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BEYOND RECALL.

CHAPTER XIX.

A CHANCE OF ESCAPE.

"I've seen enough like this before, Sim," said the old warder to his mate, when they led me back in my useless madness to my cell. "Leave him to himself, poor beggar; he'll come round when the fit's over."

When the paroxysm had spent itself, I sank down like one exhausted in the darkest corner like a beast to the last stage of endurance. I saw or felt little other difference around me and the bricks and mortar, for I had laddled up. My feeling of a burning animation was a physical hunger, but a craving for that which was necessary to my existence as bread to the famine—every way as maddening. I must have what vestige of reason remained, I must not to be cheated by the subtle cunning of wild fury. There in every case of mad.

I was perfectly self possessed now to simply to reason upon justly and even generously.

I argued with myself. I am exist contrary to reason. It is against nature that the guilty suffer their crime while innocent misery. An injustice must triumph. The foulest wrong that ever inflicted upon an innocent, guileless net. I thrust a knife into over me that night. Who do we stand now? Oh my folly! I have lost. Every day adds to every day diminishes my fair. If we go on at mercy will be the end of all the old life and my own at the same blow if possible to the whole world. Mind if I am still alive, we shall be by side—dead. Life is a curse, even for us! That is how it must end.

Easily enough with when I come within treacherous, faithless naked hands will strangle her. It was my tongue to my wife and the warders. Mercy would be a pitiful thing out of all proportion to colossal guilt. Believe the word of whose looks are fellow's a maniac, way I should Sevenoaks, Kent; and the man me. Oh, he may as bad here and loved and trusted. to escape from question. Not by the folly of my temper compounded on the spite without nothing left Thank Heaven the words that I must keep my sleep well, go on as the same way explain and every word is a splitting while. I watch and study which Providence the accomplishment of human. I am the same hand."

I picked my I heard the corridor with the washing my

later now." he

again now. I was a friend for

thirteen years of human nature people feel anxious

him, with my chosen for his sake I'll be glad to to-morrow

with the gang something on imagination Divine interpolate plantation, of the culti- a great bon- for a week, and hadm and cub- filled patch of Two men had feeding the rabbits as it came up. for the men together to their the warder men meant mis- at when we got them back the fire, and

that job to-day, a day's digging

he wished me muttering to him-

whose name was to work, the questions as to what an hour after he Tilly look- the change of twice I caught and indecisive when our eyes reluctance habit-

ing as a heart

Asked.

I'm a poor fellow and hard up for digesting up for a shovel-

in added, coming stand a chance

how, a split- for last. new me to speak, yes like, or hold

how of rubbish, and, searching look, he

look off, either keep free man to without the

offer and stay you've got a

give every drop of for forty-eight

unless I show you a poor fellow and and then he on his wife and other conditions him. But I had no I was impressed with I had put an opportunity that use to my own

I wouldn't make a hand an equal chance

come to have it to chance," the Czar and me went, been helping at the job for four days, and you do a nothing. We'll draw

"Right," said quietly. "And if Heaven hand I do this I shall win," I added, with the conviction that I should succeed.

"For all we hand ourselves by all that's come to be faithfully by the cast. The eye who goes to do as much for the other as it will for his own self."

"I agree to that."

"Then presently, when I've gone to the top of the heap to show my skill, and as old Jim napes, with the guard is about, we'll draw our lots.

A shifty look in his eye led me to suspect that if he lost he might suggest some impossible scheme for me to attempt, reserving his own for another occasion. I was already too cunning to be outwitted by another's subtlety.

"You'll have to show me how the thing is to be done before we draw lots," said I.

"Curse your suspicions," growled he, savagely; "I've a good mind to give it you."

He went off, and for a time left me in fearful doubt whether he would not abandon the scheme; but presently, to my intense relief, I saw him scramble up the heap and glance all around as he forked the rubbish down.

"It's no good falling out," he said, more cheerfully, when he came back; "the chance might never come again. Graves may take me off to-morrow. Look about you mate, and tell me if you can see any sign of a hole long enough for a cove to lay himself down in."

I worked my way round the fire, shovelling the stuff on and patting it down, all the while searching the ground round about for the sign of any hole or displacement of earth.

"No," said I, coming back to Tilly; "I can see no hole."

"There is one, though, not six foot from where you're standing. And a nice old job we've had to get the earth out and fill up the place with tater tops, and we shouldn't a' done it nigger if the wind hadn't been a-blowing down so as we could work in the smoke. See that bit o' red brick over there?"

