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STONEY CARDINGTON'S  
IDEAL.

BY

MRS. MAY ANDERSON HAWKINS.

AUTHOR OF "JACK PAYTON AND HIS FRIENDS," "PHILIP BARTON'S  
SECRET," AND OTHER STORIES.

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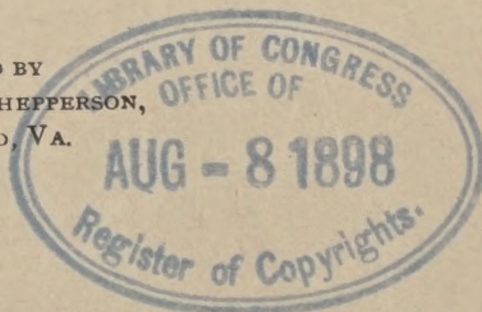
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TO THE  
DEAR VIRGINIA FRIENDS  
OF FORMER YEARS,  
WHOSE HOMES WERE CLUSTERED ABOUT  
THE LITTLE CHURCHES OF OLIVET AND BETHANY,  
THIS VOLUME IS  
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.



## PREFACE.

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IF any words in this little volume will help perpetuate the memory of the noble hero whose purity of life has so impressed her as to cause this simple story to be written, the author will be richly repaid for her labor.

Our Southern youth can hardly find a higher human model than is furnished by the life and character of General Thomas J. Jackson.

If the writer accomplishes nothing more by sending out this loving tribute to his memory than to awaken in the hearts of our boys and girls a desire to familiarize themselves with his life, as given us by his devoted wife and also by Dr. Dabney, her task will not be barren of fruit.

M. A. H.



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# STONEY CARDINGTON'S IDEAL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *RESISTING AN ENEMY.*

“STONEY! Stoney Cardington, come here.”

**S** The voice was a shrill one, and the appearance of the woman corresponded with the voice.

Sharp-featured and angular, she looked as if all the honey that had ever come into her life had long ago fermented, leaving only acidity and bitterness behind.

“You, Stoney, if you don't come here this minute, I'll—I'll punish you so that you'll remember it fur many a day. D'ye hear?”

Her tone rose to a sharp falsetto as she thus called.

A lad of some seven or eight years of age, concealed from her view by a clump of low-growing evergreens, stood motionless as her tones reached him. He only straightened himself a little at her first call, and then looked down to see that his toes were squarely against

a line which he had evidently marked for himself in the sand. After that he stood like a statue.

"Me find 'im. He hidin' 'hind 'em bushes." cried a sturdy child, who had been hanging, whimpering, to the woman's skirts. Unlike the majority of children of his age, the fresh sweetness of childhood was not discernible in his face. His expression was a vivid reproduction of the ill-temper so clearly stamped upon the woman's countenance, and marked them as being undoubtedly mother and child.

"Well, go and find him, then. And if he's thar, Tommy, call me," was the woman's reply, given in the shrill falsetto in which she had before spoken.

The child ran nimbly forward, and peering around the evergreens discovered the motionless figure.

"He 'm here, muzzer," he called out, and then ran to the boy and tugged at his coat, saying: "You my hoss. You run 'ed away. Get up now, hossy. Go 'long, ole hoss."

"I'm not a horse. I'm a wall," the boy muttered, not stirring.

"Muzzer, he won't go. He say he not my hoss," screamed the child, in fury.

"We'll see about that," the woman said,

coming around the bushes. She took hold of the culprit's shoulder and shook him angrily as she said: "What do you mean, Stoney Cardington, by gettin' into these sulking spells all at onct? Didn't I tell you to play with Tommy 'till I sent you fur water? What d' you run away from him fur?"

"He slapped me in the face, and kicked me, and I couldn't do anything to please him," the boy answered, still remaining in his tracks.

"Don't you know he's nothin' but a baby? You got to humor him. Come on, now, an' don't you run away from him again."

But Stony did not stir.

The woman again shook him, and again ordered him to follow her; but he remained just where she had found him, with his toes rigidly against the mark in the sand.

"If you're not the stubbornest child that ever was born," the woman wrathfully said. "I'd whip you, but whippin' don't do no good." Then she fixed her eyes upon him and added: "If you don't come with me this minute and play with Tommy, you sha'n't have a bite to eat to-day."

Seeing that the stubborn expression on the lad's face did not change, she continued: "It's nigh on to twelve o'clock. You didn't eat a

big breakfast, an' you'll find yourself about starved before night."

Stoney's lips quivered a little, but he did not move.

The woman turned away with Tommy beside her, who began howling for his "hoss." He darted back and gave Stoney's bare legs a vicious kick with his copper-toed shoes, and then joined her again, saying: "You'll starve 'im, won't you, muzzer, cause he won't be my hoss?"

"I don't see what great sin I ever done to have that dreadful child left on my hands to look after. He is gittin' worse and worse every day, an' he acts ez if he didn't have good sense," she said, in a monotone. "He just stands plumb still when the notion takes him, and I can't make him budge. I've whipped him 'till I was clean tired out, but it don't do no good. I 'most wish he'd die, sometimes, so's to give me a little peace."

Poor woman! As one looked into her face he knew it would take more than Stoney Cardington's death to bring peace to her stormy, passion-swept soul.

Could she have looked underneath his ragged jacket into the lad's heart, some feeling akin to pity might have been awakened within her

breast. Greatly surprised she would have been, at least, as she read his thoughts, which ran somewhat in this wise:

“’Course she’s my en’my, ’cause she just hates me. So’s Tommy. An’ he never moved ’fore his en’mies. The man said so. He allus stood like a wall. An’ I’s to stan’ just that a-way, allus. If I does, I’ll grow up to be a great man like him.”

At this point he winked very hard to keep back two tears which the remembrance of his forfeited dinner and supper brought to his eyes.

“I’s ’most hungry ’nuff to eat chips,” he thought. “I wonder if he ever had to lose his vittles like me ’cause he had to stan’ like a wall ’gainst his en’mies? What makes her an’ Tommy hate me so, I wonder? Is it ’cause my father drinked whiskey till it deaded him, an’ leff’ me fur her to look arter? I wisht she wouldn’t be my en’my, but would love me. I could work for her, then, an’ ’fend her and Tommy, like he did fur his frien’s, ’stead o’ havin’ to stan’ ’gainst her like a wall.”

Such was the trend of Stoney’s thoughts, although they were not so clearly defined to his own consciousness as we have portrayed them. He was conscious, however, that he was ill-

used and despised by his aunt and small cousin, and that, in accordance with his childish ideal of manliness and greatness, he was bound to resist them with all his stubborn will and puny strength. His hunger became so great as the hours passed that he stole noiselessly to the shed where the scraps of corn bread and the bones for the dog were kept, and greedily devoured whatever he found that could appease his appetite. Then he threw himself upon the grass under an apple tree, and soon fell asleep.

## CHAPTER II.

### *IN AN OLD VIRGINIA HOME.*

**B**ERKELEY, the birthplace of President William Henry Harrison, is one of those old colonial homes still dear to the heart of all true Virginians. Although less pretentious than its neighbor, Westover, it is still fragrant with memories which quicken the pulse and kindle the eye of every patriotic youth in the Old Dominion State, as he recalls the stirring scenes from the years of the long ago, when Virginia stood foremost in the ranks of American commonwealths.

In the year 1874 this memorable home, which had then passed from the hands of the Harrison family, was occupied by the Gordons. It would be difficult to find a nobler race than this name typifies.

Dr. Samuel Gordon was not only an able physician, but he was also a man of culture and refinement. More than this, he was the friend and succorer of the poor and distressed, wherever found; and in him the sad-hearted always knew they would find a sympathizer and helper, so far as he was able to render them assistance.

His wife, Mrs. Annie Gordon, was a worthy helpmeet for him ; and their only child, Grace, seemed the embodiment of the graces and virtues of both parents. If she had a fault, her friends had never discovered it. She was about eighteen years of age, and was most fair to look upon. But the beauty of her soul, which gave to her countenance a chaste light which impressed every beholder, made one forgetful of the delicacy of her features, in admiration of the deeper loveliness of her spirit and character.

"Mamma," Grace said to Mrs. Gordon, the morning following the incident recorded in our former chapter, "did you notice Stoney when he came for milk last night? His eyes were all swollen, and I am sure that Mrs. Carson must have been punishing him again. She is really cruel to him, I am afraid."

"That child weighs upon my heart," Mrs. Gordon responded. "I am almost tempted to offer to take him, if Mrs Carson will let him leave her. He could do many useful things about the garden and yard, and we might find him a real comfort. I do not believe that he is really a bad child, as Mrs. Carson insists. He has a noble face, and his eyes are beautiful."

"Yes, and so thoughtful," Grace added. ' I



wish you would take him, mamma. We could teach him to read, and send him to Sabbath-school, and make a little Christian out of him. He is a veritable heathen now."

"Only God can make him a Christian, dear," her mother corrected; "but we could put him in the way to find Christ. There really seems no chance for him where he is."

"Who is he, anyway?" Grace asked. "Mrs. Carson is always flinging up to him that his father was a drunkard, and that he will probably go the same way. It is dreadful to hear her, in her shrill voice, always scolding the poor little fellow. I wonder he is not almost murderous under her constant hectoring. I am afraid I should be."

Mrs. Gordon smiled at the idea of her gentle Grace ever becoming murderous, whatever her surroundings might be; but the girl, interpreting correctly the smile, added, vehemently: "The evil in me has never had a chance to grow, mamma, is why you think the idea absurd. I do believe, if I had been forced to endure the ceaseless nagging which makes Stoney Cardington's life a misery to him, I should have developed into a little fiend. I feel it stirring in me now, sometimes, when that woman is talking, and I almost wish that I might choke

her until she learns how to behave herself. She is cultivating all that is bad in Stoney's nature, and rapidly developing whatever is wrong."

"I am afraid that is true," Mrs. Gordon assented. "I did not know that you were such a close observer. Mrs. Carson's sharp voice is truly an infliction.

"You ask about Stoney's history. His father married far beneath him in social standing, and, while Stoney's mother was a higher type of woman than her sister, she was still far from being an ideal wife. Jack Cardington was as brave a soldier as ever wore a uniform. He fought under General Jackson, and when Stoney was born, a year after the close of the war, he named him after his idolized commander. Your father knew Jack Cardington well, and loved him."

Grace smiled as she said, "Oh, I see, 'Stoney' is only his nickname, then; his real name is Thomas."

"Yes, Thomas Jackson Cardington; but they have always called him 'Stoney.' Jack Cardington took to drinking after his return from the army. People say it was the shrill tongue of his wife that drove him to it."

"If it was anything like Mrs. Carson's, I am not surprised," was Grace's comment.

“He died a miserable drunkard when Stoney was but three years old. One year afterwards his wife suddenly passed away, from an attack of pneumonia. Since then Mrs. Carson has had charge of the boy. No doubt he is a great tax upon her, especially since her husband has left her.”

“But you know, mamma, that you give her a good support, with all the work you place in her way, and with the substantial things you are always adding,” Grace indignantly answered. “There is no excuse for the way she treats the boy. She allows that horrid Tommy of hers to kick and scratch and bite him until I wonder that he does not turn upon him and knock him over; and then, if Stoney resents such treatment, she whips and scolds him until it is enough to make an idiot out of him, or train him into a criminal.”

“I am surprised to hear such strong words from you, darling. I had no idea that Stoney’s wrongs had so deeply impressed you. I think I must see Mrs. Carson to-day, and find out if she will place the boy with us.”

“Offer to pay her something, if she considers his time worth anything to her, and she will be sure to consent,” Grace shrewdly suggested.

As the result of this conversation, Stoney

Cardington soon became a member of the Gordon household.

Tommy Carson whimpered and fretted for his "ole hoss" in vain. His angry passions, after Stoney had gone to his new home, had to vent themselves in kicks and blows upon the cat and dog, varied by occasional slaps given to his mother. Mrs. Carson bore these attacks of the small ruffian with excusing tenderness, and usually defended his conduct by saying: "It is all owing to that dreadful Stoney that you have such a bad temper, dear. He aggravated you until it is no wonder you want to slap and kick everything that comes about you."

If it had not been so sad it would have been amusing to notice how such injudicious words always bore immediate fruit in the added vim with which the young tyrant gave vent to his unrestrained anger by still more viciously attacking either dog or parent, whichever was nearest him.

Truly, some mothers, who are as merciless as hyenas to others, evince such foolish and unwise tenderness toward those of their own brood as fosters all that is savage and evil in their natures. It is little wonder that such parents often live to have their hearts wrung with anguish over the evil conduct of these spoiled and ungoverned sons and daughters.

## CHAPTER III.

### *NEW INFLUENCES.*

**G**RACE GORDON had no difficulty in winning Stoney's heart. To him she seemed truly angelic. He was not by nature a reticent child, although the unkind treatment he had received while with his aunt had tended to develop this trait.

"Do you know what your real name is, Stoney?" she asked him one day after she had given him his usual morning lesson out of his primer.

Mrs. Gordon had presented him with this highly-prized little book the first day of his residence under the Berkeley roof.

"Stone-wall Cardington," was his prompt reply.

"Why are you called by such a strange name as Stone-wall?" she inquired, with lively interest, placing her emphasis exactly as he had done.

"'Cause he, the great man I's named fur, allus stood like a stone wall when his en'mies was a botherin' him," was the boy's reply. His eyes were brilliant with animation.

“Who told you this?” was the girl’s next question.

“A man—a ‘tramp’ Aunt Mandy called him—who come by onct, and stopped fur a drink o’ water. When I told him my name he put his hand onto my head and said just them words I telled you.”

There was a moment’s silence, when, encouraged by the smile upon the young lady’s lips, the boy added: “He said I must allus stan’ as he did, like a wall befo’ my en’mies. An’ I have been a-doin’ it ever sence he told me.”

“Why, Stoney, what do you know about enemies? You are too young to understand what the word means,” Grace rejoined.

His eyes kindled.

“No I ain’t. Aunt Mandy an’ Tommy are my en’mies, ’cause they hates me. An’ the man said a en’my was anybody what hated you, an’ what wanted to hurt you.”

Like a flash Grace saw into the heart of the child beside her. She understood why his aunt had found him stubborn and intractable, and she surmised that he had enthroned within his heart, as his model and ideal of manly greatness, his rude conception of General Jackson. Very tenderly she told him the history of the gallant and noble man whose name

he bore, and he listened to her with eager interest.

“As soon as you learn to read nicely I will give you a book containing the life of this grand man. It shall be for your very own, and as you learn about him, and what a noble boy he was, and what a good man, as well as being a bold and fearless soldier and commander, you will want to grow up to be just like him.”

“I want to be like him now,” was the boy’s quick answer.

Mrs. Gordon had entered the room while Grace was giving General Jackson’s history, and as she listened to Stoney’s earnest words her eyes filled with tears. She laid her hand upon his head as she said: “A noble ideal has saved many a lad from ruin. Be true to yours, Stoney, and you will become a good man.”

The child did not understand her words. He asked: “What is being ideel? Aunt Mandy said I was a idle boy. She meant I was lazy. Do you mean that? Is standin’ still ’fore your en’mies, an’ not workin’ while they bothers you, bein’ ideel?”

Grace laughed a little over his confusion of ideas, and her mother tried to explain to him the meaning of ideal. She used this illustration: “When I want to copy a portrait, I place

the picture right before me. Then I watch it, and study it until all its points are plainly impressed upon my mind, as well as being before my eyes. And then I begin to copy it, painting everything exactly as it is in the picture before me. When I have done you could hardly tell which was the copy, for the pictures are so nearly alike. Here is a picture of Grace which I copied from one which hangs in the drawing-room," she added, taking a portrait from the wall and holding it before Stoney.

He examined it with a pleased smile. It pictured Grace upon her tenth birthday, and it presented a most charming face.

"Now come with me, and see the painting from which I copied it," Mrs. Gordon continued.

She led him into the adjoining room and paused before a fine oil painting. The boy gazed from the face upon the wall into the one held within the frame in Mrs. Gordon's hands.

"They's just alike," he said, in a surprised tone.

"Yes, as nearly as I could make them. We paid a large sum of money to have this one painted which hangs upon the wall. The other one only cost me the labor of painting it," she



responded. "I wanted one to keep close beside me while I sat over my sewing and reading. So I made this copy as exactly as possible like the other. This one on the wall, Stoney, was my ideal. Do you understand now what an ideal is?"

"Yes, ma'am. It's what you painted from. An'—an'," he hesitated.

"And General Stonewall Jackson's life is to be the picture after which you are going to model, or paint, your life, Stoney," she said. "He is your ideal. You will have to be a very noble, manly boy, for he was one of the purest and grandest men that ever lived."

How deeply her words and her illustration sank into the boy's heart and fired his imagination, she did not know. The future years revealed something of the impression made that day upon his plastic character.

"An ideal is much more than your illustration showed," Grace remarked, as her mother dismissed Stoney and seated herself by her daughter's side.

"Yes, but it gave him a tangible idea to grasp, and this is so needful in teaching a child. It is sad to think how low are the ideals which most children form for themselves. They are drawn, I suppose, from persons about them.

To form and cherish high ideals means much for any one, especially for the young."

"Christ has been mine, mamma, ever since I can remember," Grace responded, in a low tone.

Gazing into her lovely face her mother thought: "Yes, and his matchless beauty is being stamped upon you more clearly every day." She said aloud: "He is our highest ideal. Until a soul knows him, however, in spiritual worship and personal love, a lower one must answer."

## CHAPTER IV.

### *A BRAVE ACT.*

PERHAPS there never was a more eager little student than Stoney became. His work in the garden and among the flowers was dispatched as quickly as possible, and then his beloved primer was in his hands.

Grace discovered that he sometimes attempted, in a rude and awkward way, to form the letters of the alphabet in the sand with a stick. This soon induced her to teach him printing while he was still learning the rudiments of spelling.

In less than three months he could read nicely all the lessons in his primer. Then he was given a First Reader, and very proud was he of this new treasure.

In their daily association Grace told him the many interesting incidents of the past which clustered about Berkeley. These seemed to impress him deeply, and he never tired peering into the room where he was told one of the presidents of our great republic had first opened his eyes to the light of earth.

Busy and happy amid the congenial sur-

roundings of his new home, and showing in every word and act his deep affection towards his kind friends, Stoney rapidly developed, both in mind and in body.

Both Grace and her mother had become so fond of the boy, and were so pleased to notice his rapidly expanding mental powers, that they accorded him almost the position in the home of a brother and a son.

