses a mild, sheep-like face, and a receding forehead on which the hair has been plastered so as to resemble two large batter cakes. There is little to choose between, and the preacher can but most fervently wish that ushers were called to their office as Aaron was to his; or to say the least, that they had read Swedenborg on Spheres.

At one of our meetings a few years since, the congregation one night being unusually large, a brilliant conception struck the Napoleonic brain of the usher. Observing the low-cushioned seat running over forty feet around the altar for the knees of communicants, he felt by a happy inspiration that this was the very place for children. The height of the cushion from the floor was unmistakable proof. Grown people could not sit upon it, but children could, therefore, it was made for them. What a beautiful syllogism! And what a silly man! It took a silly man to make such a syllogism.

In two minutes he had the place filled and the preacher for two mortal, not to say immortal, hours, had a squirming, twisting, wriggling, grinning, giggling line of fifty children not only in full view of the audience, but almost in personal touch from the pulpit. The effort of mental concentration, the labor to keep the attention of the congregation in spite of the punching, pinching, kicking, whispering, laughing line right before their eyes, can be well imagined by every one but an usher.

We remember once hearing of a man who, in order to learn how to focalize his intellectual faculties, had a habit of studying mathematics under a tree that was full of guinea fowls. He certainly had no more difficult task than the preacher was confronted with the night we have mentioned.

The usher, however, was radiant with his fancied, happy conception, and doubtless yearned and longed for more altar rails about which to festoon more children.

We should all pray most fervently and constantly for janitors and ushers.

CHAPTER 35

SKETCHES OF CHILDREN

We do not know how God brought the angels into being; but evidently from statements of the Scripture they came not as the human family. There seems to be no marriage or giving in marriage among the angels.

To our race has come the gift of children, and great as is the care, and multiplied as may be the anxiety they occasion, yet we can but see that they were intended as a blessing by the Almighty, and are indeed such.

From the very start, they make demands and draughts upon our love, patience and sacrifice, and hardly allow a hard, morose, selfish nature at home, because of their own brightness, sunniness and constant exactions upon our time, means and strength.

What questions they ask, and how we find ourselves answering all we can, like so many hired servants, and they the owners of everything around! How we have to give up book, paper, visit and business because of the little curly head being tired, sleepy or sick.

To this day, after many years have passed, our lips smile or eyes grow misty over the sayings and doing of those wonderfully precocious beings in knee pants and sunbonnets.

One asked with solemn, inquiring eyes, when she heard it thunder, if the angels were moving the furniture around in Heaven.

One of our daughters, when she was seven years of age, went down town to the union station in St. Louis with us as we were departing to fill a ten days' appointment in a town several hundred miles away. As she beheld the surging multitude at the thirty track depot, she, with the most exalted confidence in her father's power to draw, looked up and asked if all these people were going to our meeting! Perhaps not one in all that great mass of beings knew there was such a person as her father; but it did not so impress or affect her child-like trust and admiration.

Nevertheless it was quite a while before we could bring certain facial lines into serious order again.

One of our sons, when eight years of age, heard us deliver a sermon on the awful and immediate judgments of God upon unrepentant and persistent sin. It was certainly a dark discourse, with telling incidents to confirm the Word of God.

The little fellow was silent all the way home from the night service; but immediately on arrival at the house, he drew his mother aside in a room, closed the door and with pale face and trembling lips said in an awe-struck whisper:

“Will any of us be alive in the morning?”

Here was faith in the Word of God indeed, and the utterance of Christ about children takes on greater force as we mark this unquestioning confidence in the statements of the Almighty.

The same small individual had seasons of profound despondency. His arising in the morning was the signal for the gloom to descend upon his spirit. He had a way, after getting out of bed, of sitting undressed upon the carpet and surrendering himself a prey to melancholy reflections. He was a picture of silent hopelessness to some real or fancied grief.

But on one occasion he spoke aloud as he sat alone on the rug in the early dawn of the morning; and was overheard by a member of the family who, sheltered behind the bedclothes, was quietly contemplating the sorrowful, diminutive figure in white.