"Yes."

"Go over there and make pretend to be scraping the bits together; drive your fork down close to the brick, and you'll feel the tater tops underneath."

I did as he bade me. Standing with one foot beside the brick, I could neither see nor feel any difference between the earth there and the surrounding ground; but when I thrust my fork in, I perceived that Tilly had told the truth. With a look and a nod I expressed my satisfaction on going back.

"We'll bank the fire in before going up for dinner, and when we come back we'll open a vent on this side. I've got a bit o' damp stuff handy, to clap on, that'll make a rare smother; then if the wind'll only blow this way getting on for dark, we'll get out the tater tops, and one of us'll get in for the other to kiver over nice and comfortable in a jiffy. With a bit of green over your head you can breathe pretty well. I've tried it. Now for the draw."

With the next forkful of rubbish he brought back two square pieces of paper; both exactly the same size, about an inch square. One was marked with "C," and the other with "T."

"Poor old Cowan. He'd got everything ready, he had. This is his bit of paper what he was to try his luck on. Here's his letter, and this here's mine. You take his."

He gave me the paper marked "C," stuck his fork in the ground, and having gathered some rubbish up in his arms and thrown it on the heap, came back to me.

"Now, then, look sharp," said he, "put your paper alongside mine—on the handle here."

I laid my paper beside his, on the top of the fork handle.

"Come close beside me," said he. "Give me your hand, and swear to act square by me as I swear to act square by you."

I took the oath, holding his hand.

"Now turn round, and when I say three, blow with me, and the paper as goes furthest from the fork is the winner, and t'other is the loser."

We turned; he counted "one, two, three," and we blew. It seems ludicrous enough now, but then it e-fever of hope and dread brought out drops of sweat on our faces.

The papers fluttered in the air and fell within a foot of the ground. The breeze caught up mine and swept it a couple of yards beyond the other.

"You've won, matey," said Tilly, in a tone of deep dejection. "I don't bear you no ill will, but God help my wife and kids."

CHAPTER XX.

BURIED ALIVE.

As I ate my dinner, I had time to reflect upon the hazardous undertaking before me. I knew that I must be for hours buried alive; that when I broke out of my grave in the night, I must make my way across the wild moor, eluding the men sent out in pursuit; and that before I dared to venture near a town, I must procure some sort of costume to conceal my prison dress. The scheme was desperate enough to daunt, in its very inception, any one but a convict or a madman. It had no terrors for me. I could not even doubt the issue, believing, as I did, that I was the chosen instrument for the execution of a Divine vengeance.

"If the wind don't change, it's all up," said Tilly, when we were alone again; "with the smoke a blowing that way we can never open the ground, let alone lay you in and cover you up, without being spotted."

"If it isn't for to-day, it's for to-morrow," I replied, calmly.

"Supposin' the wind's contrary to morrow, or suppose old Graves jobs you off a diggin', how then, matey?"

"I shall escape all the same," said I. "Do you think Cowan was inspired with the idea of making that pit for nothing? Do you believe he was called away for nothing. Is it nothing that Graves singled me out to take his place—nothing that the same breath of wind carried my piece of paper further than yours?"

"Well," replied Tilly; "your questions is perplexing, but I'll answer for it, Cowan wouldn't have been inspired to make that pit if he'd a' guessed he was scrapin' it out for you. As for old Graves calling him off for nothing, and putting of you in his place, all I can say is I hopes Cowan won't take it nasty and blow on us. With regard to the breeze a carryin' your lot further than mine, the only remark I've got to make is dam the breeze!"

We worked for some time in silence, and then, after eyeing me curiously, he said—

"I've been thinking over your argument, mate. It do seem curious that things should turn out one way when they might just as easy turn out another. Are you a religious cove?"

"I believe in a just God," said I, with a strang feeling of exultation.

"Ah, that's it! I knew a man who got on wonderful just because he got what he called faith; and he didn't have to work hard, nor pick pockets, nor nothing. There must be something in it; still," said he, rubbing his stubby chin, and looking up at the smoke, "I should feel more confident like if the wind would change a bit. It won't be amiss, neither, to keep on banking up the fire t'other side a bit."

Again we worked for some time without speaking.

"I say, if you're a real religious sort of covey," he said, breaking the silence, "and if you could allow that I've got some kind of hand in getting you off, you might give my poor old woman a bit of a help when you're safe and comfortable."