Dr. Gordon was also much impressed by the boy's bright bearing and by his evident thirst for knowledge.

"He shall become a physician if he so desires, and I will take pleasure in helping him," the good man said to his wife. "I am pleased to see that he seems to be altogether a Cardington. Barring his unfortunate taste for drink, Jack Cardington was a noble man. I have no doubt but that his unseemly marriage was the cause of this sad habit. In his younger days no one ever suspected Jack of tippling."

"I feel as though I had rescued a valuable jewel from destruction by taking Stoney from his aunt's influence," Mrs. Gordon rejoined. "He responds to love and kind treatment, as well as to firm rules, as no child would unless he possessed a truly noble nature."

About six months after Stoney had become

a resident under the Berkeley roof, Mrs. Gordon's cook fell ill. In their dilemma Grace suggested that Mrs. Carson be asked to fill the gap. After some hesitation, for she did not enjoy having the shrill-voiced woman about her, Mrs. Gordon acquiesced.

She did fairly well in the role of cook, but Tommy was a great annoyance to the entire household. His usual surly temper increased under certain restrictions which his mother, at Mrs. Gordon's suggestion, deemed it best to place upon him.

Both mother and son, one consciously and the other unconsciously, showed feelings of envy towards Stoney. It seemed to hurt them to see how happy and well cared for he was.

Many spiteful things as to his former worthlessness were said by his aunt, and she solemnly warned Grace "to look out, for he would yet prove to be a snake in the grass, ready to bite them in some unsuspected moment."

One day while his mother was busy about the breakfast, Tommy amused himself by playing in a fire which she had built in the back yard, over which she was heating water with which to begin the week's washing.

Stoney was near, tying some vines to a trellis.

“Look out, Tommy, or you’ll get a-fire,” the boy said, warningly.

The small urchin’s only notice of the words was to distort his face into a hideous grimace.

Having finished his work about the trellis, Stoney threw off his jacket preparatory to weeding out a flower bed. A shrill cry from Tommy caused him to turn swiftly towards the fire. He saw, with horror, that the child’s clothing was in flames. For an instant he stood motionless. Another cry from the child caused him to spring forward. His coat was still in his hands. He quickly wrapped this about Tommy’s blazing garments. As he did so the child screamed more loudly than ever, and began to kick Stoney’s legs, crying out: “Lem’me ’lone! lem’me ’lone! I hate you.”

His would-be rescuer, for half a second, backed away. But the sight of the flames forcing themselves through the folds of the jacket which he had wrapped closely about the short figure of the burning child caused him again to spring forward. This time he forcibly threw the screaming boy upon the ground, and rolling him over once or twice as if he had been a log, he proceeded to throw the soft sand, with which the yard was filled, over the prostrate form. So intent was he upon extinguishing the

flames that he did not hear the kitchen door open, nor heed his aunt's shrill cry as she noted the spectacle before her.

A ringing slap across his cheek, followed by a tingling blow upon his ear, was his first intimation of her presence upon the scene.

"Take that, an' that, an' that," she said, in her high falsetto, following each word with a blow. "I'll teach you better than to roll Tommy on the ground, an' then throw dirt onto him. You think 'cause Miss Grace is a plumb fool over you ye can do as you please with Tommy."

The voice of Grace from an upper window came like music to Stoney's tingling ears. Her tone was sharper than he had ever before heard from her, as she said: "For shame, Mrs. Carson! Tommy was on fire, and Stoney has probably saved his life."

Upon examination it was found that Tommy was not seriously injured. Several burns upon his neck and one under his chin showed that his young rescuer had not been any too prompt in staying the course of the flames.

Although he made no complaint, Grace found that Stoney's hands were badly blistered. Very tenderly Mrs. Gordon dressed his burns, and spoke words of praise over his heroic be-

havior. Grace was also quite eloquent in her expressions of pleasure because of his bravery. From her window she had witnessed the whole scene. But fright and horror had kept her speechless until Mrs. Carson had made her furious attack upon Stoney.

His aunt made no apology for her blows, merely stating that from what she knew of him she thought he had knocked Tommy down and was throwing dirt upon him for spite. Nor did she utter one word of thanks for his promptness in saving Tommy from the effects of his naughtiness in playing with fire. Her dislike of Stoney was so intense that she seemed incapable of believing that he had actually saved her child's life at the risk of his own. She seemed to believe, in spite of all that Grace could say, that some sinister motive lay behind his brave act.



## CHAPTER V.

### *AN UNWELCOME SUMMONS.*

**T**IME rolled rapidly on. Stoney had been amid his new surroundings for nearly five years. He had been sent to school much of this period, and had repaid the care given him by becoming one of the most promising scholars in the neighborhood. The life of the illustrious Jackson had long been one of his choicest treasures. Grace laughingly declared that she believed he knew the entire contents of the book by heart.

Life looked very bright to the orphan boy, and the trials of his earlier years while with his aunt seemed as a troubled dream to him.

One day Mrs. Carson came to Berkeley with news that sent a thrill of pain through every member of the household.

“Jim has come back, and he ’lows to go to farmin’,” she said, without preface. “He has brought a good mule home with him, and he is going to get some oxen. He says Stoney has got to come home and help him on the farm.”

“Jim” was the woman’s husband. He had been away from her ever since Tommy’s birth.

He was thought to be an honest, quiet man, who had been driven from his home by his wife's sharp tongue.

Upon what terms he had returned, no one, outside of himself and wife, knew.

"Oh! but we can't give Stoney up," was Mrs. Gordon's quick response.

The boy, who was sitting upon the piazza studying his lesson, raised troubled eyes from his book as his aunt's words reached him.

"We feel that we have a claim upon him, Mrs. Carson, because of all that we have done for him," Mrs. Gordon added. "We are expecting to educate him for a physician, and give him a chance to become a useful and honored man."

Mrs. Carson's eyes snapped. She said, in the shrill voice she always used when strongly moved: "Stoney's mother gave the boy to me. No one can get him away unless I choose to let him go. He's been here long enough. He is plumb spoiled, an' workin' on the farm will make a man outen him. An' Jim says he's bound to have his help to run the place, an' keep things ship-shape."

Grace now spoke. Although deeply resenting the woman's attitude toward the boy, her tone was gentle and persuasive as she said: "I had

quite a nice legacy left me by my uncle last year. It is mine, to do with as I please. I will hire a negro boy for you, one who will be as useful as Stoney could possibly be to your husband. I am sure, Mrs. Carson, if I do this, you will be willing for Stoney to remain with us. Why, I love him as though he were my brother."

Her last words were unfortunate. Mrs. Carson's face, which had begun to look less acid under the influence of the young lady's unexpected and generous offer, darkened. She quickly said: "I know as how you are plumb foolish over him. That is one reason he must come home. He is that spoiled and set-up now, that unless he is brought to his senses he will carry just the high head Jack Cardington always carried, and will likely end in the same way. No, he's got to come back on Saturday. Jim has enough work laid out to keep him and the boy busy all the year, and this will be better for Stoney than gittin' high-up notions o' bein' somebody without workin'."

She would listen to no persuasion, and soon went home, saying to Stoney, whom she espied upon the piazza as she passed out: "Don't you fail to come home on Saturday mornin'. Jim 'lows he'll be ready to give you your first taste o' plowin' then."

It was now Wednesday. Stoney drew a long, sobbing breath, and ran into the orchard. Down upon his face he threw himself, on the soft sod, and bitter tears ran from his eyes like rain. After the first tempest of grief was over he strove to calm himself, but cruel sobs still shook him.

“I will never, never go back to her,” he said, aloud. “She will make me mean and sneaking and wicked. I feel wicked now, and yet Miss Grace said, only last Sunday, she believed I was a Christian. Oh, dear! And I thought so too. And here I am feeling as if I could choke Tommy, and hating, yes, just hating, Aunt Mandy.”

Again his tears flowed, but this time they fell more quietly. He was a manly boy, and not for worlds would he have had any one see those tears. He hastily wiped them away and pressed himself closer to the ground as the sound of footsteps smote upon his ear. But he soon discovered it was only Jake, the negro boy, going past after the cows.

For a long time the stricken boy sat under the boughs of the apple trees, trying to face his future. Once he whispered: “I wonder what General Jackson would have done if such a dreadful thing had come to him.”

This question seemed to bring some light to him, for soon his face brightened and again he said: "She has no claim on me. It will make me bad and wicked to be there. I believe I would rather die, to-night, than go back. And I don't believe he would go if he was in my place."

When he joined the family at the supper-table his face was pale, but no other trace of his hour's agony was visible.

Dr. Gordon said he would see Jim Carson and try and make some arrangement whereby Stoney could remain at Berkeley. But Mrs. Gordon and Grace, while expressing a fervent wish that he might be successful, did not entertain much hope. They recalled the vindictive expression which had marked Mrs. Carson's countenance as she had declared that Stoney should no longer remain in his present home, and their hearts grew heavier with every passing hour.

"If she insists upon taking you away, Stoney, we will still do all that we possibly can for you," Grace said. "You shall have all the books you can read, and I will call by for you to ride with me to Sabbath-school every Sunday."

"And may I take all my clothes that you bought me?" the boy asked, turning to Mrs. Gordon.

“What a question, Stoney. Everything we have gotten for you belongs to you, for you to take with you wherever you go,” was Mrs. Gordon’s reply.

That night Stoney lingered a long time with the family before going to his room. He seemed reluctant to leave them. At last Mrs. Gordon said, as she bent over him and kissed him upon the cheek: “It is time you were in bed, Stoney. Don’t lose all hope. If it is possible we will still keep you with us.”

Grace arose and went over to him and laid her hand softly upon his head as she said: “Don’t forget to tell God about this trouble, Stoney. He will help you, and us, to do what is right.”

For years the touch of her hand seemed to linger, like a benediction, upon his head.

That night, as the midnight moon looked serenely down upon a sleeping world, a little figure, with a large bundle slung across a stick from his shoulder, stole noiselessly out of Berkeley, and took the road leading to Richmond.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *ADRIFT.*

**G**REAT was the consternation in the Gordon household when it was discovered that Stoney was gone.

A note was found fastened to the pin-cushion on his bureau, addressed to Grace. It read:

“DEAR MISS GRACE: I am so sorry to go. It most breaks my heart. I am afraid to stay. I will grow mean and wicked if I live with Aunt Mandy. Some day, when I grow too old and big for her to make me live with her, I will come back. I will ask God to bless you and your mother and father every day. Good-bye.

“THOMAS JACKSON CARDINGTON.”

It was written in the round, clear, school-boy hand which Stoney was so proud to have acquired. In several places it was splashed and blotted, and the family knew that these spots had come from his swiftly falling tears while he laboriously penned this parting token of his love.

“I wish we had some clue as to where he

has gone," Mrs. Gordon said, wiping her eyes. The terror and desperation which filled the boy at the prospect of going back to the slavish life with Tommy and his aunt was very clear to her sympathetic heart, and she had no word of reproach or condemnation for him.

"I am almost glad he has gone," Grace exclaimed. "If I knew he would find kind friends and a good home, I would be wholly glad. It seems to me it would be a dreadful sin for him to again be under Mrs. Carson's influence."

"I will try and trace him," her father said. "If I can find him, I will either force Mrs. Carson to give him up altogether, or arrange with some good people to take him until he is too old for her to order around."

But no trace as to Stoney's whereabouts could be gotten. Once or twice Dr. Gordon thought he had discovered a clue, but each proved a false one.

After some weeks the family gave up the search, hoping that the boy would voluntarily communicate with them, after a time, when his haunting fear of his aunt had partially subsided.

"If he felt certain that we would not tell Mrs. Carson where he is, I am sure he would write to us," Grace said, one day, after she and



mother had been talking over Stoney's departure.

"I am afraid he would think she might discover him if we knew where he is staying," Mrs. Gordon responded. "I wish he could know that we would never allow her to trouble him again. I don't yet see how we could prevent her from taking him, but I feel, now, as though I would protect him from her the same as if he were my own son."

But such words were now idle, for Stoney had as completely disappeared as though the earth had opened and swallowed him.

Mrs. Carson was more shrill than ever in the expression of her anger when she found the boy had eluded her. At first, she seemed to think that the Gordon's had secreted him, to prevent her from getting possession of him.

But as the weeks passed, and it was plainly visible how anxious the family at Berkeley were about him, she dismissed this thought. Her whole spite then centered upon Stoney.

"If ever I lay eyes on him again, I will have Jim whip him within an inch of his life," she said to Grace. "After all the care I gave him when he was too young to do a thing for me or for himself, it does seem hard to be repaid by his running away now, just when we need him."

Her hearer kept a discreet silence, and turned the conversation by asking after Tommy.

"He's a helpin' his paw," Mrs. Carson replied. "He gits along splendid with Jim, most o' the time. Jim, he's a little hard on him, but Tommy knows I won't stand much foolin' where he's concerned, and when Jim gets to bearin' down too heavy, the child runs to me. He likes to be out in the field, and so he minds his paw, generally, frustrate."

"I am glad he does," Grace responded, feeling that such obedience was an epoch in Tommy's life.

"I'm a-fearin' he will work too hard, now Stoney's not here, a-tryin' to help Jim," Mrs. Carson continued. "So I told him, yesterday, if his paw ever asks him to do anything he don't want to do, he is to leave it alone, and come straight to me. I'd like to see anybody make Tommy do what he hadn't a mind to while I am about," and her eyes snapped ominously.

Grace felt a thrill of gratitude sweep through her heart at the thought that Stoney was not at the mercy of this dreadful woman. Almost anything seemed better to her than that.

"I hardly see what Tommy can do to help his father in the field," she said. "He can't be over six or seven years of age."

“He’s just seven. But he’s right smart bigger ’n most boys are at eight,” his mother responded, with pride. “He picks up stones to help clean the new pasture, and does lots o’ things. Yesterday Jim says a big ant stung the child while he was gettin’ the stones. He hollered, and his paw run to see what was the matter. And if you’ll believe it, that boy was that hurt and mad that he threw a rock at Jim. His paw dodged, and when he found out that it was not a snake which had bite him, he was goin’ to flog him for chunckin’ the rock at him. But Tommy didn’t get nary floggin’.”

Mrs. Carson paused to laugh, and Grace found herself wishing the child had not missed the correction which he so sadly needed.

“When Jim tried to hold him he kicked his legs until his shins are all black and blue; and then he bit his hands and tore away from him, and came straight home to me. He knows who’s his best friend. And he was that out-done with his paw a-tryin’ to whip him when he was all smartin’ from the ant-bite, that he most cried himself sick. I had just fried a lot o’ doughnuts, and he ate up most all of ’em before I could get him quieted.”

“Are you not afraid, Mrs. Carson, that Tommy will grow up to be very wicked unless he is

taught to control his temper?" Grace asked. "A child with his disposition, unless it is restrained in childhood, will very likely break your heart when he is older."

Again Mrs. Carson's eyes snapped. She was assisting in the arrangement and decoration of a chamber for an expected guest. Mrs. Gordon was not well, and Grace did not feel free to leave the woman alone. It caused her absolute physical pain to listen to her shrill voice and to her disagreeable words.

"No, I'm not," she replied, with emphasis. "Temper is a good thing. I'd never have made out no ways without it. Jim's got none is why he's never forehanded. I'm glad Tommy has all he's got. He'll grow up to be o' some account, and not one o' the shiftless sort."

Grace was silent. It was a waste of words to offer advice to a woman of Mrs. Carson's type.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *NEW SCENES.*

“**J**ACK is a good boy, and he works well. I wish he would be content to 'bide long with us,” said Mrs. Tolley, Farmer Tolley's buxom and good-natured wife.

Their home was some ten miles out from Richmond.

“He is a-hankerin' after the city, like mos' boys of his age,” was her husband's reply. “I'm sure I don't grudge him the six dollars I've paid him, fur he has 'arned every cent of it. Long's he's sot on leavin', I'm goin' to give him a recommend to Dan Lawson. Mos' likely he'll find need fur him in his big grocery, if I tell him what an oncommon smart boy he is.”

At this moment the subject of his remarks came into the room. One glance into the lad's comely face revealed the fact that it was Stoney Cardington. He had been with Farmer Tolley and his wife ever since leaving Berkeley. They had taken him in, at first, out of sheer pity. He had been reticent about his past, merely stating that he was an orphan, and that he wanted to go to Richmond to find work. He

had decided that he would never again be called Stoney.

“That is not my real name. I will be called Jackson after this. I could not bear to hear people call me Thomas, for it would always make me think of that dreadful Tommy,” he thought, as he trudged along, footsore and weary. He was, at the time he came to this decision, nearing the inviting-looking home among the trees where dwelt the kindly people who proved to be just the friends whom the loving hearts at Berkeley were praying God would raise up for him. He had now been with them for over two months. On the morrow he was going with a neighbor of Farmer Tolley’s into Richmond. Mrs. Tolley had brought out a rusty-looking valise and told him to pack his things in it. She had no use for it these days, she declared, and it would be handier to keep his clothes in than to have them tied up in a bundle. He gratefully accepted it, and now he was ready for his departure. Six silver dollars were safely stowed away in his pocket, paid him by Farmer Tolley for his services on the farm and around the house during his nine weeks’ stay with them.

Early the next morning he drove away in the wagon of Mr. Smith—the neighbor who had

good-naturedly offered to "give him a lift" when he found where he was going. Mr. and Mrs. Tolley stood in their door and gazed after him with many expressions of regret at his departure.

"Jack," as he was ever afterwards called, could not make himself feel willing to become a farmer. Had his ambition soared no higher he would gladly have remained with his kind friends on the farm. The hope of some day becoming a physician impelled him to seek the city. Once there, he felt sure he could find work, and, later on, a chance for an education. As they came in sight of the old line of fortifications around the city, he asked: "What is that red line ahead of us?"

"Them's the breastworks. Many's the gallant fellow who died behind them red lines durin' the war."

And then the man launched into a description of those last days of the Confederacy, so precious and yet so painful to every Southern heart. Jack listened with breathless eagerness. Emotions too deep for utterance swelled in his heart as incident after incident of those stirring and fateful times was recounted.

"Won't you please let me get out a minute?" he asked, as they came up to the line of the

old bulwarks. "You can drive on. I will overtake you before you go far," he added.

Mr. Smith complied with his request. The boy walked thoughtfully up the line of breastworks for some distance. Even the ditches were still there, half filled with water from recent rains.

"I know father did not fight around Richmond, and yet I almost feel as though he was once hidden behind these very fortifications," he murmured.