“Everything is against me,” said the disconsolate little voice. “One of my socks is gone! My shoestring is in a hard knot! And my front tooth is loose and ready to drop out.”

How much farther he would have proceeded in his lamentations we do not know, but a hearty laugh near by had the effect of bringing the little fellow back to life and cheerfulness again.

The despondent, bewailing youngster is not alone. We have met the tribe grown up and spending much time in receiving the attention of people

where they enlarge on the lost article, the knotty difficulty, the loosening tooth and all the various ills of earth.

Well for them could they meet the bright face and cheery words of a friend of the writer who, on encountering a preacher with longitudinous countenance and drooping lip, said brightly:

“Did not the sun arise on time this morning, my brother? And did you observe, as you came along, whether the roses were blooming as usual?”

Whereupon the doleful young minister immediately proceeded under this symbolic comfort and advice, to find the lost sock, untie the knot in his shoestring, and had the loose tooth set and braced by a nice piece of dental work.

We were reading to a little country girl of six about the Prodigal Son. She was sick in bed, a burning spot of fever on each cheek, but the bright mind was giving close attention to the narrative, as was evidenced by the eager, luminous eyes.

While rendering the history with occasional comments on the degradation, suffering, and finally the starvation of the young man as he stood in the midst of the droves of swine; suddenly, with snapping eyes, the little auditor cried out:

“Why didn’t he kill a pig?”

It took some seconds for the young pastor to rally, so natural as well as so amusing was the question of this little country girl, accustomed as she was to the hog killing time at Christmas, with sausages, spareribs and backbones in abundance.

We of course spoke of the commandments forbidding Jews to eat swine flesh, and of the intense prejudice of that people against such a diet. But it was all lost on her, as she could not see why, through the custom of law, a man should perish with hunger when a fat pig was close by and ready to be offered up.

A deeply interesting lad of four years kept most of the passengers on a Pullman in California enchained for a whole afternoon. There seemed to be

no end to his bright and odd sayings. He was a lovable little fellow, open and trustful with all, and won the tender regard as well as smiles and laughter of his audience with equal ease.

He sat before the colored porter quite a while studying him. Finally he said in a wondering tone:

“What makes your face black? Why couldn’t you get it whitewashed like ours?”

This was a question which has puzzled the wisest of heads, and so the porter may be excused for replying with an amused “Hee-hee.”

But the little interlocutor was not satisfied. He wanted explanations and facts, and so with his tiny hands on his knees he returned to the charge:

“Do you reckon that smoking your pipe too close to your face made your skin black?”

This time the porter, showing all his ivories, had to retire under the general laugh.

Being told that the beautiful sky he was looking at was the home of the good and the best people, the little fellow replied quickly and confidently: “Well, then, I’ll be off at half-past four o’clock.”

Just why he postponed his transition from 2 p. m. until the time already mentioned in the afternoon, did not appear. It was simply one of the many quick, terse speeches with which the thoughtful faced child regaled the company for hours.

In a Southern State a girl of six heard us attentively for several days on the subject of the second work of grace. Approaching us one day at the church door she said very quietly, but firmly: “Dr. C., I do not think I have the Second Blessing you preach, but I have the One and a Half.”

Truly this was refreshing, as well as a powerful recaller of a number of people whom we had met in the church and full salvation ranks wearing the regalia of the profession, but not measuring up to the real experience, by a remarkable deficit symbolized by the child’s saying, “One and a half.”

But still more impressed were we with a little girl of five, who, kneeling at the altar in the midst of a number of grown people, was asked why she was there. Her reply was, as she lifted the tear-stained, blue-eyed, innocent face:

“I am a backslider!”

A number of heads all around went down very suddenly on that announcement, to hide the smiles that would come.

Again asked if she would like Christ to give her a pure, holy heart that was being preached about in the meeting, she answered in the deepest seriousness, and looking the questioner full in the face:

“I have wanted that blessing for years and years.”

If heads went down before, they certainly descended this time much lower and far more quickly.