I reflected for a moment, and recollecting the money Mr. Renshaw held at my disposal I promised I would help his wife if he told me where to find her.

"I'll tell you where to find her for certain," said he. "But, first of all, let me know what you intend to do. If you get there in the dark, which way shall you go?"

"I shall trust to the guidance of Providence," said I.

"For a change of togs and a bit of ready-money and everything?" his eyes growing round with wonder.

I nodded.

"It's a slicker!" he said, giving up the mystery of faith with a shake of his head. "However, if it don't go against your principles, you'd better keep in a straight line with tile run of the High Street; keepon goin' right over the hollow, over so far, till you come to a brook; and when you come to that brook, take and turn to your left hand, and go on and on along that running water, till you reach a bit of a bridge made of wood. Standing on that bridge, if there's any light at all, you'll see a sort of a cottage by the side of the road leading to the bridge, which might have been a turnpike house once on a time. Most likely there'll be a nightlight burning in one of the windows that will tell you for sure that there's no mistake. You knock three good raps at the door, and when you hear a voice say, 'who's there?' say this, 'It's me, Jack Tilly.' Then the door will be opened, and a woman will let you in. That woman is my wife, and she'll take care of you for my sake, bless her heart."

His eyes filled with tears.

"I can't help it," said he, dashing his cuff up to his face and stamping his heavy foot. "I thought to hear her voice and see the little ones."

"We've been hopin' and hopin' and looking forrards to it so long," he continued, presently. "The old woman managed to put by a bit of money out of her earnings, and when she thought she'd got enough, she left London and took this bit of a house, laying up things for me against the time I should get away; but her money's all gone, pretty nigh, and she must go back to London, and there's an end to all our hopes of meeting, unless you give her a bit of help to keep her and the kids alive until another chance turns up. It's all her invention, and her 'as kept me hopin' to get away. She knew I could never get off the moor without togs and a bit of money; and I'll tell you how she managed to let me know without getting her letters stopped by the governor. She's a scholar, you know; a regular first-class scholar, as writes like a dictionary. Well, I couldn't make it out at first, how she came to write so badly, and spell her words wrong, till I found out one day that every letter as wasn't square spelling went to make up the words she had to tell me secretly. There's for you! When I tumbled to it, I took to spelling bad myself, and that way we've kept up a regular conversation unbeknown to any one. God knows when I shall get another chance of putting away, and then perhaps Providence will send some other cove to profit by it. However, matey, I won't grudge you your good fortune if you do a good turn for the missus."

Our shadows grew longer and longer. At length Tilly passing me with his fork, said, with ill-concealed sarcasm, "If the wind don't change pretty quick, you'll have to make up your mind as Providence don't mean you to hook it to-day."

At that very moment the column of smoke spiralled round and enveloped us. We got out of it, rubbing our smarting eyes, and Tilly choking with the pungent, acrid fumes that had got down his throat.

To me this was nothing short of a Divine demonstration. I think the effect upon Tilly was scarcely less convincing.

"There must be something in it," he said again, gasping for breath; "it's a warning if ever there was one. Well, now for it, anyways. Come on, matey."

He made his way into the cloud of smoke bending down close to the ground. I followed close at his heels.

"Here we are," he said through his closed lips as he came to a stop; "stick your hands in down there, and lay hold of the stuff in a lump."

I plunged my hands through the loose earth, and laid hold of the stuff of closely matted haulm. With one or two vigorous jerks we scattered aside the overlying earth, and then a strong and long pull brought up the roll.

"Back to the fire out of this! I'm a busting."

His face was purple through holding his breath so long when we met on the side opposite the smoke.

"I couldn't have stood it another minute without bursting," said he; "and it won't be amiss to show ourselves. When you see me go down off the top of the heap, you put your way round the fire into the smoke, and make for the hole again. This wind won't hold on forever."

I obeyed his instructions, and once more we met in the smoke beside the long shallow pit.

"In you go, matey, and good luck to you," said he; "the wind's baffling."

I throw myself in the hole and stretched myself out full length on my face. Tilly stuffed a lump of haulm about my head, and with furious haste shovelled the loose earth upon me.

"Lord help us, the smoke's going!" I heard him mutter. "Don't stir. Time enough when we're seen. It's all right; the smoke's hanging on the ground, and rolling over towards old Graves. I must stamp it down a bit. Never mind if it hurts a bit. His words grew fainter and fainter as the closed quicker and deeper over me. The last words I distinguished were, "Don't forget the missus and the youngsters; he good to 'em." But I heard the grating of the shovel above still a little longer; then that ceased.