Then he glanced about to see that no one was observing him. Reassured upon this point, he knelt down and whispered: "O God, I want to be just such a good and brave man as was General Jackson; yes, and General Lee. Won't you help me to grow up just like them? Make me a stone wall all my life when wicked people or wicked thoughts bother me. For Christ's sake. Amen."

It was a simple prayer, but it came from his deepest heart. After it was finished he gave another thoughtful survey of the long red embankments of clay which mutely testified to former scenes of horror and bloodshed which had transpired beneath their shadow. Then he walked briskly on to overtake the wagon. He asked many questions as they entered the



city, being full of boyish curiosity about the strange sights and sounds that greeted him.

“Have you ever seen the statue of General Jackson in the Capitol grounds?” he at length inquired.

“What, Stonewall Jackson? I reckon so. More times than you can count on all the fingers of your right hand,” was the reply. “An’ its sho’ like him. I saw him onct, and I’ll never forget how he looked. That figger in bronze is as like him as one pea is like to another. I was a servin’ right here, an’, of course, I think there never was a man nor a soldier quite up to Lee. But Stonewall Jackson was a mighty fine man, an’ folks do say he was ekal to Napoleon Bonaparte, so fur as bein’ a general went. His men just ’peared to love to be shot at when he was a-leadin’ ’em, an’ he allus led ’em to victory, that’s certain.”

The boy’s eyes glowed with pleasure and pride as he listened to these words.

“And he was a good man as well as a brave one,” he said softly.

“That’s so. I’ve heered his men tell as how he allus prayed before he went into battle. He would sit on his hoss, and raise up his right hand, and never move fur a minnit or two. Then the boys knowed he was a-askin’ God to

go into the fight with him, and give him the victory.”

“And it seems as if God always heard his prayer,” the boy responded. “I heard Dr. Gordon say once that God had to take General Jackson to heaven before the Confederacy could be overthrown.”

“P'r'aps he did. He sho' took him, an' we was sho' beat,” Mr. Smith said. “It 'peared like hard lines then, but I'm a-thinkin' it will work out all right for us in the end.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *NEW FRIENDS.*

**M**R. SMITH dropped Jack, as we shall hereafter call Stoney, in front of a large grocery store on Blank street.

“I’ll call ’round to-night, to see what’s become o’ you,” he said, at parting.

Armed with his note from Farmer Tolley, the lad, with his valise in his hand, presented himself a moment later before the proprietor of the store. The man was standing in the doorway gazing down the street.

Jack timidly inquired for “Mr. Lawson,” and was bluffly informed: “I am your man. But I don’t know that I have any business to transact with you. Whose boy are you?”

For an answer Jack produced his note. Mr. Lawson took it and read it carefully through. Then he looked the lad over and said: “So you’ve been with Tolley, have you? Why didn’t you stay? He said he liked you and would have been glad to keep you.”

Jack gave his reasons for wishing to come to Richmond, and added: “Mr. Tolley thought

you might need a boy about the store. Do you? I will try and please you, sir."

Mr. Lawson was a prosperous, good-natured man, and the farmer's recommendation of Jack had been given in no uncertain terms. He rubbed his chin thoughtfully before he replied.

"I have got a boy, but he does not suit me. His time is not up for about a week yet. If you can knock around and take care of yourself until next Monday, I will try you."

This was satisfactory, for Jack had his six dollars, and he felt sure he could make this supply him with bed and food until the time designated.

The grocery-man told him that he could stay about the store until Mr. Smith called in the evening, and probably the farmer would be able to take him with him to the same cheap boarding-house where he always put up when in the city.

Jack opened the nice snack which Mrs. Tolley had insisted upon preparing for him, and as he ate it he felt himself to be a very fortunate boy.

"God must be watching over me," he mused, "even if I am not as good as I thought I was before Aunt Mandy tried to make me go back to her and Tommy. I wish I did not feel so,

just as if I'd like to be mean to her, and punch Tommy's head, whenever I think about 'em. But I'm glad God still cares for me, and I'll try to be as good as I can be if he'll help me to get an education, and make me grow up to be like General Jackson.

The boy did not know that in thus bargaining with God he was following the example of Jacob at Bethel. Nor had he any idea that his position was not just what it should be. If we could look into hearts as can our heavenly Father, it might be that we should find more persons thus placing an "if" before their promises to God, than we suspect.

There were a number of clerks in the store, and Jack was much impressed by their nice clothing and by their manners. They seemed to be perfectly at home, while he felt so awkward and stiff that he wondered if he should ever be able to acquire their easy bearing amid all these strange surroundings.

Towards sunset a boy of about his own age, jauntily dressed, and with such a jolly face as instantly won Jack's friendly regard, came in.

He helped himself to an apple, and then turned to inspect the young stranger. Jack was sitting upon a box, with his valise beside him.

"I suppose you are the boy that father spoke about when he came home to dinner," he presently said. "What is your name?"

Jack told him, carefully emphasizing "Jackson." He wished people would not shorten it to "Jack."

"My name is Judd Lawson. Is this the first time you've ever been in Richmond?"

They were soon engaged in an animated conversation, and Judd asked him, after awhile to go with him to see his white rabbits.

Mr. Lawson's house was a very nice one indeed, only a square from the store. It had a lovely yard in front, and the trees and flowers were very refreshing to the country boy, who was already tired of brick walls and paved streets.

A handsomely-dressed lady, whom Judd called "mother," came out into the yard while the boys were looking at the rabbits.

Her face was pleasant, and she smiled kindly upon Jack when Judd said: "This is the new boy father is going to have when Nelson's month is up. He doesn't look much like Nelse, does he?"

Again, Mrs. Lawson smiled, as she replied: "I hope his character is as different as his looks."

She stopped a few moments to chat with him, and as she did so she passed her arm lovingly about Judd's shoulders.

It reminded Jack of the many times Mrs. Gordon had thus shown her affection for himself while he was at Berkeley, and the thought of her, and of the other kind friends there, brought a shadow to his face.

"What are you going to do until father is ready for you?" Judd asked as they walked back to the store.

Jack told him that he was hoping Mr. Smith would find him a place to stay. When they reached the store the farmer had already come.

He was much pleased at Jack's success in getting a place with Mr. Lawson, but when asked about taking him with him to his boarding-house, he said: "Why, I am on my way home, now. It's moonlight, and I did not aim to stay all night in the city this time."

Jack's countenance fell. It was now dark, and the lights were burning all over the city. How could he find a suitable boarding-house, with no one to show him the way, or to direct him?

"I'll tell you. Come home with me to-night. Mother won't care. There's a cot in my room that she keeps ready for a cousin of mine who

comes in from the country every once in a while," Judd exclaimed.

Mr. Lawson now came in, and hearing how matters stood, he said: "Yes, turn in with Judd, to-night. To-morrow we will find you a boarding place somewhere near the store."

Much relieved, Jack took his valise, after telling Mr. Smith good-bye, and gratefully accompanied Judd back to the house.



## CHAPTER IX.

### *SETTLED.*

**A**FTER supper was over Judd gave an hour to study, and then he and Jack had a delightful time.

Judd was the only child in the family, and his visitor was fairly bewildered by the many costly and interesting things which the boy owned. One of his treasures was a beautiful pet squirrel. He was gray, with rich markings in black, and Jack thought him the handsomest creature he had ever seen. He was still quite young, and was confined in a lovely and expensive cage.

“When he is older and fully tamed, mother says I can let him run about the house, sometimes,” Judd remarked as they stood looking at the squirrel’s graceful movements.

The lad gave him some nuts which the squirrel at once proceeded to enjoy, much to Jack’s delight.

“I have called him ‘True,’ after the young man who gave him to me. His name was Trueman Mavvitte, and he died soon after he sent ‘True’ to me,” Judd said. “He was

from the North, and 'True' is a real Yankee. But I like him just as well as though he was a born rebel, and Mr. Mavvite was a splendid fellow. Almost as nice as though he had been a Virginian," he added, with a laugh.

The next morning, greatly to Jack's surprise and pleasure, Judd announced to him: "Mother says you may stay with us, if you want to, and share my room."

Seeing that Jack did not fully understand, he added: "Instead of hunting any other place to board, you can board here. That will be fun, for there will be lots of times when I can beg a holiday for you, and we can have jolly times together."

"Judd has taken a great fancy to you," Mrs. Lawson remarked. She had just entered the room and had heard Judd's words. "So, as he wished it, you can consider this your home. We will board you cheaply, and I am sure you will find this arrangement more pleasant than going among strangers again."

Jack felt that his cup of happiness was about full.

"If you choose you can help me among the flowers till Mr. Lawson is ready for you," she added. "You can thus pay your board by working until you begin to earn wages."

This exactly suited the lad. He loved flowers, and he knew a great deal about the care they needed. This had been one of his chief duties while at Berkeley.

The first day he spent entirely among them. The next morning Mrs. Lawson sent him on an errand which took him close to the capitol. She gave him minute directions so that he should not get lost, and he started off in blithe spirits. He had asked her if she was in haste for his return, and she had kindly told him "no," that he could look about the capitol and the grounds for an hour or so, if he wished.

It was a very earnest-faced lad who, an hour later, stood gazing upon the splendid statue of General "Stonewall" Jackson. So rapt was he in his contemplation of it that he was oblivious to everything else.

A young man with a genial face and distinguished bearing, who was passing into the capitol building, paused a moment to notice the lad's absorbed face.

"Looks as though he was one of Carlyle's hero worshippers, does he not?" he laughingly remarked to an elderly man who was by his side. "I seem to know his face, but I can't recall where I have met him."

"He looks as if the making of a hero might

be in him," was the response. "I never saw a nobler countenance. I know most of the lads who come around here, but he is a stranger."

They passed on, and Jack did not know for three long years how nearly he had come to again being in touch with his Berkeley friends.

After that morning, whenever he was in the vicinity of the capitol he always went to take a look at his hero. Such visits seemed to strengthen him, and there came a time when he felt that he needed all the help he could get.

The Lawson home was not a Christian one. At Farmer Tolley's Jack had heard family worship conducted as regularly as when he was at Berkeley, but here no one ever seemed to read the Bible or to offer prayer.

When Sunday came, every one did as he chose. Sometimes Mrs. Lawson attended church, and tried to get Judd to accompany her, but oftener the morning was spent in lounging and in reading. In the afternoon she always went driving, and took her boy with her.

As Jack and Judd became better acquainted, the former found many little blemishes in the petted boy's character which quite startled him. He discovered, for one thing, that he was not always truthful, and that, unknown to his mother, he sometimes smoked cigarettes.

“Why don’t you smoke?” he asked of Jack one day, when the latter had been at work in the store for about a fortnight. Jack smiled as he said: “I’ll tell you to-night when we go to our room.”

He was pleased to find that his duties in the store were over every evening, except Saturday, by six or seven o’clock. He decided to enter a night-school without delay, and begin the course of education he so coveted.

“Now tell me why you are such a dunce as not to smoke,” Judd said, as their chamber-door closed upon them for the night.

Jack went to the bureau drawer where his things were neatly laid away and drew out his cherished volume of the *Life of General Jackson*. He turned to a certain page and read several paragraphs aloud. Then he said: “If young Jackson knew that tobacco would hurt him, I ought to be as wise as he, with his example to help me.”

“Pooh! He was a prig, any way. I’ve read about him. Of course I know he was a brave soldier, and all that,” Judd hastened to add, as he saw the fire in Jack’s eyes. “But he was always afraid to have a good time for fear he would do wrong. I don’t like such fellows. What’s the use of being alive if you can’t have

fun?" and his jolly face gave force to his words.

"Well, I want to be just such a boy and just such a man as General Jackson was," was Jack's response, given with much warmth. "He is my pattern of a noble man."

"Oh! he was well enough to read about, but it does not pay to live like that, now," Judd replied. "For my part, I want to enjoy myself and have a good time every day."

"So do I," Jack responded. "And I can have a good time without smoking your old cigarettes. You know, Judd, your mother would feel dreadfully if she knew you smoked."

"Who cares. She is a woman, and she doesn't know what a boy needs to make him have a jolly time. Doesn't father smoke? And he drinks wine, and ale, and beer, and he gives it to me, sometimes, though mother thinks it terrible for a boy to touch beer," was Judd's answer.

## CHAPTER X.

### *A BIRTHDAY FEAST.*

JACK'S duties were various. He had to open the store in the morning, make the fires, and aid in anything he was called upon to do.

One of his chief pleasures was to help deliver groceries. Sam, the negro driver, taught him to be a careful driver. Being fond of horses, and already knowing something about them, he soon became quite expert in threading his way among the crowd of vehicles which often thronged the streets through which they passed on their daily rounds. Sam complimented him upon his efficiency in handling the reins, and Jack felt very proud of his accomplishment.

Finding that he had become so skilful in this direction, Mrs. Lawson often asked him to drive her carriage for her when she went calling.

He had entered a good night-school, so that he now had little leisure to give to Judd. This piqued the boy, and he scoffed at Jack's persistency in attending to his studies.

"After working all day, what in the world do

you want to work at night for?" he querulously asked. He missed him in his evening games of checkers and backgammon, in which Jack had joined him until he began his school duties. Although Mrs. Lawson good-naturedly offered to fill Jack's place, Judd was not satisfied.

"I would not go to school another day," he declared, "if father and mother did not make me. I hate books. I'd rather go in Sam's place and deliver groceries than study. When I'm a little older I'm going to stop, and go to work in the store. I know almost as much now as Jenkins or Brady, and they know enough to make good clerks."

Such words seemed to trouble Mrs. Lawson, but Judd was not very careful about giving her pain.

"I wish, Judd, that you were more like Jack," she responded on this occasion. "If you were as diligent about your studies as he is, how I would rejoice! He will grow up into a smart, capable man, while you, unless you attend to your books better, will be a know-nothing."

"I'll know enough to have a good time, any way," he replied, laughing. Judd's ill-humor never lasted long.

Mrs. Lawson discovered that Jack's birthday came only two days later than Judd's. He had



been in his new home only four months when his thirteenth birthday rolled around.

“I always give Judd a birthday dinner, to which several of his intimate friends are invited,” Mrs. Lawson said to Jack, about a week before this period arrived. “As you are so nearly of an age, and as he is so fond of you, I shall ask Mr. Lawson to give you a holiday and permit you to share Judd’s happy day.”

She did so, and the good-natured groceryman, who was becoming quite attached to Jack, for he did his duties promptly and well, was perfectly willing to grant her desire.

The house was lavishly decorated with flowers, and the dinner was a most elegant affair. There were four invited guests, and Judd seemed about as happy as a boy could well be.

A tiny wineglass was placed beside each plate. When the servant asked Jack if he would take wine, he was about to refuse; but Mrs. Lawson, noticing this, said: “I only allow Judd to drink wine twice a year—once on his birthday, and again at Christmas. This is very mild, and it cannot possibly harm you. Do take a glass, Jack, in which to drink Judd’s health.”

Thus urged, and seeing that every one else at the table already had the sparkling, amber

beverage in his glass, he allowed his own to be filled. Later, when Judd's health was proposed, he did as he saw the others do, sipped about half of his wine. The taste was delightful, and the glass held such a small quantity that it really seemed true that it could not possibly harm him. It was his first taste of any intoxicant, and, had he dreamed of the curse his heredity had entailed upon him, he would not have dared touch it.

He thought that he had never felt quite so jolly in his life as he did during the remainder of that feast. A gentle glow seemed to pervade his entire being, and he found himself chatting with the boy next to him with an ease and pleasure that surprised him.

He drank the last drop of wine from his glass, and wished that it had held just a little more. It did not taste at all as he had expected, but it was so sweet and mild that it was hard to believe that a larger quantity of it could harm him.

"Mother, give us just half-a-glass more of the wine," Judd pleaded; and his father seconded his request by remarking: "It is the weakest stuff that I ever tasted. A gallon of it couldn't harm the boys. Give them each a second helping."

So the tiny glasses were all refilled, and the merry lads, as they nibbled their cake and nuts, emptied them, not one of them dreaming of the serpent that lay coiled at the bottom.

After the dinner was over, games were introduced, and such a happy, lively time Jack had never before experienced.

Judd's presents from his parents and friends were very handsome indeed; and Jack thought that he ought to be the most contented boy in the world, instead of being, as he so often was, peevish and fault-finding.

Late at night Jack was surprised to find that his head was aching. This was something new, but he attributed it to the quantity of rich food of which he had so freely partaken at dinner.

The next morning Judd was cross and "all out of sorts," as he expressed it; and Jack felt great sympathy for him. He experienced much the same feeling, although his habitual self-control enabled him to hide it from others.

"It is a good thing that birthday dinners do not come oftener than once a year," Mrs. Lawson remarked. "I have noticed that Judd is always peevish after his is over. The nuts and candy and cake and raisins probably give him a touch of indigestion. I never limit him in his eating on his birthday, and he certainly indulges more fully than is well for his health."

## CHAPTER XI.

### *A CRITICAL PERIOD.*

ONE night about a week after the birthday dinner, Judd asked Jack to hurry home from his school, for he wanted him to go around to see Hugh Brandon with him.

Hugh was one of the guests at the dinner, and Jack had liked him very much.

So he hastened back as early as possible, and blithely accompanied Judd around the corner where the Brandons lived.

They found Hugh and his older brother, Charley, and two sisters, engaged over a game of cards.

"Mamma is out, and she said we might sit up with Hugh and Charley until she got back," Bertha, the younger girl, explained to Judd as a reason why she was up until past nine o'clock. Her usual hour for retiring was eight.

"We have just finished one game, and you and Jack must take a hand with us in this one," Hugh said, after the lads had been given seats around the table. He began shuffling the cards.

"All right," was Judd's answer.

“But won’t it keep us out too long?” Jack suggested. “Your mother said we must not stay late.”

“Oh! she won’t bother about us. She knows I’m all right when I’m over here,” Judd replied.

Jack looked at the cards and hesitated. Grace Gordon had often told him while he was at Berkeley that he must never touch gambling cards.

“Surely these cannot be that kind, or Mrs. Brandon would not allow her children to play,” he thought, gravely regarding the cards as they were being distributed. He ventured to say to Judd in a low tone: “I have never played cards. These are not gambling cards, are they?”

“There’s no more harm in playing these cards in this game than in playing checkers,” Hugh answered, rather scornfully.

“No, this game is all right,” Charley added, noticing Jack’s perplexed face.

Charley was almost sixteen years of age, and he considered himself almost a man. “Mother likes to have us play these harmless games, for she says they will amuse us and keep us from wanting to run with bad boys,” he added.