And yet there were tears as well as smiles around that altar that night over the occurrence just mentioned. It showed how early the Saviour begins to work in the heart of a child. Truly He antedates the labors of the most devoted churches, Christians and parents.

And He said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands upon them and blessed them.”

A little girl writing to us lately said in closing her three-page note, “I will now conclude — the whole family seem very cross and disagreeable this morning, and I feel somewhat fussy myself.”

We could not restrain a hearty laugh as we took in the intense humanness, and also saw a perfect commentary and explanation of one sentence in what was admitted in the second. The disagreeableness of the family was perfectly understood in the acknowledged “fussiness” of the one who made the charge.

Here was not only a key to this situation, but one that unlocks and most thoroughly explains a great deal of the indiscriminate faultfinding that we have to listen to on all sides today.

Many of God's people are accused of being all wrong and bad by a number of parties, who if they finished their verbal and written attacks as truthfully as did the little girl, would have to add — "I feel somewhat fussy myself — I am wrong and bad myself."

Another letter was received several years ago from one of our youthful correspondents. The individual had reached the mature period of five years of age, and is one of our nephews. He dictated the epistle, and his mother wrote it down word by word as it fell from his lips. Among other things he said:

"They tell me that the devil will get me if I am bad. I think a good deal about him and dream of him sometimes at nights. I don't want him to get me. My mamma says if I am good, he won't get me. But you see, Uncle Beverly, I'm not good all the time."

Comment is unnecessary, while smiles are abundant. Somehow the diminutive letter writer without knowing it has thrust a sword point into the harness of a large body of people. He wrote as if he was lonesome, when he is one of a great company — only franker and more open than the rest.

Just how much simplicity or depravity is in the following occurrence we leave the reader to decide.

A little fellow of two years of age in New Orleans had an inconsolable weeping spell upon him. The nurse had tried numerous things by way of comfort and diversion, but all in vain. Finally the child cried out "Take me down to the garden, and walk me around under the trees and see if that won't do me some good?"

In Tennessee a case was narrated to us by a gentleman friend that surpassed our Louisiana boy.

The lad in this occurrence was about four years old. One afternoon he suddenly rushed into the house and told his mother that he had just seen a lion in the grove near by. She informed him in reply that lions were in Asia, in Africa and menageries, but none were roaming around the country as he had declared.

But he insisted that he had seen one. So taking his hand she went out to the grove and there saw a large brown dog which he had affirmed was the monarch of the forest. After he had admitted his mistake, the mother said:

“You ought to ask my pardon for what you have done.”

“Well, I do,” he replied.

“The next thing” she pursued, “is for you to go into the parlor and ask God to forgive you for this story.”

“I’m willing” he rejoined; and walked straight into the room while his mother closed the door softly upon him. After about five minutes he came out; when she enquired:

“Did you talk to God about the matter?”

“Yes ma’am.”

“Did he answer you?”

“Oh yes.”

“What did he say?”

“Well, He said the same thing had fooled him a number of times.”

Truly volumes could be written about the wit and wisdom, the strange sayings, old ways, and countless charms of childhood. It is marvellous how they brighten a house, fill up the hours and days with sunshine, and bring greater blessings than they do trouble and care, great as the latter may be.

What a desolate place the home becomes if the little ones lie down to sleep in the cemetery. How the breast aches over their long absence, and the heart wearies to see them again. Or if they grow up and leave the home, there is almost a kindred desolation and gloom.

A lady wrote to us a few months ago saying:

“All the family were together at this season of the year, but Christmas is not like Christmas, when there are no children.”

In this instance they had all grown up or gone away.

In a city in California where we spent a few days, we became impressed with a mansion that stood solitary and most of the time silent near where we boarded. It showed but little life and stir at any time, and never did we see a child.

Once we had occasion to go through the large yard, and passed a corner shaded with crepe myrtle trees, that had long ago been a playground for the children. We saw a small bat almost covered with the soil lying on the ground. Evidently many months had passed since the little hand had played ball with the forgotten piece of wood on the grass.