Thus assured, Jack was soon absorbed in the

game. The elder girl, Lois, volunteered to teach him how to play, as she had given her place at the table to Judd. Bertha also had ceased taking part after the boys entered.

It was half-past ten o'clock before Jack and Judd bade the Brandons good-night. They found Mrs. Lawson quite annoyed over their long absence, but when she found that they had been with the Brandons all the time she seemed satisfied.

Several times during the next few months Jack found time to go with Judd over to see these pleasant young neighbors, and they always had a game of cards before they left.

One day at dinner, in speaking of the Brandons, Mrs. Lawson said: "They are a nice family of children. There is but one objectionable thing in their habits, and they are not to blame about this. They play cards. It was Mrs. Brandon herself who taught them."

Jack looked into her face in surprise. Could it be possible that she alluded to the games he and Judd so much enjoyed when they visited the Brandons?

She noticed his questioning glance and added: "I suppose they never play cards when you are there, for Judd promised me long ago that he would not join them. They are too

polite to indulge in a game in which their guests could not join."

"What is wrong about the cards?" Jack inquired. It took some courage to ask this question, for Judd was opposite him at the table, and he had felt a kick upon his ankle which told him that the lad wanted him to keep quiet.

"Oh! they are gambling cards, and I am afraid for Judd to handle them. I have a horror of them. I had a brother once who gambled. He was shot and killed in a gambling hall. I never wish Judd to touch one."

Jack's heart was filled with dismay at her words. He stole a glance across the table at Judd. The lad's face was flushed, but he assumed a careless air as he said: "Can't I turn True out of his cage for a while, mother? He is so tame, now, that I am sure he would go back all right."

Thus diverted, Mrs. Lawson said no more about the cards.

"And so I've been playing with gambling cards after all," Jack mused. "What would Miss Grace think of me if she knew? Well, I need not ever play again. And, yet, how I did enjoy the games. What a pity there is harm in them."

Then his thoughts turned to Judd. Again

he was forced to admit that he was not a good boy. He was sincerely attached to him, and he hated to think him a really bad one.

“He does not mean to be bad,” Jack assured himself. “He thinks his mother does not know what is best for boys, that is all. I wonder how Mr. Lawson feels about cards?”

It was not long after that before he had an opportunity of seeing that Judd was worse than he had been willing to believe.

Sometimes Jack remonstrated with him for the way he constantly deceived his mother, but he always defended his conduct by saying: “Father does not care. He knows what boys are, and what they need to make them have a good time.” Then he added: “Mother would make a girl out of me if she could. She is a jolly good mother, but she doesn't understand a boy.”



## CHAPTER XII.

### *A NARROW ESCAPE.*

JACK was so handy wherever placed that both Mr. Lawson and his wife began to look upon him as almost indispensable to their comfort. Time passed rapidly and brought him near his fourteenth birthday. He progressed rapidly in his studies, and was far ahead of Judd, although the latter had never done anything in all his life but attend school.

Mrs. Lawson frequently, these days, requested her husband to permit the boy to be her driver as she rode out for an airing or to call upon her friends. It gave Jack great pleasure thus to be trusted with the management of her horse, for the animal was a mettlesome creature, and required gentle, firm, and watchful care.

One day Mrs. Lawson asked him to drive her to Hollywood. Jack had only seen the cemetery from the outside, and he was much pleased to get a nearer view of it. The afternoon was lovely, and with a basket of flowers with which to decorate the grave of a friend who had recently passed away, Mrs. Lawson

entered her carriage. She bade Jack drive rapidly, as she wished to be at home at a certain hour. The horse needed no urging, and the distance between Mr. Lawson's residence and the cemetery, which was over two miles, was soon passed. The name of the horse was "Lightfoot," given her because of her speed and the ease with which she travelled. Jack had accustomed her to his voice, and a sincere affection seemed to exist between him and the intelligent creature. He saw that she was especially nervous this afternoon, probably caused by the freshness of the breeze, which was blowing cool and crisp from the west. He frequently spoke to her in quiet and soothing tones, but she still started at every unusual sound, and was inclined to travel more rapidly than her driver deemed exactly prudent.

Mrs. Lawson, observing her manifestations of excessive spirit, urged Jack to be watchful. But the lad needed no admonition, for he knew that the safety of the one who had chosen him to be her driver depended upon his care and skill in managing "Lightfoot." He had anticipated much pleasure from the drive to and through the lovely cemetery, but the attention he was forced to give to the horse excluded every thought of observing his surroundings.

Just as they were passing through the spacious gateway which led to the city of the dead, a dog suddenly sprang towards them from the roadside, barking noisily. This startled "Lightfoot," and she sprang forward. The road was now descending a hill. Jack drew the reins firmly to curb her speed before she got beyond his control. As he did so the right rein snapped. This left him powerless to check her. He dared not pull the remaining rein, for this would draw her to one side, and might easily cause the carriage to upset. Feeling no restraint upon her, "Lightfoot's" pace increased to a run. Jack had only a moment in which to decide what course to take. Mrs. Lawson, seeing their danger, gave a cry and hid her face in her hands. The lad discovered, to his horror, that the top of the hill which they must ascend in another moment was lined with carriages. Evidently there was a funeral, and the carriages were drawn up near the grave. If he could manage to spring upon "Lightfoot's" back he felt sure he could check her. He had ridden her under the saddle several times, and had found her especially pliant to the voice of her rider. But how was he to reach her back in time to save her from dashing in among the line of carriages?

“If I sit still it is almost certain death to me as well as to Mrs. Lawson. I might as well die in one way as another, and there is a chance of my stopping ‘Lightfoot’ if I can reach her back.”

These thoughts flashed through his brain with the rapidity of lightning. It had only been a moment since the rein snapped and the terrible danger confronted them. By the time the frightened animal had reached the bottom of the hill, after passing through the cemetery gate, Jack was standing upon the swingle-tree of the carriage. For an instant his head grew dizzy. Then he felt a wave of confidence and courage sweep over him. The next moment his hand was upon “Lightfoot’s” back, and his voice was calling her by name. As he stepped forward upon the shaft, only sustained by his hand upon the running horse, it seemed he must be dashed under her feet. He felt he was going—gone. But instead, he gave a leap, and in some way, he never knew how, he reached her back. He clung to her until he was firmly poised, and then he swiftly seized the reins. He leaned forward to grasp them as close to her mouth as possible. He kept repeating her name and speaking to her in a quiet and soothing tone. Before the top of

the hill was reached he had her under control, and was able to turn her safely aside from the line of carriages into an open avenue. Several gentlemen came hurriedly up, and one of them grasped "Lightfoot" by the bits. She was brought to a standstill, trembling with nervousness and fright.

"That was a brave thing that you did," one of the men said, while another assisted Mrs. Lawson to the ground, and remarked to Jack: "Had any one told me that any boy, except a circus-bred one, could have gotten from a carriage on to the back of a running horse, as I saw you do, I would have said 'the thing is impossible.' How it was that you were not dashed to death upon the stones, I cannot see."

Many other expressions of surprise, and words of praise for his bravery, greeted him. Mrs. Lawson's low, "I owe my life to your brave act, Jack," meant more to him than all the rest.

A few lines in the morning paper, telling of the incident in no lukewarm spirit, stirred the boy's heart with keen pleasure.

"I am so glad to know that I am not a coward," he reflected. "I hoped I was not, but this is the first time I have ever been tested."

He had forgotten how dauntlessly he had rescued Tommy from a horrible death by fire while he was yet but a wee laddie. That had seemed to him such a simple thing to do, and, in fact, the only thing left for him to do, that he had never considered it as exhibiting any special courage.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *NOT ANCHORED.*

THERE was some danger at this period of Jack's head being a little turned. So much was said about his courage that he began to feel that he was quite a hero.

Judd was loud in his words of praise, and often declared that he was sure he would never have thought of risking his life as Jack had done.

The Brandons were also outspoken in their appreciation of the courage he had exhibited, and soon invited him and Judd over to a birthday dinner given to Hugh. Wine was upon the table, and Jack drank it without protest. Indeed, he had used it upon several occasions since that birthday dinner of Judd's, which had first introduced him to its subtle and enticing flavor.

Christmas had seen it again upon the Lawson table, and twice since upon festive occasions the tiny glasses had appeared beside the plates. Mr. Lawson had called for them, and his wife had acquiesced, her faint scruples

overcome by her husband's assurance that "such mild stuff couldn't hurt a baby."

Insensibly Jack had begun to feel a keen thrill of pleasure whenever the dainty glasses appeared. Had any one spoken of it to him he would have said that it was largely because they were so pretty, and so added to the beauty of the lavishly-spread board.

He had never touched cards since he had discovered them to be those against which Grace Gordon had warned him. In vain Judd and the Brandon boys laughed at him, and urged him to join them in the games he had found so fascinating before he learned of their danger. He was proof against their blandishments, and he felt, for a time, that he was really proving himself to be a veritable stone wall of firmness. But he gradually found that he was losing some of his repugnance towards many things he had esteemed as evil. The use of tobacco no longer seemed to him an inexcusable habit. Every clerk in the store used it in some form, and Mr. Lawson was rarely seen without his cigar. Judd continued to smoke cigarettes upon the sly, and sometimes he even ventured upon a cigar.

To say that Jack, during these days, never felt tempted to indulge in this prevalent habit



would not be true. He had never yielded, but the fact that he felt so strongly inclined to indulge himself shocked him.

One day when he was in Mr. Lawson's private office the groceryman opened a bottle of ale. The lad saw the foaming liquid poured into a glass and then tossed off by his employer, with shining eyes. How good it did smell!

Turning towards him and pouring out about the third of a glass, Mr. Lawson said: "Try it, Jack. Your head is steady, and it won't harm you. I wouldn't trust Judd very often, but you are different."

With thanks the boy took it and drained every drop. After that it was no unusual thing for this to occur when Jack visited the office. Indeed, he soon got to looking forward with keen pleasure to being summoned there, for he knew the ale would probably be awaiting him. He no longer read in his Bible. In truth, he had almost forgotten that he owned one. His life of General Jackson still, at times, delighted him, and he often visited the capitol expressly to gaze upon the face of his hero.

One evening after he had finished his studies, he was looking in his bureau drawer for something. His hand struck against his Bible. He took it out and looked at it. Memories of

Berkeley and of the dear friends there thronged over him. Judd was in his bed and asleep. Jack sat down and opened the sacred book at random. Was it an accident that he turned to the twenty-third chapter of Proverbs? His eye first rested upon the twenty-ninth verse: "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

He read the verses over slowly and thoughtfully. "Why, it says wine. I knew whiskey was dreadful, but wine seems so harmless."

Again he read the solemn words. His heart sank. Must he give up ever again tasting wine? How he wished he could go to Grace and pour out his heart to her, or to Mrs. Gordon. He felt confused and troubled. There was no one to whom he could go for help or advice. He sat a long time in thought. At last he decided that it would be safer, in view of the words he had just read, not to drink even the mild wine which Mrs. Lawson sometimes placed upon her

table. He had not long to wait before his determination to abstain was tested. A guest from a distance was to dine with the family, and again the dainty glasses were upon the table. This time Mr. Lawson insisted upon having them placed there, for he wished thus to honor his expected guest. When the servant reached for Jack's glass to fill it, he shook his head. He was sitting next to Mr. Lawson, who noticed his refusal. With a jolly laugh the groceryman lifted the glass and held it for the sparkling liquid to fill it as he said: "This wine is some of my choosing, Jack. You must try it and see if it is not finer than the weak stuff Mrs. Lawson has been putting us off with."

So he drank it, almost glad that he had such a good excuse with which to quiet his conscience.

It was, indeed, fine wine, being nothing less than the best Burgundy.

Jack's head felt a little queer after he had swallowed it, but this soon passed. He thought he had never before enjoyed one of Mrs. Lawson's elegant dinners quite so much as he did that one. But he experienced a feeling of self-contempt when at last he was free to examine his own heart. "I don't seem to be much of a stone wall these days," he said to himself. "I wonder what is the trouble?"

## CHAPTER XIV.

### *AN UNSTABLE WALL.*

SOME days after the dinner and the wine, Jack sought the spot where he seemed to derive more help than from any other source. It was a very sad pair of eyes that were lifted to General Jackson's unresponsive ones.

"There is our young hero-worshipper again," said the distinguished-looking young man who had noticed Jack the first day the lad had visited the capitol, almost three years previously. The same elderly gentleman who had been by his side on that occasion was again with him.

"I wonder who he is, anyway," the young man continued. "I have seen him so often in that very spot, and in that identical position, that I believe I could paint him. I was talking to Grace about him the other day, and she is quite anxious to meet him. She thinks that he may be a genius, one who has an idea of becoming a sculptor. He really looks to me as though he worships that statue."

"His fondness for studying it is certainly extraordinary," the elder man replied. "If he did not seem so absorbed, I should feel tempted to speak to him."

They lingered a moment longer, and then went on their way.

Jack was wholly unconscious that any one had observed him; but he longed to be away from all eyes, and wished that he was free to go where he chose. But he must return to the store; so he turned away, not having received the help and strength for which he longed.

As the days passed he became depressed in spirits. This was so unusual that his altered manner soon attracted the notice of the family as well as of the clerks in the store.

He could give no reason for this change. He was scarcely conscious himself why he felt so differently. The truth was, he was now undergoing a series of peculiarly fierce temptations. His appetite was clamoring for many things which his aroused conscience told him were wrong. The odor of Mr. Lawson's cigars made him long inexpressibly to try one.

It seemed, during this season, that temptations were continually placed before him. Even Mrs. Lawson unwittingly added to his troubles. He went to the house one afternoon upon an errand. He found the usually robust lady reclining upon a couch. She told him that she felt strangely weak and faint, and asked him to go to a certain closet and bring her a bottle of

wine. He did so, and, following her directions, opened it and poured some of the liquid into a glass. She drank it and said: "Now I shall feel better. Take a little, Jack. It is the mild kind which I always keep on hand. You look pale. A glass of this will help you."

He refused, although the odor tempted him strongly to indulge. Those words from his Bible seemed to stare him in the face. He almost ran out of the house and back to the store. He did not think to pray, as he had been wont to do in former days, while the influence of the godly Gordon family was still about him.

As he entered the store, and while he was feeling himself to be quite a victor, in that he had not touched the wine, a summons came for him from the office. Mr. Lawson wanted to send him upon an errand. He attended to it with unusual celerity, and was back to report to his employer long before the latter expected him.

"You are just in time, Jack, to help me out with this ale," he said, in his jolly way.

"No, thank you, sir; I don't wish any to-day," the boy replied.

"Nonsense! You haven't been looking well of late. A taste of this will help you amazingly."

He reached the glass, half-full of the foaming beverage, towards him as he spoke. Before Jack could again refuse, his employer added: "You need not feel afraid of it, Jack. This is not intoxicating. You would have to drink a gallon of it before you could feel any bad effects. Even temperance people use ale when they need a tonic. Come! It will help bring back the color to your face. You begin to look quite peaked."

So, without further protest, Jack drank it, and soon felt a pleasant glow and a sense of new strength throughout his system.

"I suppose it really cannot be harmful, or it wouldn't make me feel so much better," he thought; "and it is only against wine and strong drink that the Bible warns us."

But after the stimulating effects had passed away, he began to feel that probably he had done wrong in breaking his resolution never again to touch it. Had there been any one to warn him, and to show him that the fondness for all intoxicants, which was so strong within him, was an inherited taste, and that any indulgence became far more dangerous for him than for one not possessing this bias, his conflict would probably have been over. He possessed a really strong character, but he was

confused, and what he saw those about him constantly doing, without any apparent injury, seemed to him could not be so wrong as his purer instincts declared it to be.

Mrs. Gordon and Grace had decided, while he was with them, that it was better, for a time at least, never to allude to his father's weakness in his presence. His aunt had so constantly thrown this into his face that these loving hearts felt that it would be wiser only to speak of the many virtues which had made of Jack Cardington, at one period of his life, a most noble and lovable man. Had they known that the orphan was to be so soon separated from them, they might have uttered words of warning which would now have borne good fruit.

So Jack drifted along, sometimes feeling that he was true to his early ideal, but oftener troubled in a vague way with the thought that the stone wall which he had so longed to become, was rather an unstable structure as exemplified in his life.

His confusion as to what was really right and what was really wrong, was deepened by the fact that both Mr. and Mrs. Lawson more and more held him up to Judd as being almost a perfect character, and one that they desired him to imitate. This naturally fostered his self-



love and flattered his pride, and there were seasons when he held his head with the air of a conquering hero. At such times he would have warmly resented any hint that he was betraying weaknesses which marked him for defeat, unless a change was soon wrought in him.

## CHAPTER XV.

### *GATHERING CLOUDS.*

JACK'S fifteenth birthday passed, and the boy began to feel the thrill of coming manhood permeate his being. He was now employed as a trusted clerk in Mr. Lawson's store. He still continued his studies in the night-school, and his diligence had won for him many words of praise from his teachers. He had confided to Mrs. Lawson and to Judd his hope of some day becoming a physician. The former had encouraged him in this desire.

"It will give you a position in society to become a doctor, which Judd can never reach if he is a groceryman, like his father," she shrewdly remarked.

Jack and Judd had drifted far apart during the past months. The latter had become weary of having the boy, who had come to them almost as a beggar, held up to him as a model. A feeling almost of dislike, of late, had taken possession of him, and he was often cross and spiteful toward Jack. He had formed a careless habit of leaving his things thrown about,

just as he laid them down when he entered his room. Various small articles which he valued, had, from time to time, been lost. Once it was a pair of nice gloves. Again, a white silk handkerchief had disappeared, and at another time it was a lovely necktie which was gone.

Mrs. Lawson urged him to put his things neatly away in his dressing-case, as he saw Jack do, saying that the articles he had missed would be found somewhere, tossed aside just as he had left them.

“More likely Jack’s got ’em. He is fixing up for a dandy doctor, and he’ll need all the fancy things he can muster,” Judd retorted. He was half in fun and half in earnest.

“For shame, Judd! You know you don’t mean that. It is wrong, though, to say such things even in jest,” his mother reprovingly answered.

Of course Jack was not present.

“Well, he’s none too good to take ’em. He’s not half the saint you and father make out. I lost a two dollar bill last week, and the very next day he paid two-dollars for a pair of shoes, and he had not received anything on his wages for two weeks. I believe he took the bill out of my pocket after I was asleep. He’s always up, mooning around, after I am in bed.”

Judd's tone was spiteful, and his usually jolly face was red with ill-feeling.

"My dear, you shock me," was Mrs. Lawson's reply. "Do you know that would be stealing? Jack would never be guilty of that, and especially not from you, who have been like a brother to him."

Judd tossed his head as he said: "Oh! of course he would not call it stealing. He'd say he had only borrowed it."

The very next week Judd lost five dollars. This was quite serious, and his father reprimanded him sharply for his carelessness.

"I laid that five-dollar bill on the bureau when I went into my room, meaning to put it away when I turned up the light. I forgot about it, and when I looked in the morning it was gone. It could not have walked away," he said, sullenly, and looked straight at Jack.

The latter did not seem to notice the glance, and soon left the room.

Then Judd blurted out his suspicions: "Jack, I just know, has got that money. You know, father, he does not get enough to have any laid away. He pays high for his schooling, and I have often heard him planning how to save something out of his wages so as to get

some little thing he wanted. Yet I saw him the other day looking over his money when he didn't know I was near, and he had quite a roll of it. He's not quite as perfect as you think he is, and he'll fleece you yet, unless you watch him."

Mr. Lawson reproved Judd for his words, yet he went to the store with a very sober face. He might not have noticed his boy's suggestion, except to sharply reprove him, had it not been for an annoying little discrepancy which had occurred in a collection Jack had made the previous day.

The bill called for a certain amount, but Jack had brought back just two dollars less than was due.

Mr. Lawson had accidentally met the man who had paid the money, only a few hours afterwards. The bill had been due for months, and the man said: "I'm glad to be square with you once more, Lawson. Sorry I was so long in paying you."

"Yes, it is all settled now but two dollars," the groceryman replied.

"But I paid every cent I owed you yesterday," the man said, in a surprised tone. "And your clerk receipted the bill," he added. "Better keep an eye on your clerks, Lawson. It's a temptation to place money in their hands

as you do. Excuse me, but your way is too free and easy for these times. You are honest yourself, and you expect every one else to be."

"No, I don't. I only trust Jack. He is as honest as I am. He will be able to explain, no doubt," was Mr. Lawson's reply.

But Jack had no satisfactory explanation to give.

"I receipted the bill, as he says, but I counted over the money very hurriedly. I must have counted it wrong, and Mr. Neely must have made a mistake in the amount he gave me. I am very sorry, sir. I will be more careful another time."

Mr. Lawson had accepted this as the true explanation of the deficit, until Judd's words of suspicion had been uttered. Then an uneasy feeling which he found it difficult to banish entered his breast.

A few days later he overheard Jenkins, one of his clerks who had been with him for a number of years, say to Jack: "Why don't you get one of those stunning ties they have at Kenney's? They are all the style. The one you sport is a back number."

Jack replied: "I wanted one as soon as I saw yours. But I can't spare the money."

“Pooh! You get almost as much, now, as I do, and I manage to keep in style,” Jenkins rejoined.

For a moment Jack made no response. Then he said: “But my school bills are pretty steep, and my books cost like anything. I have more things to plan for, out of my wages, than to dress in style.”

Mr. Lawson looked very solemn as he heard these words.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *HOMELESS.*

JUST two months later Judd rushed into his father's room one morning, saying: "Father, those two five-dollar bills you gave me for my shoes and tennis racquet are gone. I tied them in my handkerchief, for I could not find my purse, and laid it on my bed last night, and now I cannot find it anywhere. I meant to have put it under my pillow when I went to bed, but forgot it."

His father and mother both accompanied him to his room, the latter saying: "It has probably slipped behind the bed. Why didn't you put it in the drawer, as I have so often told you to do?"

Jack had been gone from the house for over an hour. It was still one of his duties to open the store every morning.

A diligent search failed to reveal the handkerchief or its contents.

"Father, Jack has got it. I know he has," Judd exclaimed, at last.

"It does look like it," Mr. Lawson replied "No one else has been in the room."



Again they searched in every corner and possible hiding place, but without finding the object sought. Mr. Lawson's face grew very stern.

"This is too much," he exclaimed. "After all that I have done for that boy, to have him turn out a thief."

Mrs. Lawson indignantly defended her favorite, but neither Judd nor his father would listen.

"I bet, father, he's got it put away in that bottom drawer. He feels sure no one will suspect him, for he knows how perfect you and mother have always considered him, and he wouldn't think of hiding it."

"I see his plan," Mr. Lawson suddenly exclaimed. "Last week he asked me for a three days' holiday. He said he had some friends up in the country he used to live with before he went to Tolley's, and he wanted to go and see them. I promised to let him off to-morrow. He has taken the money to help him get some presents for his friends, no doubt, and to make them believe he is a big fellow. He is feeling his oats too much, anyway, of late."

Judd chuckled as he listened, and said: "He seems to think he owns the store and everything about him. I'm going to look for the money."

Without waiting for any answer, he drew out

the lower drawer of Jack's dressing-case. At first he did not find what he expected. But after a moment's search he triumphantly drew out from under various articles piled over it, a tiny barrel, or toy keg, such as candy is sometimes sold in.

"He keeps his money in this," he said, proceeding to open it. He drew out a piece of carefully-folded paper. In this, as he opened it, lay revealed four five-dollar notes.

"That settles it," Mr. Lawson exclaimed, with his face growing several shades redder than usual. "He could not have got that money honestly. His school bills have been high, and his books have cost a good deal. He does not get as much as Jenkins, and Jim can hardly make ends meet, pinch as he will."

In vain Mrs. Lawson pleaded for the absent boy. Her husband only relented enough when reminded that she owed her life to his courage, to promise her that he would take no steps against him, nor would he expose his dishonesty to the clerks. This last was wrung from him by his wife's tearful portrayal of the boy's hopeless and helpless condition if it got out that he was a thief.

"But he must leave my premises at once," he sternly said, much to Judd's satisfaction.

So, before two hours were over, Jack Cardington, feeling himself disgraced as well as homeless and friendless, was lying upon his face in a little room in a third-class boarding-house. He was sobbing as only a strong-natured boy can sob when he feels that all his earthly hopes are suddenly blighted.

“Don’t lose courage,” Mrs. Lawson had whispered to him as he went away. “I don’t believe you took the money any more than I believe I took it myself. But I can’t prove this, and until I can, you will have to go. But I will find where it went, before long, and you will come back to us again.”

These words had brought a little balm to his wounded and outraged heart, but his wrong was too deep for him to be easily comforted.

Mr. Lawson had refused to listen to any explanation as to how he had become possessed of the twenty dollars which had seemed to seal his guilt.

“To think,” the boy sobbed, “after I have done without things I needed so dreadfully all this time, just to save a little, each month, to lay away to help me begin my studies to be a doctor, that I must be called a thief. If I was one, I couldn’t have stolen from them after they have been so kind to me.” He almost felt that

his heart must break under his weight of suffering.

It was hard for him to believe that the past few hours were not a horrible dream. And to think the blow had come just as he was on the eve of realizing his long-cherished plan of visiting Berkeley.

As often as the longing had seized him to see the dear friends of his earlier boyhood, he had comforted himself by saying: "When I am fifteen years old I will go back and visit them. I will be too old for Aunt Mandy to order me 'round, then, or for her to try and force me to live with her." And to-morrow was to have witnessed this eagerly-longed-for visit.

At last he could no longer bear being shut up in the stuffy room where he had gone in his first hour of sorrow. So he washed away the traces of his tears, and pressing his hat low over his forehead, he went upon the street. It was still only twelve o'clock, although it seemed to him that days must have passed since Mr. Lawson, in angry tones, had told him to take his things and leave his premises forever.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### *IN HOLLYWOOD.*

JACK did not hesitate as to his course. He found his way at once to Hollywood Cemetery. Once there, he went to the base of the stately monument which loving hearts have erected to the memory of the thirty thousand brave men who sleep almost within the circle of its shadow, and flung himself upon the soft grass. As his eyes travelled over the long array of narrow mounds, he almost wished that he, too, was lying there.

“But they died honored and loved. If I died now, I would leave a disgraced name behind me,” he bitterly thought.

He turned his face to the sod, and the grass seemed almost like caressing fingers upon his cheek. Tears again welled to his eyes. How long he had been there, lost to everything but the sense of his sudden and overwhelming sorrow, he did not know. Steps upon the walk, almost at his side, aroused him. He sat up and then stood up, with his hat in his hand, as he saw that a lady, young and beautiful, was before him. After one swift glance he was

about to turn away. But he saw that he had startled her by his sudden uprising from among the mounds, and with a low "excuse me," he again glanced into her face. Something in her eyes, in her features, sent a quick thrill to his heart. He eagerly scanned her countenance, and then said, in a voice trembling with joy and surprise: "Miss Grace! It is Miss Grace!"

The lady at once responded to his glad exclamation by saying: "Stoney Cardington! How glad I am to find you!"

Yes, it was, indeed, Grace Gordon who took both his hands in her loving clasp, and looked into his eyes with all the affection of the old-time days when she had held him almost as a brother. After the first joy of their unexpected meeting had somewhat subsided, Grace said: "I am now Mrs. Harvey Grayson. You remember Mr. Grayson used to visit me before you left Berkeley. I have been his wife for over six months, and my home is now in Richmond."

Then she noticed the shadow that was over the noble face she remembered so well. The light which had illumed it as he recognized her had faded, and now he looked haggard and stricken.

"Stoney, you are in trouble, great trouble. What is it? Open your heart to me, dear. I

love you just the same as in the old days," she said softly.

As she spoke she seated herself upon one of the narrow mounds, and Jack instantly dropped upon his knees beside her. He poured out his story of grief and disgrace, often choked in his rapid utterance by emotions which it took all his power of self-restraint to conquer.

Grace had many questions to ask as to his life with the Lawsons up to the present time. During these questions, which were necessary to place Jack's life clearly before her since she had last seen him, the boy said: "Mr. Lawson's believing me to be a thief is not the only thing that troubles me. I have not lived up to my ideal, Miss Grace. I have always wanted, always meant to, but somehow I know I have failed. I can't tell exactly how or why, but I know it is a fact. I am not the stone wall I expected to become when I took General Jackson for my hero and my model."

Grace listened to his words with a tender smile upon her lips. Jack thought she was more like a heavenly being than ever, and his heart went out afresh to her in loyal love and boyish admiration.

"Have you remembered to be true to God, Stoney, during these years we have been sepa-

rated? Have you prayed every day, and fed your soul by reading his blessed word?" she gently inquired.

"I have never failed, not one night since I left Berkeley, to ask God to take care of me, and to keep me from becoming a wicked man; and I have never once forgotten to ask him to bless you and Mrs. Gordon and Dr. Gordon," he replied.

"And how about the reading of the Bible?" she asked.

"I haven't read that regularly at all," he promptly confessed. "In fact, I have only opened it a few times during the past year."

"Suppose, dear, you had forgotten to give your body proper food for the last year, at regular and never-failing periods, in what condition do you suppose it would now be?"

"Starved," he unhesitatingly said.

"Yes; and you have been starving your soul. The vital truths that fill God's holy word are as needful for the sustenance of the spiritual life as is bread for the physical."

She paused and looked searchingly into his face. Then she said: "I am wondering, dear, whether you have ever been really born again. I hoped so when you were at Berkeley, but I may have been mistaken. What is your thought about it, Stoney?"



“I don’t know,” he replied, thoughtfully. “I remember that I felt very wickedly toward Aunt Mandy and Tommy when I left Berkeley, and I have never been able to keep from feeling the same way whenever I think of them.”

“The first thing, then, for you to do is to seek God with all your heart. It is he alone who can make you right toward your aunt as well as toward every human being. Until his Spirit enters your soul through conversion, you cannot keep evil thoughts from your heart or evil acts from your life. Only his power can hold you. You have no power of your own.”

A deep sigh came from Jack’s lips. His eyes suddenly filled with tears. But he did not speak.

“Did you ever think, Stoney, why General Jackson was the peerless man he was? He chose God as his portion in his boyhood, and it was the Spirit of the living, loving Christ which filled him, and made of him the godly man we know and love. You have been trying to live his life without having the mighty power which held and swayed him, to hold and mould you. Is it any wonder you have failed?”

“No, it is not,” Jack said, while tears dropped slowly down his cheeks. “I see now where my trouble has been. But how can I

get God's Spirit? I do want to do right, and I do want to get the dreadful hatred towards Aunt Mandy and Tommy out of my heart. But I don't know how."

Grace laid her hand tenderly upon his shoulder as she said: "God is seeking you, dear, more intently than you are seeking him. He sent you to me to-day, because he wants to bless you and to make your heart right. He saw that you needed help. You are to go home with me, Stoney. I shall not again let you slip away from me."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *A GUEST ADMITTED.*

AND so the homeless boy was again among loving friends. He found that Doctor and Mrs. Gordon had also left Berkeley, and were now living in the city with Grace.

It was a joyful time when Stoney again appeared in their midst.

When Mr. Grayson met the lad, and shook hands with him, he exclaimed: "Why, it is our hero-worshipper. I thought I knew your face when I first saw you at your place of worship, but I could not place you. Of course I used to see you at Berkeley, when I first lost my heart to this dear little lady," and he stroked his wife's cheek with caressing fingers.

"What do you mean by calling Stoney a hero-worshipper?" Mrs. Gordon inquired.

The young man explained about the many times he and his partner, Lawyer Denham, had seen Jack before the statue of General Jackson in the capitol grounds, and Grace at once said: "I always wanted to see that boy you so often told me about. Yet how little I dreamed it was

our Stoney. I wonder, now, I did not connect the two."

Very tender and wise were the words she spoke to Jack that night, after he had gone to the cozy little room which she said was henceforth to belong to him. She marked many passages in the Bible for him to read, and then said: "Although we have been together at family worship, I want to kneel with you here, Stoney, and ask God to make you and seal you his own dear child. I am anxious for you to have the witness of his Spirit to the fact that you are really his. I never again wish to feel a doubt upon this point, nor do I want such a doubt to have any place for lodgment in your own heart."

And so, with his hand closely clasped within hers, they knelt beside the bed, and Grace poured out her heart to God in prayer. Long before she had finished Jack was in tears.

"Now, Stoney, will you not pray for yourself?" she said, as she concluded her earnest petition. His heart was so eager for divine help and light, that he did not wait a moment, but began at once, in broken utterances, to tell God of his sore need of his forgiving love and cleansing power.

As he prayed, the sense of his deep need

seemed to increase. At last his voice ended in a sob, and he wept instead of continuing his prayer.

“Remember, dear, that the work of your salvation has all been wrought, once for all, upon Calvary. All that you have to do is to believe that Christ bore your personal sins, and that through his atoning blood you are now free. Paul tells us, through the inspiration of the Spirit, that a man is justified by faith. And listen, dear, to the words of our blessed Christ himself, when he says: ‘He that heareth my words and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.’”

Jack’s sobs had ceased, and he now raised earnest eyes to Grace, as he said: “I do believe that.”

As he spoke a change seemed to mark his face. He arose from his knees and said, as though addressing his own soul, as well as God, “‘Is passed from death unto life.’ Yes, I see. I must have passed, for I do believe.”

“Yes, that is all. Faith is the only channel through which our gracious Lord can put eternal life into the soul,” Grace said, as she stood beside him. Her heart was pleading with every

breath she drew that the Holy Spirit would bear witness to the lad's having passed from death unto life.

After an interval of silence, in which she saw that his lips moved in prayer, he said very quietly: "It's all right, now. How very simple it is. I don't know how, but I feel that I am different. God seems so real to me, and everything that troubled me is taken away. Oh, how glad I am! Now I know him. I never knew him before. I thought I did at Berkeley, but I was mistaken."

Grace bent forward and pressed her lips to his cheek. He smiled, but seemed too absorbed to give much heed to the caress.

"Good-night," she said. "Remember, Christ is now formed in your heart. He will henceforth be your strength, and the power that will enable you to live a noble life for him."

She went out, seeing that it was best to leave him alone with the One who had just been so sweetly revealed to him as his Saviour and his God.

"There is joy in heaven to-night," she thought, with beaming eyes. "Another soul is born into the kingdom of God; another heart has opened and Christ has come in. Oh, my gracious Lord, how I praise thy holy name!

Enable me to give this child of thine the help he will need from day to day, until he grows strong in thee!"

She told her husband of the joy that filled her heart, and he was much pleased to know that Jack felt he was now a Christian.

"It was years after I joined the church before I had the consciousness that I was converted," he said. "I have often felt since that I lost so much by not sooner realizing the fact. I think, perhaps, we are not careful enough to teach young people to expect and look for the witness of the Spirit after they have definitely accepted Christ as a personal Saviour."

"Of course I know that God does his work in different ways, with different souls," Grace rejoined. "I was so fully conscious when I entered into life, that I always long for others to realize the same sweet experience."

"And yet it is faith, not feeling, that brings salvation. How we do need wisdom from above to enable us to rightly help souls find eternal life through faith in Christ. If I knew him as fully and as intimately as you do, darling, I should feel satisfied. I would not so often hesitate and wait, when I know people are needing the help that I ought to be able to give them," Mr. Grayson responded, with much emotion.

“Suppose you take the first two verses of the twelfth chapter of Romans, and ask God to show you exactly what they mean,” his wife softly rejoined. “Perhaps you have not yet fully entered the life of sweet union with Christ which he desires you to know, and which can only come after one passes through the gateway of those two verses. It is a very narrow gateway, dearest, and strips one of everything but Christ.”



## CHAPTER XIX.

### *CHANGED.*

JACK'S face was a very happy one when he appeared before the family at the breakfast table the following morning. There was a quiet peace about him which told its own story of a heart freed from some burden which had been pressing upon it very heavily.

He went up to Mrs. Gordon at the close of family worship and said: "I want to tell you how happy I am. You explained to me once, when I was at Berkeley, what an 'ideal' was. Perhaps you guessed then that General Jackson was mine. He was then, and he has been ever since. But last night I found out who his ideal was, and now I have also taken him for mine."

Mrs. Gordon was deeply moved by his words. She quickly understood his meaning, and said: "I am so glad, Stoney. General Jackson was a fine model, but Christ has power to transform your whole life and make you like himself. Do you know this?"

"I am beginning to understand it a little.

Oh! how different everything seems. Miss Grace showed me how to find him."

His eyes turned to her with love and gratitude as he spoke. She had come up and was standing beside him.