But that which most deeply touched the heart was the sight of a small grave, ten or twelve inches long, with a marble slab at the head, and on it engraved the words,

“Here Lies Bunnie.”

The miniature tomb of the domestic pet was only a few feet from where the bat lay. Many rains had stained the one and almost buried the other. “Bunnie” had evidently died first, and his little master doubtless used to play around the tomb and remember his pet. It was pathetic to see the bat so near the grave. Then by and by the boy himself went — whether to the cemetery, or to some distant place to live, we could not tell — only that both were gone and both seemed now forgotten.

We walked away with a misty feeling in the eyes and a choking sensation in the throat which we had trouble with for some hours.

In a town in Florida we overlooked from our room window at the hotel another such stripped home as described.

The garden was filled with a profusion of southern flowers. The large back yard was beautifully shaded with great water oaks and rustling magnolias. The spring sunshine fell like a glory over all. But there were no children to be seen. That they once had been there we found out by an affecting circumstance.

Out in the branches of one of the smaller trees and near the flowers the servants hung a parrot in its cage every morning. Soon we noticed that he was calling the names of children. Clear and distinct over the flowers and

through the trees came to our window the words, “Willie!” then, “Annie!” later on, “Charlie!” after a pause, “Minnie!”

Sometimes the bird would repeat one of the names several times before going to another, and this, with the waiting after each call, as if expecting an answer, made the sound unspeakably affecting.

The history of the case was that two of the children had died and two had been taken North to live. The household pet, who had watched them play and enjoyed their sports from his airy perch many months, had been left behind with a part of the family. But he missed the children and kept calling for them.

The servant maid scolded him at times, but it had no effect. As she went back into the house, and he was left out in the yard alone, the old calls would come pealing over the garden to our window — “Charlie!” “Minnie!” “Annie!” “Willie!” until our heart felt sick and sore.

We wondered if Charlie and Minnie away up in the North ever recalled their pet to mind, if they were as faithful to his memory as he was to theirs.

Somehow we thought of Longfellow’s poem that we have always considered a gem. One verse alone is a perfect picture:

*“The large Newfoundland house dog
Stands watching at the door;
He is looking for his little playmates,
Who will return no more.”*

When a small lad, the writer used to follow his mother up into the large attic of our home, where trunks and many other things were stored. It was always a dark, mysterious and solemn place to him as a boy, and a certain occurrence which he beheld there more than once did not lessen at all its melancholy innocence. That occurrence would be the bitter weeping of his mother over one of these open trunks. With wondering childish eyes we would creep near, hearing her sobs, and find her with a tiny little sock or shoe in her lap; or she had come across the rattle of the baby now under the sod, or find the cap or ball or some plaything of a little fellow who had been asleep under the cedars in the cemetery for twenty years.

We recall a certain busy time in our life, when not only the tongue was in frequent demand before the public, but the pen had to fly for hours each day at home.

A certain little toddler in the family, aged about eighteen months, assumed that it was his privilege to break in at any time on these busy hours in the Study. He would escape from the notice of the family and his unsteady steps could instantly be recognized coming down the porch to the room at the remote end, which had been fitted up as a kind of preacher's office or library. The room itself was a foot or more higher than the floor of the veranda.

The writer at his desk could hear the little uncertain footfalls approaching, could tell when he reached the door, and then, perfectly unable to write, would listen to the soft chubby fist striking several little blows at the bottom of the door. Not a word would be said on either side for several seconds, and then would come another soft beating of the tiny hand on the door.

It was no use, the pressing work had to be given up, the writing postponed. Somebody at the door, perfectly conscious of his power, was preparing to give the third series of knocks, when the door opened and he found himself lifted up and hugged tight in the arms of his father.

Somehow the postponed labor was performed afterwards, though at times it required a work deep in the night. But better than all, the father has been glad many times since God took the child to the skies, that the solemn-eyed, loving little fellow was never turned away a single time from the door. His gentle knock was always honored.

THE END

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