"Human ideals are good, and they do help one to reach a higher life than would be possible without them," she softly responded. "But only Christ enthroned in the heart has power to cast out the evil within us and fill us with his own wonderful love." Then she looked smilingly into Jack's face and asked: "How do you feel toward your aunt and Tommy this morning? Would it give you pleasure to 'punch' your cousin's head as you spoke about yesterday, and to 'pay your aunt back' for her unkindness to you by being ugly and miserable toward her?"

Jack laughed happily as he replied: "No, indeed. It is wonderful how differently I do feel towards them. I really believe I love them now, and I have been planning how I might make Aunt Mandy happy. How is she, anyway?"

"Very unhappy. Her husband has again left her, and Tommy is as bad as you can imagine he would naturally be by this time under his mother's mistaken treatment. Mrs.

Carson's health has broken, and I am afraid she is having a hard time to support herself and the boy since we came to Richmond," was Mrs. Gordon's reply.

Jack's eyes kindled.

"I don't know yet, of course, just what work I can get to do, but I shall soon find something. When I do, I know I can save a little every month to send Aunt Mandy. It will please her, I know, and it will make me so happy to do it."

Mrs. Gordon and Grace smiled over his enthusiasm, and the latter said: "Yes, it would please her very much."

Mrs. Gordon inquired: "Have you given up your old desire of becoming a physician, Stoney?"

"No, indeed," was his quick response. "I don't know how I am to manage it, but I still expect to become a doctor."

"If that is God's plan for you, as I believe it is, he will open some way for its accomplishment," she responded.

Dr. Gordon, being well known in the city as an able and experienced physician, already had his hands quite full. For the next few days he asked Stoney to aid him in making his rounds by becoming his driver. He still owned the

pretty thorough-bred, Selim, which the boy remembered with keen pleasure, for many had been the jolly rides he had taken behind him, as well as upon his back, in the old Berkeley days.

One afternoon as he was holding the reins while Dr. Gordon was calling upon a patient in the suburbs of the city, Mrs. Lawson came up the street. A negro boy was driving her carriage. She recognized Jack and at once ordered the boy to stop. Her greeting was just as cordial as though his departure from her house had been that of an honored guest.

She asked him where he was staying, and seemed delighted to find that he was among old friends. She took down his address upon her pocket tablet, and smiled as she said: "I see you are with 'tony' people, Jack. I know who the Graysons are, and I also know that lovely home of Mr. Harvey Grayson's on Jefferson street. I shall soon call to see you, and I am sure I shall have good news for you when I come."

It warmed Jack's heart to hear her affectionate tone and kind words. While he had always been conscious of the great difference between her blunt but cordial ways and the refined and cultured atmosphere of the Gordon home, yet he was truly attached to her.

Her unswerving faith in his honesty and integrity, when the others of her household had turned against him, had drawn his heart still more closely to her, until now it thrilled him with keen pleasure to again meet her.

Dr. Gordon came out while she still lingered. She seemed loath to drive on. Her vehicle was almost against the doctor's, and her driver was told to move a little to permit Dr. Gordon to enter his carriage.

Jack hastened to introduce them, and Mrs. Lawson at once said: "I am delighted to see that my dear young friend, Jack, has become your guest. I know of you through my friend, Mrs. Nelson, whom you recently attended through a spell of fever. I could hardly wish anything better for Jack than for him to be under your care."

Dr. Gordon smiled and bowed as he replied: "We feel that he is now at home, and that we are the ones indebted to you for your kindness to him while he was away from us."

With another kindly smile he told Jack to drive on. Mrs. Lawson also went on, feeling greatly relieved about the boy who had grown so dear to her heart during his stay in her home, and about whom, since his departure, she had passed many unhappy and anxious hours.

## CHAPTER XX.

### *A SUDDEN DEATH.*

THE Lawson household was in quite a state of agitation. True, Judd's pet squirrel, had done a very naughty thing. He was often permitted to roam at his pleasure through the house, care being taken that he should not escape upon the street. For several days no one had remembered to give him the daily hour or so of liberty which so much delighted him. He was restless and uneasy in consequence, rapidly turning his wheel, and chattering in a way that disturbed Mrs. Lawson.

"I am going out after breakfast, or I would give him his airing now," she said. "I never like to turn him loose unless I am in the house to watch the doors and keep the servants from letting him get upon the street. But I can't stand his noise. Do put his cage into the hall, Judd, until after I have finished my breakfast."

So Judd carried his pet into the front hall, and dropped the kernel of a nut into his mouth as he went on his way to school. There True remained until the evening, forgotten and neglected.

The following morning proved to be chill with rain. Judd went for his overcoat, which hung upon the rack in the hall. A quick exclamation from him brought Mrs. Lawson to his side.

“Just look there,” he said, ruefully. “My new coat is ruined. That little rascal, True, has cut it awfully.”

One glance showed the truth of his words. All the bottom part of the back of the handsome coat was cut into shreds.

“You should have been careful not to place the cage so near the rack,” Mrs. Lawson said.

“I know; but I never thought of his being such a scamp. Well, he has paid me back this time for not remembering to give him his frolic. True, I almost wish that I could whip you,” he said, shaking his finger at the graceful creature. The squirrel was poking one of his cute little hands through the bars of his wheel, begging for a nut.

In spite of her chagrin over the ruined coat, Mrs. Lawson hastened to give the little fellow his longed-for liberty.

“I shall be at home all day, and I will make up to him for our neglect by letting him remain loose until the evening,” she said.

So True was as happy as a squirrel could

well be who was deprived of his inalienable right to a life of freedom in the woods.

The servants were warned to keep the outer doors closed, and the squirrel roamed at will over the house. He had so often enjoyed this freedom that no one apprehended any danger for him. Both Mr. Lawson and Judd, when they came home to dinner, rejoiced to see him having such a happy time.

"It seems almost cruel to keep him shut up in a cage at all," Judd said, as he saw how the nimble creature seemed to enjoy his freedom.

The loss of the overcoat was quite a serious thing, and Mr. Lawson, upon first hearing about it, had felt quite angry.

"I have half a mind to give the rascal away," he said; but Judd knew he would not carry his threat into execution, for he was as fond of True as were any of them.

As he now watched True's pretty, graceful ways, he said: "I wonder what induced him to cut the coat, anyway."

"To provide something fresh and soft for his bed, perhaps," Mrs. Lawson replied.

Just then a servant entered the room, bearing a tray of dessert. She left the door ajar behind her; a draught of wind suddenly closed it with a bang. A wail of distress was heard. Judd sprang to his feet and rushed to the door.



Poor True had been caught in it as it closed. He was dead when Judd picked him up.

The boy was not ashamed of the tears which coursed down his cheeks as the limp body of his pet dangled from his hands. Mrs. Lawson also shed tears over the sad death of the beautiful creature; and the servant, through whose carelessness the accident had occurred, was quite heart-broken.

Judd got up quite an elaborate funeral for the dead favorite, and invited several of his boy friends to the services. The remains were placed in a pretty box, and a tiny United States flag was draped about it. They marched in procession to the grave, and one of the boys repeated an appropriate piece of poetry, in a funereal tone, over what remained of poor True. Then he was consigned to his last resting-place, and Judd declared that he never wanted to own another pet, for it cost too much to lose him.

“How about your rabbits?” one of his friends asked.

“Oh! I don’t care much for them. I like to have them, but I don’t love them as I did poor True. They are rather stupid, you know; but the squirrel had almost as much sense as some people show;” and he launched into a description of some of the winsome and intelligent tricks of his departed favorite.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### *AN UNSUSPECTED ROGUE.*

THE morning following the squirrel's interment, Judd mournfully said: "I am going to put True's cage out of sight. It makes me feel dreadfully to see it, and to remember the poor fellow is in his grave."

Before he carried it away he opened the tiny door and peered into the dainty house which had been True's home for more than three years.

"Better take out the cotton which he had for his bed and burn it, before you set the cage away," Mrs. Lawson said, coming up and standing beside him. He put in his hand and drew out a handful of cotton.

"Look. Here are pieces of my coat, all cut into little bits," he said, curiously examining the dark shreds which were scattered through the white. He drew out another handful of cotton, and then another.

"My! What a soft bed he had. See what a pile of stuff. And there's still more," he said. "What did you give him such a lot for, mother?"

It must have filled his house so full he hardly had room to turn around."

"I am sure I did not give him all that trash," Mrs. Lawson answered. "I only placed a good handful of cotton in the house. Dinah cleaned out his cage the last time, to be sure, and put in the fresh cotton, but I gave it to her. And I know there was not half as much as you have brought out."

"Whew! Just look here," Judd exclaimed, holding up a fragment of blue silk. "If that isn't a piece of my pretty necktie which I lost a while back. Yes, and here are some bits of white silk. Oh! and here is one of the initials which was on my silk handkerchief. Who would have thought that True was such a thief? He must have stolen these from my room."

Mrs. Lawson bent over the pile of *débris*, as Judd finished speaking, and eagerly examined it. After picking out some tiny scraps of something here and there, she looked into her son's face and said: "You are right in calling him a thief. It was he, instead of Jack, who stole your money, as well as your tie and gloves and handkerchief. Look here."

She spread out some small bits of greenish paper upon the table. Judd closely examined

them. His face flushed scarlet, and he looked confusedly into his mother's eyes.

"I do not wonder, dear, that it makes you blush to remember the hard words you spoke to Jack. And it was your suspicions that first aroused your father's. True stole the bills, not Jack, and these bits of paper prove it. Here is a piece with the figure five clearly seen."

"But what in the world did True want with the money?" Judd asked.

"I suppose his object was to make his bed softer. Here are little pieces of the linen handkerchief in which the bills were tied."<sup>1</sup>

So Jack was cleared from the charge of stealing. Mr. Lawson's contrition was deep for the cruel manner in which the poor boy had been accused of a crime for which the naughty squirrel was alone responsible. He could scarcely believe the facts in the case until he had carefully examined the pile of trash for himself. In this he found positive proof of True's propensity for stealing, and saw without a doubt that all the missing articles, including the bills of money, had been stolen by the agile creature.

"We must get Jack back, and treat him so

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<sup>1</sup>The incident of the squirrel's thieving propensity, as of his death, is an actual occurrence.

well that he will forget the past," he said, with a rueful glance into his wife's face.

"I will go and see him this afternoon," Mrs. Lawson replied. It was Saturday. "Judd, you can go with me, if you wish, and tell Jack how sorry you are for your unkind suspicions."

Judd shook his head.

"I don't want to. Of course I'm sorry, and all that, but I don't see why he need to come back. That new clerk is a lot sharper than he was. Jenkins says he sells more than he does. He knows how to talk things up."

"I prefer Jack, now that I know he is honest," Mr. Lawson responded. "There is such a thing as a fellow being too smart. Brown is one of that kind."

That same day Mrs. Lawson's carriage stopped before the Grayson's lovely suburban home. Jack was just going out, but he returned to the house when he met her at the gate.

"I have good news for you," she said, with a glad smile. "The real thief has been discovered, and your name has been cleared from all suspicion."

Mrs. Gordon and Grace were at home, and they, as well as Jack, listened with thankful joy to the story she unfolded.

"Mr. Lawson told me I must be sure and

bring you back with me," she concluded. "He wants you in the store again, and will advance your wages."

Jack looked pleased and glanced toward Grace. Before either of them could speak, Mrs. Gordon hastened to say: "You are very kind. We appreciate Mr. Lawson's offer, but Stoney, or Jack as I see you call him, will remain with us."

As Mrs. Lawson opened her lips to remonstrate, Mrs. Gordon added: "Dr. Gordon has fully decided to place him in college at once, and prepare him for his life work. We look upon him as our own son, and as such we claim the privilege and the right of caring for his future."

Jack was so surprised and touched by these words that his lip quivered, and he decided it was best for him to keep silent.

When Mrs. Lawson at last arose to go, he said: "Please thank Mr. Lawson for his kind offer. I would be glad to go back, if—" he hesitated.

"If your heart was not set upon becoming a physician, and upon beginning to prepare for this career as speedily as possible," Mrs. Gordon smilingly supplemented.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *A TEST.*

ONE week later Jack entered the best school in Richmond. After a long talk with Dr. and Mrs. Gordon he had yielded himself wholly into their hands.

“I have an abundance of this world’s goods,” the doctor said. “I know of no better way to use a portion than in fitting you for God’s service in your chosen profession. This will place you under no obligation to me, for I consider myself as merely being God’s steward, and I believe it is his wish that I should do this. We look upon you as belonging to us now, Stoney, and we give you a son’s place in our affections.”

“I notice that Mrs. Lawson calls you ‘Jack,’” Mrs. Gordon hastened to say to relieve the boy, whose emotions threatened to overpower him. “I suppose this is by your wish.”

Jack explained to her how and why he had given the Tolleys and Lawsons the name of Jackson instead of Thomas, and added: “I wanted to be called Jackson, not Jack. But

everyone gave me the short nickname, so I could not help myself."

"Hereafter we will call you Jackson," Dr. Gordon quickly responded. "I fully appreciate why you did not care to be known any longer as Stoney. That name answered for the child. It would be very inappropriate for the young man."

Thereafter the boy was pleased to hear himself addressed by the entire household under his chosen name of "Jackson."

Some weeks later there came to him an invitation to dine with the Lawsons. The dinner was to be on a Saturday, so he was free to accept it.

He found Judd almost as cordial as in the earlier days of their acquaintance. Since Jack was no longer to be a member of the home circle, and was not now held up as a model for his imitation, Judd felt his old-time fondness return for him.

"Come and look at True's grave," he said, soon after Jack was in the house.

The squirrel's tomb was in a corner of the yard. A neat board, on which his name and age were printed, marked his resting-place.

"Who would ever have thought of him as being the thief?" Judd remarked as they stood



beside the tiny mound. "You can't guess how cheap I felt when I knew that it was he, and not you, who had taken my things. I'm no end sorry for all the mean things I said to you."

His words and manner were frank, and Jack hastened to say: "Don't think about them again. It's all right now. I was dreadfully sorry to hear of True's sad end. But I'm glad he didn't suffer long."

"Not a minute. He was dead when I picked him up. The door crushed his head, you know," was Judd's reply.

The dinner proved to be one of Mrs. Lawson's best. The dainty wine glasses sparkled beside the plates, and Jack saw them with a thrill of regret. He knew that he must not yield to the pressure which he felt sure Mr. Lawson would bring to bear upon him to induce him to again indulge in his hostess' mild wine. This apprehension proved correct. When he declined to have his glass filled, his host said: "Nonsense, Jack. I drank up all of Mrs. Lawson's thin wine on purpose to treat you to some of the genuine article. This is the best Port in the city."

As he spoke he reached for Jack's glass.

"But I cannot drink it, Mr. Lawson," Jack answered. "I appreciate your kindness, but I must not taste it."

Mr. Lawson smiled as he said: " 'Must not,' Jack? And wherefore? "

His guest hesitated. Seeing this, Mr. Lawson took the glass and filled it with the rich, beautiful liquid.

"If you don't pronounce this the best wine you ever tried, then I shall think you do not know a good brand when you taste it," he remarked.

Jack was silent. His heart was saying: "He can put it before me, but he cannot make me drink it. I hate to seem rude, but I believe, now, I would rather lose my right hand than touch a drop of it."

He noticed that Mrs. Lawson permitted Judd to have only half a glass. The boy grumbled over this in a low tone, but his mother was firm.

"You see, Jack, Judd is built differently from you," Mr. Lawson said, as he noticed his guest's observant eyes resting upon Judd's partially-filled glass. "Our boy seems to have no higher ambition than to indulge his appetites. This quite worries his mother, and she insists upon keeping him on thin rations. No doubt she is right. But when a fellow has an idea of being somebody, as you have, there is not a bit of danger of his going too far. I'd trust you

with a barrel of wine in your bed-room, and never be afraid you would take too much."

Jack murmured something intended as thanks for this implied compliment to his strength of character. He was thinking: "How little he knows me. If any boy was ever weaker than I proved to be before I left this house, I pity him."

Dinner was almost over before Mr. Lawson noticed that Jack's wine remained untouched. His face flushed a little as he said: "You're not going to turn your back on my Port after all, are you? I got it especially in honor of your visit."

Jack looked quite distressed as he said: "Please don't think me rude, but indeed I must not drink it."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *A GOOD TIME.*

“**W**ELL, tell us why you must not,” Mr. Lawson said.

He was a good-natured man, usually, but he had wished to give Jack pleasure as well as to show him an especial honor by placing this expensive wine before him. It nettled him to be thus balked in his kindly designs.

Mrs. Lawson looked sympathetically into their young guest's flushed face and interposed with: “Why not let him do as he prefers, Mr. Lawson? I am sure the wine will not be wasted while you are about.”

“I want to hear his reason for not tasting it. If it is a good one I will not say another word,” her husband said, looking expectantly at Jack.

“I have given myself to God since I went away from here,” the boy said, in a low voice. “I should feel that I was doing wrong if I drank the wine.”

“But I know plenty of church members who use wine,” his host persisted.

“That may be. But I could not do it with a clear conscience. It means more to me than

you can guess to do anything that could possibly grieve my best Friend."

Jack's tone grew firmer as he thus spoke. He glanced towards Mrs. Lawson and was surprised to see that she was regarding him with tears in her eyes.

Mr. Lawson dropped the subject, but Jack could see that he was much annoyed.

Before he went down to his store, he said, as he laid his hand on the boy's shoulder: "I owe you an apology, Jack, and something more than an apology, for the way I sent you off. I am heartily ashamed of myself. I hoped you would come back to us and give me a chance to show you, by my acts, how sorry I am for my base suspicions, and how much I do really think of you."

It cost him an effort to say this.

Jack raised beaming eyes to his face and answered: "It's just as though it had never happened, Mr. Lawson. Don't ever waste another thought over it."

"I said I owed you something more than an apology for the way I treated you in sending you away as I did on an unfounded suspicion," the groceryman continued. "Here is the money your wages would have amounted to from the time I turned you off 'till you de-

cided not to come back to us. And, now, if you ever stand in need of a friend, you must come to me."

He placed an envelope in the boy's hand; then, as he turned away, he looked back to say: "It's all right to join the church, if you want to, Jack. But don't you let the preachers make a muff out of you. You're too fine a chap to have the mettle taken out of you by following their tiresome rules."

The boy smiled as he thought, with a glow at his heart: "It is only the dross they want to take out. The mettle will stay, all right, and will be worth something, I hope, when the worthless trash is gone."

Mrs. Lawson evinced much emotion when the hour for his departure came and he bade her good-bye.

"I am so glad you have joined the church," she said. "I wish I had joined, long ago. Where do you belong?"

"To the Grace-Street Presbyterian Church. Dr. Read is pastor. He is a splendid man."

"Yes; I have heard him preach. I will try and go around often, now that I know you are there. Perhaps I will join, if I can get Mr. Lawson to join with me," she responded, gazing wistfully into Jack's face.

It lighted up joyfully at her words, "Oh, I hope you will."

He longed to tell her something of what was in his heart, but he did not have the courage. So he again said: "I hope you will join real soon," and went away.

"I wish Judd would join, too," he thought, as he walked homeward. "He needs something that will change him. I like Judd. He is a jolly fellow in the main, but he does not aim high enough. His one idea still is 'to have a good time' And his good times mean bad times, I'm afraid, in the end."

Jack had good reason for the fear. Judd had confided to him that he could now play cards much better than Hugh Brandon. A set of his school-fellows, the Brandons included, met every Friday, after school, in an old deserted building not far from the river.

They had formed themselves into a secret society, "bound by an awful oath," Judd said, "not to reveal anything that was done at these meetings."

"We have splendid times," he added. "New fellows join us every once in a while. A lot of 'em want to come in, but we take only a certain kind—jolly fellows who won't blab."

"Does your mother know about the society," Jack had asked him.

Judd gave a derisive laugh, as he said: "I should hope not. I told father about it when we were first getting it up. Of course he doesn't know what the oath is, nor any of our secrets. He knows better than to ask. He belongs to ever so many secret societies himself. He laughed when I told him about ours, and asked if we made our fellows ride a goat. Father knows what a boy needs to make him a man, but mother would like to keep me a baby always."

These being Judd's sentiments, it was not very probable that Mrs. Lawson's love would have much restraining influence over her boy.

Although he was now nearly sixteen years of age, Jack was not wise enough in the ways of the world to have a clear conception of Judd's danger. But he knew enough to feel that a change was desirable, and as he recalled the petted boy's words, he again said: "I wish Judd would join the church."



## CHAPTER XXIV.

*"A NOBLE LIFE WILL LIVE FOREVER."*

WEEKS passed into months and months into years, bringing Jack Cardington to his eighteenth birthday. Long ago he had made a flying visit to Mrs. Carson, and had placed within her hands his entire store of moneyed possession. This was the hoarded twenty dollars, the discovery of which had seemed to Mr. Lawson and Judd to seal him as being a thief. The groceryman's gift was added to this amount.

Jack had talked with Grace and with Mrs. Gordon before he visited his aunt, and they had commended his desire of helping her in her time of trouble and want.

Mrs. Gordon had said: "Dr. Gordon now wishes to supply all your needs, so that this money, the most of which is the result of your years of careful saving, is not required for your personal wants. Of course, it might purchase many things which would give you pleasure, but I believe your idea is the right one, and that to give it to Mrs. Carson will bring you

more joy than to expend it for any personal gratification."

Mrs. Carson was not voluable in her expression of thanks over the gift, nor over his visit. She merely said, as she put the bills away: "I'm glad to find you're not so bad as I thought. I never expected to lay eyes on you again. Of course, you owe me a good deal fur defraudin' me outen your work just when I was a-countin' on havin' you pay me back fur all I had spent on you. That was a shabby thing you done, an' I am proper glad you feel it enough to come back an' apologize in this satisfyin' way"

Jack smiled. He was rather surprised at her way of looking at things, but he felt genuine compassion for her, and was pleased to note her satisfaction in receiving his peace-offering.

Some months later her husband apparently decided that it was his duty to support her, even if her tongue did, at times, almost turn his brain. At any rate, he once more took up his abode in the little home, and had remained there ever since, working hard and giving his family a comfortable support.

Jack was leading many of his classes in his college course. This was not a surprise to Dr.

Gordon, nor to any one who knew of his past. A boy who had regularly, for three years, attended night school after working all day in a grocery store, was not one who was likely to make a low grade of scholarship when he entered college.

"Eighteen to-day! How nice it is to feel that I am almost a man," he was saying to himself as he came blithely out of the recitation hall.

Professor Foster had just given him some words of high commendation over his mastery of an obscure passage in Greek, and his heart was beating high with pleasure. A group of students stood beneath the shadow of a clump of evergreens as he passed along the campus, apparently absorbed in some interesting discussion. One of the number opened the ring as Jack approached, and beckoned him to join them. He did so, expecting that it was some fraternity question which engaged them. Instead, the one who had called him said in a low tone, and with a light laugh. "You've got an eye for beauty, Jackson. What do you think of this?"

He placed a photograph in his hand as he spoke. Jack gave a swift glance at the picture. His face darkened as he said: "I would sooner

you had struck me in the face, Thompson, than have shown me that thing."

"Hush! Don't speak so loud," one of the other students said, warningly.

Claude Thompson spoke: "Why, it's all right. Only one of those cute things that come in our cigarette boxes. I thought you would enjoy it."

"Whatever suggests evil is beastly," Jack quickly responded. Then he opened his coat and drew a tiny volume from his pocket. From its leaves he took a printed scrap of paper. "Read this, Thompson. Two years ago I cut it out of a paper, and I have carried it ever since. It has acted as a kind of talisman to keep me from just such danger as is entrapping you fellows this afternoon."

The young man proceeded to glance over the bit of paper, and several of his companions crowded up to look over it with him. This is what they read:

"After Stowewall Jackson's death, a New York merchant said of him: 'I never met Mr. Jackson but once, yet an incident in which he had part exerted a strong influence over my early life. I was a boy in college, eager to be considered a man, but often hesitating to maintain the principles taught me by my mother,

lest I should be called weak and womanish.

"I happened to be seated at supper one night next to Jackson, who was somewhat younger than I. While waiting to be served one of the boys drew from his pocket a picture suggestive of evil, and it was slyly circulated among the students near by, with smiles and suppressed laughter. When it came to Jackson, he glanced at it contemptuously and said, 'That is silly and beastly.'

"The boys were silent. One of them threw the card on the fire. I felt a sudden stiffening of my whole moral nature. It was so easy for him to be pure and manly. Why not for me?

"I can truly and candidly say that that momentary touch of a strong, bold nature, put new health and vigor into my own.

"There is no fact in human experience more striking and significant than the impression that is often made upon one soul by another in momentary contact.'"

Claude Thompson read the slip down to the last word, and then said: "That is a good rebuke. Thank you, Jackson."

He then proceeded to tear the card which he had been circulating into a dozen fragments. These he placed in his pocket, remarking: "I'll see that these reach the fire. No one shall be

injured by even a glimpse of a part of this 'beastly picture' as the noble Jackson truthfully named it. I fancy the South owes more to that man than she yet knows. His words and deeds live after him."

With a bright face Jackson Cardington passed on.

"I thank God for my early ideal," he thought, "and I thank my father for giving me a name which awoke in my heart this love for a noble character. With General Jackson as an ideal, and with General Jackson's mighty Captain admitted into the soul to mould and transform one according to his Godlike plan and nature, no boy need live on a low plane."

Is it any wonder that this youth was every day developing into a character which more and more challenged the respect of his fellows, and won for him the loving regard of all who knew him?

## CHAPTER XXV.

### *SAD HOURS.*

“**I** AM glad that you will be ready to take my practice, Jackson, in another year,” Dr. Gordon said to his adopted son when the latter had passed his twenty-second birthday. “I feel the need of rest. My work has become too arduous for a man of my years. I shall feel relieved when I can stand aside and place it in such faithful hands as I know yours will be.”

Jackson smiled as he answered: “The transfer must be very gradual indeed, else your patients will surely rebel; and they will have cause. I feel my incompetency more and more as I contrast my crude knowledge with your ripe experience. It is a great relief to me to know that I shall have your advice to help me, and your experimental knowledge to fit into the crevices of my theories and pet hobbies.”

It will be seen, from these words, that Jack’s life-work was opening before him in the near future.

“I was called to see Mrs. Lawson yesterday,” Dr. Gordon remarked, as Jack finished speak-

ing. "She has a low type of fever which troubles me. Anxiety about her son is the chief cause of her sickness, I am sure."

"Judd is quite wild," Jack said, regretfully. "He is a fellow of fine parts, but somehow he got started wrong when he was a boy. His mother fairly idolizes him. I suppose it is almost breaking her heart to see him going so rapidly to destruction."

"Have you ever had a talk with him about his ways, Jackson, and told him how his course is killing his mother?"

"Yes, indeed, sir, many such talks," Jack replied. "It has not been more than six weeks since I met him with his breath reeking with whiskey. He had just been on what he was pleased to call 'a tare,' which meant that he had not been home for three days and nights. His mother was wild about him. I had just seen her before I ran across him. I talked to him as earnestly as I knew how, but he only laughed at me. I have less hope of his reformation than that of almost any fellow I know."

"Why is that?" Dr. Gordon asked.

"Because, in some way, there seems nothing about him to get hold of—no moral nature, I mean. From a boy he has scorned his mother's suggestions, and rejected all her ideas of



right and wrong. He has deceived her ever since I first knew him, and his father has winked at his ways. I am afraid Mr. Lawson is more responsible for Judd's wrong-doing than he knows."

Jack sighed as he spoke. It hurt him to know how deeply Mrs. Lawson was suffering; and yet he felt incapable of helping her. The only way help could come to her would be by saving Judd.

"I will run out and see her in a day or two," he thought, as he hurried off to lecture. But two days later came the news of her death. Dr. Gordon related the circumstances attending it, as the family gathered around the late dinner-table: "She was in a very critical condition. Heart-trouble had developed. I warned Mr. Lawson that she must be spared all anxiety, and that no shocks must be permitted to reach her. Her son came into her room last night in a state of beastly intoxication. The grief caused by seeing him thus snapped the slender thread upon which her life was hanging."

"Perhaps the knowledge that he has been the occasion of her death will have the effect of turning the poor boy from his evil ways," Mrs. Gordon said.

"I hope so," Jack responded. He was too

deeply troubled by Mrs. Lawson's sad end to have any appetite for dinner. As soon as the meal was over he hastened to find Judd.

"If he will ever listen to me, now will be the time," he pondered.

"Judd has gone, no one knows where," Mr. Lawson said, in reply to Jack's inquiry for him.

The groceryman seemed much broken by his wife's sudden death. Anxiety about his son, no doubt, added to his sorrow.

"He seemed stunned when he realized that it was the shock of seeing him intoxicated that killed her," he frankly said. "I am afraid he has gone into deeper excesses, in order to try and drown his trouble. Poor boy! he has a good heart, but wild companions have been his ruin."

Mr. Lawson buried his face in his hands as he thus spoke, and Jack hastened to say: "I hope that he has gone clear away, out of the reach of temptation. That, to me, seems the most reasonable explanation of his absence."

This surmise proved to be the correct one. Judd remained out of the city, with some relatives who lived near Petersburg, for several months. He wrote hopeful letters to his father, telling him that he was trying to live right, and was determined to break entirely away from his

evil habits. He also spoke of wanting to enter the store and go to work when he returned.

Mr. Lawson seemed greatly encouraged by these letters, and Jack shared in his hopes. Judd was so young, being only a little past twenty-two years, that there seemed a reasonable possibility that the shock of his mother's death would lead to his reformation.

Jack was glad to see that the groceryman no longer seemed to indulge in his wines and ale. Perhaps his conscience had at last aroused, and shown him that his use of these insidious intoxicants had been a bad example to set before his boy. He did not explain the reason of their banishment, but it sufficed Jack to know that he had ceased to use them.

“Perhaps dear Mrs. Lawson's death may bring about what her life failed to accomplish,” he thought. “I do hope that she knows how Judd is now trying to be a man; and also that Mr. Lawson is changed.”

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### *THE BROAD WAY.*

JUDD returned after an absence of five months. He entered with so much enthusiasm into the work of his father's large and flourishing store, that all who were interested in him entertained strong hopes that his reformation was complete.

Jack found time, quite frequently, at first, to call around and chat with him. He tried to induce him to attend church with him, but this Judd persistently declined to do.

"Father's life is good enough for me," he said. "He has managed to get along all right without the church, and I can do the same. Sermons bore me. I like to go where I can have a good time and enjoy myself. I'll be glad to go to the theatre or to the circus with you."

It was now Jack's turn to decline, which he did with a pleasant but firm: "I have no time for plays, and the circus serves me the same way you say sermons do you. There is to be a grand concert next week. I will enjoy going to that with you, if you say so."

“All right. I’d prefer to go to the minstrels, but I reckon a fellow ought, once in a while, to hear the famous singers who go about,” was Judd’s reply.

They spent a pleasant evening together, although Judd grumbled over the music, and declared that “it hurt his head to hear people screech, and then call it singing.”

His companion was forced to laugh, not so much at his words as over the comical expression of countenance which accompanied them. The evening had been an unalloyed delight to Jack, and he could hardly conceive it possible how any one could feel about it as did Judd. He tried hard, as the weeks passed, to interest him in something higher than his mind had hitherto been wont to grasp. But Judd’s tastes all seemed to lie in a certain direction, and Jack’s efforts to turn them ended in failure. Finding this to be the result, and feeling the burden of his last months of study pressing upon him, his visits to Judd gradually became less frequent. As the time for his graduating exercises drew near they ceased altogether. The anxiety he had felt lest Judd should again fall into his old evil ways was lost amid the many duties that now crowded upon him. He was, therefore, much startled and dismayed when a

friend casually remarked to him: "Judd Lawson has lapsed into his old ways. It does seem too bad, for he is a good-hearted fellow."

"What makes you think he has gone back to his bad habits?" Jack quickly asked.

"I met him with that Brandon fellow yesterday. Both were drunk. One of the fellows told me that Brandon said, when he heard that Judd had reformed and was helping his father, that he would get him out of the store before three months had passed. Charley Brandon is about the hardest customer I know."

Jack sighed, and fell into a reverie. He was too busy for the reverie to be long continued, but in the brief time it lasted he recalled many things.

Hugh and Charley Brandon had been, from boyhood, Judd's chosen companions. Charley, being the eldest, had wielded a powerful influence over him. And this influence had always been toward evil. He it was who had gone from his mother's parlor, and from the card parties there given, to the gaming table, and he had carried Judd with him.

Not until her boy had been gambling, in a quiet way, for a long time, had Mrs. Lawson suspected that Judd understood how to play even the simplest game of cards.

Jack came out of his fit of musing with an audible groan.

“If a fellow only knew what risks he takes when he purposely deceives his mother, he would surely think twice before he did it. Judd Lawson’s downfall began right there,” he said.

“That’s about where every chap begins to go wrong, isn’t it?” suggested his companion.

“Probably. If Judd had ever had a noble ideal there might have been less chance of his going to ruin. But his highest aim has always been ‘to have a good time.’ Poor Judd! If Charley Brandon has got hold of him again, I am afraid there is not much hope for him.”

“Hugh Brandon seems to be a nice fellow. How is it that he is so different from his brother?” his companion asked.

“Oh! when his father died he was sent away to be with an uncle. All his surroundings were changed. I have heard that his uncle is a noble Christian man. When Hugh came back, two years ago, he joined the church, and he has lived all right ever since.”

Jack determined, at his earliest leisure, to go and visit Mr. Lawson, and see if there was any possibility of helping extricate Judd from his evil environment. When he was at last able to

call upon his old employer, he found him so unlike the jovial, care-free man of other days, that his heart sank within him. He felt that what he had heard about Judd must all be true.

The groceryman's words confirmed his fears.

"He is wilder than ever," he confessed, in reply to Jack's affectionate inquiry. "I seem to have lost all hope for him since he has got to running with Charley Brandon again."

"It won't do to feel discouraged," Jack cheerily responded. "God is still alive, and our hope of saving Judd must be anchored in him."

Mr. Lawson smiled rather grimly as he said: "That thought may comfort you, but it does not hold much for me. God is too busy, I take it, managing the big things of the universe, to care what becomes of poor, weak chaps like Judd and Charley."

"And yet Christ tells us that the 'very hairs of our head are all numbered,'" Jack responded. A quick thought brought the color to his cheek and an eager light to his eyes. He said, in a tone of confidence: "I am going, from this moment, to ask God to save Judd, in some way, from Charley Brandon's influence. And I believe he will do it."

"Well, if I felt as you do, and believed that



God would listen to my prayers, I might hope to see Judd reformed," Mr. Lawson slowly replied.

"God tells us there is only one man whose prayers he will not hear," Jack said, impressively.

"And what man is that?"

"The one who hides iniquity in his heart."

Leaving that thought to find its way into the groceryman's inner consciousness, Jack went home.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### *ANSWERED PRAYER.*

JACK'S success as a physician was soon assured. In a year from the time he entered upon the active work of his profession, all of Dr. Gordon's practice had passed into his hands. Added to this was an ever-increasing circle of patients, who felt that the brilliant young physician was fully fitted to cope with their various troubles and ailments. Much of his first success was, no doubt, owing to Dr. Gordon's influence, as well as to that of other interested and influential friends of the Gordon family. But Jack's cheery ways and sympathetic heart won him hosts of friends, and his skill in conquering disease was soon manifest to all.

"A true physician, like a teacher, is born, not made," Dr. Gordon remarked to Grace, when he saw how his protégé was winning deserved success. "Jackson's abilities surprise me. I knew he was able, even brilliant, as his college record proved. But he seems to have an instinctive knowledge of the best way of treating troublesome cases, which is most re-

markable. Some of his methods are unique. I believe he will become one of the ablest physicians of his day."

"When a man is as devoted to his profession as is Jackson, I suppose success must always wait upon him," Grace rejoined.

"In a certain sense, yes. But this will not explain Jackson's phenomenal leap into public favor. Extraordinary gifts and powers must lie behind his winning manners and his love for his profession," Dr. Gordon responded.

One day as the busy young physician was passing down one of the streets in the poorer portion of the city, he was stopped and asked to visit a man who had just been shot. He hastily followed his guide into a house near by, where the wounded man lay. One glance into the pale, drawn face revealed the sufferer as none other than Judd Lawson. His wounds and injuries were very serious. They might prove fatal. Jack did what he could for him, and then ordered Mr. Lawson sent for. Judd was too weak from loss of blood to be able to talk.

"Whiskey has done its usual work," Jack reflected, as he went on his way, saddened by this unexpected encounter with his old comrade and room-mate. "If he lives he will

probably never be able to walk. The spine is injured."

His diagnosis proved correct. Judd's life was spared, but he could never again stand upon his feet. A drunken brawl had ended in making him a cripple for life.

"This is pretty trying, Judd," the young physician said, after the wounded man had recovered all the health that would ever come to him, and was able to be wheeled about the house in an invalid's chair. "For an active fellow like you to be tied to this chair does seem hard."

Judd's face looked brighter than Jack had seen it for many a long day as he replied: "Perhaps you'll hardly believe me, Jack, but I have been thinking all the morning how glad I am that I will never be able to run around again."

"Why?" was Jack's response, although his heart divined the answer.

"Well, I was such a poor, weak fool that I never could have kept from drink if I had got strong and active again. I tried my best after mother's death, but it was no good. The smell of whiskey and Charley Brandon's influence were too much for me. I got so I couldn't pass a saloon to save my life without turning

in. Now I am safe, and I hope I can live a decent life, even if I am tied to this chair the rest of my days."

Tears sprang to Jack's eyes. He took one of Judd's hands in his, and looking across the room where Mr. Lawson sat with his head bowed as though in deep thought, he said: "Almost two years ago, Judd, I began to ask God to save you from Charley Brandon and from whiskey. I believed he would do it. Sometimes I got disheartened, when I saw how far gone you were, but at such seasons I would plant myself afresh on one of God's promises, assured that in his own good time my prayer would be answered. When I first looked into your face that day you were shot, my heart sank. I thought you would die. But you see now that God has heard me. You are saved from Charley Brandon, and you are also saved from whiskey."

Mr. Lawson arose and came and stood by Judd's chair.

"He is certainly saved from Charley Brandon," he said, with strong feeling. "If ever again he dares to come where Judd is, I will shoot him as I would a dog. It is to him that Judd owes his ruin as well as his injured back."

"Not altogether, father," Judd answered.

“Charley is bad, and he never rested until he got me to be as wild as himself. But if I had never seen you touch wine or beer or ale, I would not have been so easily led off. I thought what you did was just right; and I felt I was man enough to drink just as I saw my father drink, without any danger of going too far. How well I remember with what pride I used to see you toss off two and three and even four glasses of wine, without ever seeming to feel them. Other fellows’ fathers would be drunk over half what you would take. It became the height of my ambition to be just like you. But I had a weak head as well as a weak will, so I went to the dogs.”

If Judd had struck his father in the face, Mr. Lawson could not have appeared more startled than he did when he heard these words. He stood for a full moment looking silently into his son’s face. Then he turned away, saying in a husky voice: “May God, forgive me! I thought I loved you well enough to have died for you. Yet I, it seems, and not Charley Brandon, am responsible for your ruined life.”

“Not wholly ruined, perhaps, father,” Judd said. “Now that I am safe from the saloon and from whiskey, I may be able to do something with my life after all. I have been think-

ing it all over this morning. You know I always had a clever head for figures. The study of mathematics was about the only thing I cared for at school. I could learn book-keeping and become your book-keeper. I suffer no pain now, and this would give me something to do; and it would also keep me from being a useless weight upon your hands."

Jack saw that Mr. Lawson's lip quivered with emotion as he listened to Judd's words.

"It will be better to leave them alone together," he thought. So with a hurried good-bye he went out.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### *BROKEN PLANS.*

A FEW weeks later, Dr. Jackson Cardington walked into the artistically decorated room which Grace called her "sanctum," with the air of a man who is the bearer of glad tidings. He was always welcomed into this cosy retreat by Grace, and many were the confidences he had poured into her sisterly ears during the years of his residence under the Grayson roof.

To-day he looked into her beaming face with unusual affection as he said: "I have a precious secret to tell you. Edith Denham has promised to become my wife before the leaves of next October begin to fade."

"Oh, I am so glad," Grace exclaimed, with deep pleasure. "Edith is the rarest girl I know. You are fortunate to have won her. She has already refused several fine offers of marriage, although she is only twenty-one in May."

"The fact that she loves me seems too marvellous to be true," Jack replied. "I can scarcely yet believe it. Surely God is good to



me to have given me the heart of this peerless girl. I have been wondering, as I came home, how I can prove to him my deep gratitude for his priceless gift."

"A life of simple and unquestioning obedience to his will is the only way, it seems to me, that we can ever show our love and gratitude for any of his goodness," Grace rejoined. "Sometimes the path of implicit obedience becomes difficult. Happy the soul who does not falter when such tests come. Edith Denham will make a true helpmeet for an earnest-hearted man, for she is a lovely and devoted Christian."

Jack continued to pour out his happiness and his plans for the future into the sympathizing ears of his listener, until a peremptory wail from the nursery brought Grace to her feet.

She had been the proud mother of a sturdy boy for almost a year, now, and when the child's cry was heard, nothing could long detain her from his cradle.

With a merry laugh she ran out, after Jack had promised, very soon, to finish unburdening himself of his budget of rosy-hued plans.

A few evenings later the young physician, with his lovely fiancée by his side, was listen-

ing to an eloquent appeal from a returned missionary for men and means with which to carry the gospel work into foreign lands.

It was not often, these days, that the busy physician could command an uninterrupted evening, but this proved to be one of those rare occasions.

The fluent speaker told, in burning words, of the sore need that existed for men of talent and consecration in the foreign field. Toward the close of his appeal, he said: "God is urgently calling for men of cultured intellect to penetrate, with gospel torch in hand, into the vast fields of heathen darkness, which still cover so large an area of the globe. He is asking for your best. Not for those men for whom no room is found at home, but rather for those whose going will leave a vacancy hard to fill. India, China, Japan, all call for workers with intellectual powers of the highest. Intellects so clear and so thoroughly trained that the Holy Spirit may possess them, as he possessed Paul, in such fulness as to make of them an irresistible power to be hurled against Satan and his kingdom.

"Only such can be effectively used of God toward the pulling down of Brahmanism, Hindooism, Confucianism, and all the effete systems of those peoples whose leaders are men of such

learning as causes them to laugh to scorn the missionary who goes to them with meagre intellect, or with untrained and unpolished mental faculties, expecting to reap a harvest of souls."

As Jack listened, his face wore a strangely-startled expression. His earnest eyes never left the speaker until the last word was uttered. Then he turned to the maiden by his side with cheeks so pale that, had she been less impressed herself by the address, must have aroused her wonder and anxiety.

They threaded their way in silence out of the thronged building, and it was with forced composure that Jack spoke of the evening's service as being one of the most solemn he had ever attended.

Miss Denham, like himself, seemed absorbed in her own thoughts, and made but brief reply to his remarks.

Once in his room, Jack Cardington sank upon his knees by the table, with his open Bible before him.

For hours he alternately read and prayed, only rising from his knees, now and then, to take a few hurried strides across his room. A terrible conflict was raging within his heart. His soul seemed to hear the words of Christ as addressed to himself: "Go THOU into all the

world and preach the gospel to every creature."

In vain he urged that his life-work was already mapped out—entered upon.

"Go!" was the answer that sounded like the knell of doom through his shrinking soul.

At last, broken and spent, he squarely faced the sacrifice which it seemed to him it must cost him to heed the call. His thoughts ran thus: "Earthly prospects all shattered. A noble ambition trampled upon. Dr. Gordon's expectations and hopes that his protégé would win a name which might reflect honor upon the one who had enabled him to reach that position thrust aside. And last, and bitterest of all, Edith must be given up."

Not for a moment did he contemplate the possibility of Miss Denham accompanying him to the foreign field. She was an only child, and he could not suppose that her parents would be willing to give her up, even if she herself could face separation from home and loved ones.

Who can paint a soul while it is passing through such an ordeal as was now being thrust upon this earnest-hearted young physician?

But God won. Slowly and calmly, at last, Jack read aloud these words from Holy Writ: "I be-

seech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Then he said: "Forever and forever, O God, I give myself, spirit, soul, and body, wholly, irrevocably to thee! Do with me as thou wilt. I now have no hope, no wish, no desire, but to do thy will."

All his anguish of soul rolled away. A great peace filled him. He smiled as he whispered: "I wonder if this is what Richard Baxter meant by his wonderful 'rest'? How often I have longed to know the exact meaning of his words when I have listened to Mrs. Gordon reading them."

It seemed to him that a divine ecstasy possessed him. Again he murmured: "The other Sabbath Dr. Read told us of the sainted Payson. I remember his very words as he lay dying: 'My soul seems swimming in a sea of glory.' Am I dying, I wonder? The glory seems to be all about me, the glory of the blessed Christ himself."

Never before had he felt so full of strong, vigorous life. At last he retired to his bed, but his joy was so sweet and thrilling that he could not, for a long time, close his eyes in sleep.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### *SEVERED TIES.*

SOME one has aptly said: "God is always better to us than our fears." Jackson Cardington experienced the truth of this saying when he found that, instead of being called upon to renounce Edith Denham, she joyfully said, after learning of his battle and his decision: "I would rather be the wife of a foreign missionary than share a throne with you. It has been my dream, from a child, to go to the foreign field to tell of Christ and his love."

"But can your father and mother give you up?" he asked. "Will it not break their hearts to be separated from you?"

"It will be hard," she replied. "But papa, at one time, wanted and intended to go out as a lay missionary. Only his feeble health prevented. He will consider it a privilege to give me to this work. See if I am not right."

So it proved. One by one all the seeming barriers melted away, until it almost appeared as though Jack's hard-fought battle had been waged against obstacles of straw which he himself had erected.

Dr. and Mrs. Gordon were moved to happy years when they heard of his changed plans. Instead of feeling aggrieved, as he had feared, they welcomed his going.

“Medical missionaries are so needed that I feel God has honored me far above my deserts in permitting me to aid in preparing you for this high post of service in his vineyard,” the former said.

Words of pleasure and of encouragement also met him when his pastor learned of his purpose.

Not only was this true, but some weeks later Dr. Read’s church asked the privilege of assuming the expense of Dr. Cardington’s support while he was in the foreign field.

Jack’s cup of thankful joy was now brimming, and if a happier man than he ever prepared to go forth to carry the light of the gospel into the “regions beyond,” certainly his Richmond friends had never met him.

The call for a medical missionary for one of their stations in India was before the board of his church, and Jack was appointed to this field.

Six months from the night of his terrible conflict with self and with ambition, his marriage with Edith Denham was solemnized. The

next day the consecrated and Spirit-filled couple left for their future field of labor. Tears and smiles were mingled upon the faces of the dear friends who watched their departure. Tears, because the human heart is weak and ever prone to cling to the object of its affection. Smiles, because the Master had so honored these youthful servants as to call them to a post of peril, there to hold aloft his banner of love before a people who were perishing by the millions without ever having heard of Christ or of his wonderful salvation.

A few days before his departure Jack went to make a final call on Judd Lawson. He asked Edith to accompany him, and she gladly assented. She had learned from him the history of the Lawson family, and her heart had gone out in tender sympathy toward Judd, and she earnestly desired to meet him. Their visit was made in the evening, and father and son were both at home, as Jack had hoped would be the case.

Judd looked bright and contented, and he said to Jack, with the cheery voice of his boyhood days: "It's a good time I am having keeping the books. Father says I am the most careful book-keeper he ever had. That is saying a good deal, for Hammond was as careful as a man could be, it always seemed to me."



“How do you manage about a desk?” Jack inquired.

“Oh, father has had a chair with a desk attached made on purpose for me. It is very nice, indeed. I am the most important man about the store, now,” and Judd laughed in quite his old, jolly way.

He and Mr. Lawson were both loud in their expressions of regret over Jack’s going away. The latter looked earnestly at Miss Denham and said: “Could you not persuade him to stay? India has such a dreadful climate that I should think you would be afraid to go there.”

“That is one reason why we are glad to be appointed to that field,” Edith answered. “Dr. Cardington’s skill will find ample scope for exercise among the poor people out there.”

“But you—don’t you feel afraid to live there?” Mr. Lawson persisted. “I don’t see how you can be willing to leave your friends and go so far away to be buried from everybody you have ever known.” He scanned her countenance intently as he awaited her reply.

Jack and Judd were also listening for her answer. It came in a moment, with such a happy light breaking over her face that Jack

alone could understand the secret of her joy.

“If this life were all, I might shrink back. Or if Christ were less mighty, less tender toward those who love and trust him, I might feel afraid. As it is, I am glad to go where he asks me, for I know he will go with me, and I can never feel alone or lonely where he is.”

Mr. Lawson looked so softened as well as surprised as he heard these words that, after a moment's silence, Edith ventured to add: “How I wish you knew what a wonderful Friend he is to those who will accept of his love. Everything is so changed when once we know him.”

Whether these words would ever bear fruit, she could not tell. Something in his face encouraged her to hope that he might now be feeling his need of having this mighty Friend, for whom she had witnessed, as his Friend and Helper.

Before they left, Jack laid a beautifully bound pocket Bible in Judd's hand, saying: “Will you take this as my parting token of love for you? And will you promise me to read in it every day?”

Judd gave the promise with great heartiness, and his face glowed with pleasure as he ex-

amined the soft and costly binding of the sacred volume.

“Many a soul has found Christ in reading from his word. May Judd be one of the number,” was the donor’s thought as he bade these friends of his boyhood good-bye, and turned his face toward the untried future.

## CHAPTER XXX.

*"IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS."*

**F**IVE busy years have rolled on to join the long procession which make up the solemn past. What record they have borne to God of Dr. Cardington's life in India may be gathered from one or two brief hours, during which we will silently stand by his side, and try to learn, from his words and acts, what we desire to know.

Has the noble ideal which he early enshrined in his heart been realized in his life? Has the sweet mystery of "Christ in us," which Paul tells us "was so long hidden from the ages," been so fully manifested to and in him as to render him, through it, "more than conqueror" in all his daily and hourly conflicts with the adversary of souls?

A large hospital has grown up under the young physician's fostering care. It is in this that we find him. Many suffering ones have already, to-day, felt the touch of his skillful hand; but it is beside one special cot that he now lingers. Upon it is stretched the form of a youth of some eighteen years. His face is a

noble one, and his eyes, as they seek Dr. Cardington's, hold a grateful expression which tells of pain eased and disease conquered through the medium of this earnest-hearted physician.

"The remedies that I gave you could have brought you no relief, except as my God blessed them," Dr. Cardington gently said. "Even the surgical operation which I performed might have increased, instead of having eased, your troubles, had he not placed his seal upon it. It is God alone who 'forgiveth all our iniquities, and healeth all our diseases.'"

For a moment the youth gazed searchingly into the young physician's face. Then he turned his head impatiently away and said: "I believe in you, Dr. Cardington, but not in your God. Why are you always telling me about him?"

"Because my God is a God of love, and he longs to pour his love into your poor, restless heart, Chandra. When once you have learned and tasted of this wonderful love, your whole life will be changed."

As he finished speaking, Dr. Cardington drew from his pocket a Testament, and laid it upon the young man's pillow, adding, before he turned away: "I want you to read this book. It tells of God's great love to you, and it will

show you why he has sent you to the hospital. It was that you might find him, and that he might fill your heart with such joy as you have never dreamed possible."

"The missionaries have robbed me of my mother, and now you want me to worship your God, and make me lose my father, too," the youth replied, with tremulous lips.

Dr. Cardington only smiled, for he saw that, in spite of his impatient tone and manner, Chandra's hand had already grasped the sacred volume.

"Curiosity to learn about the God who has stolen his mother's heart from Buddha will prompt him to read it," he thought, as he passed on to carry help and relief to other suffering ones.

Wherever a patient was able to listen, the young doctor spoke a few tender words about the loving Father who had sent him with healing remedies to ease their pain, that he might also pour healing into their souls. Some listened carelessly, others earnestly, and a few scoffingly; but all had faith in the skillful physician, although the majority rejected his God.

There was a peculiar magnetism about this young doctor, which seemed to draw all hearts toward him. This enabled him to speak words

for Christ without giving offence, from which others were debarred.

Once again we will glance upon Dr. Cardington ere we bid him a final adieu.

Two full months have passed. He is now at home. A chubby boy is in his arms, and his wife is by his side. Her face, although thinner than when we last saw her, wears such a light of deep happiness that one knows without the telling that no regrets for her life in India have ever visited her.

"Chandra's mother was here yesterday," Edith says, smilingly. "She is very hopeful, although she has no positive proof that he is changed."

As she speaks, two figures approach the door. One is that of a woman, the other is the young man whom we saw in the hospital.

Dr. Cardington advances toward him with outstretched hands. He feels within his soul what this visit means, and his heart whispers: "My Father, I thank thee."

Without waiting for any formal welcome, the youth says: "Dr. Cardington, your God has found me. It was while I was reading his book. Oh! I cannot tell you how it was. I only know that he found, and that he showed

me my heart; and then, afterwards, he showed me his love; and now I want to be called a Christian, and I want to be baptized."

The woman who had accompanied him is softly weeping, but her happy face tells that her tears are those of joy. Edith's eyes are also moist, and she stoops over her little boy, whom the doctor has placed upon the floor, to hide her emotion.

"Do you know, Chandra, what it means to avow yourself a Christian?" Dr. Cardington inquires, gazing searchingly into the young man's face.

"I do. It means losing my home, my father, my friends, my position; giving up all that I ever counted dear or worth living for," is the prompt reply.

"And you are willing to make this sacrifice, are you?"

"I am. Two days ago I would rather have died than do it; but since I saw him—the Son of your God, who was fastened to the cross—I do not seem to care for anything but to have him always near me; and I know that I must be a Christian, and be willing to be hated by my people, if I am to have him walk with me all the time."

As he thus speaks Chandra's face holds a



glow that expresses more to his three companions than do his words.

"Another soul is won for Christ," Dr. Cardington's heart is saying, and he is filled with deep and exultant thanksgiving. Very solemnly, and yet joyously, he says: "Our Lord said to his disciples, 'Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life.'"

Then he adds: "Shall we kneel and thank him for the great love which has caused him to seek and to reveal himself in saving power to you, Chandra?"

Instantly the youth drops upon his knees, and soon the voice of prayer and praise arises from the young physician's lips.

As we gaze into the devout and upturned faces of the kneeling figures, it seems that the light which made Stephen's face "to shine as it had been the face of an angel" is also transfiguring these countenances.

One can imagine that the battlements of heaven are crowded with angelic beings who are eagerly gazing, with untold joy, upon "one more sinner who has repented."

As Dr. Cardington prays, one feels that his spirit stands in the very presence of his God; and one is not surprised that souls are constantly being given him for his Master.

Surely he is learning much of the wonderful life which these words express, and which he now repeats: "Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."



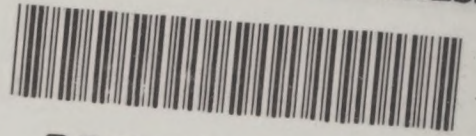








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