"He has gone back to the fire," thought I. We are much of a size, he and I; by showing himself first in one place, then soon after in another, which is easy enough with the smoke about, no one will suspect that one of the two is gone. He will do that, without doubt, for the love of his wife and children. Poor wretch! he would give anything to be lying here in my place, but what would I give—my chance of liberty, my life—all, to change places with him in the love of one good woman? What a contrast between us; he longing for escape to help the woman whose love for him is pure and noble; I to take the life of one who is steeped to the lips in infamy. How shall I do it? I must hide in that cottage till my hair is grown and the prison look is worn off from my face; then I must go to Sevenoaks and find her out. But how shall I kill he? I need not trouble my head about that. That power that is leading me to her will put the means in my way. It is decreed; who can evade the blow? There's the shovel at work again; the wind has blown the smoke over me. It would seem marvelous this combination of helpful circumstances if one had no faith in accident.

I felt that the earth was being stamped down upon my body. I could not move a muscle; it seemed as if I were encased in solid concrete. Every minute respiration was becoming more difficult. With each breath a ton of earth seemed added to the weight upon my loins and shoulders.

"You're all right?" asked Tilly, his voice sounding far away.

"Yes," I answered with as much force as I could muster.

The sense of suffocation—a terror to think of now—gave me no moral uneasiness then. The physical pain was nothing to me; I knew that Providence would enable me to live it out.

Gradually these pains gave place to a numbness in the lower extremities, as if death were stealing upon me, but the suffering from fulness in my head and chest was unabated. I tasted blood in my mouth; my lips were wet with it.

I was losing consciousness, when, above the gushing and throbbing of the blood in my ears, I distinguished the hurried tramp of feet above and the report of two shots fired in succession.

"They have found out my escape," thought I. "Thank God, one stage in this ordeal is past."

I had no knowledge of how long I had been lying there. If these men had been mustered for return to prison when my absence was discovered, then it must be nearly five. How long must I lie now before it would be dark enough to break out. How could I tell? How could I measure time when every minute must seem an hour? Then the terrible question came to mind; shall I have the force to move when I dare to venture? All feeling was gone from my limbs; they might be dead and powerless. Could I exist till Tilly came the next morning to find the ground as he left it? Would he not find me dead? Could I endure this suffocation even an hour longer? Must not a vessel burst? As my faith began to waver my torture increased. Dread of some physical agony beyond any I had yet endured began to maddem me.

What were they doing above there? At one moment I heard the sound of shovels scraping the ground. Had Cowan, learning my escape and seeing no further hope for himself, told of the means by which I had obtained concealment? Were the men searching the ground for me? Was I being dug out like a ferret? A moment later I felt the heavy thud of earth being thrown down; it felt it strike the ground over my chest; it was like a rib being driven into my lungs. Then I could no longer draw breath. What had happened? Were they burying me deeper and deeper, rendering escape impossible?

With less faith in miracles, Tilly had thrust a piece of wood through the ground into the haulm which surrounded my head; this he carefully withdrew now, leaving a channel for the entrance of air. Nevertheless, the pain of breathing increased; my face, my tongue, my neck swelled as if the vessels must break with the blood, forced upwards from my constricted limbs and body. Then a terrible cramp seized my feet and crept slowly upwards. It was as if my tendons were being dragged from the muscles. My fingers began to tingle, as if they were being powerfully galvanised; and then the same tearing of nerve and tendon spread up my arms. Without that strange semi-religious confidence in Divine grace the torture would have been unendurable, and I must have burst out of the grave in which I lay buried.

With the convulsive effort of a man at the point of existence, blind now to the consequences, unconscious of the thing I did, my limbs contracted violently, and I heaved my shoulders up.

Oh, that first gasp of air! I can give no idea of its effect upon me, for every form of physical relief is inadequate to describe it by comparison. Whether I was safe from discovery, or whether I had betrayed myself, was, at the time, a matter of indifference; it was enough to feel that I breathed again.

But presently I noticed that the sound of falling earth still continued; that shoved I had not been discovered. "How is it," I asked myself, "that though that terrible weight is removed from my body, and my head is comparatively free, I can see nothing?"

Being my numbed limbs little by little as they regained strength, I raised my body high. Still all was dark. I raised my arms cautiously, and found that I was covered with dry potato haulm. Then the mystery was explained.

The guard, suspecting I had concealed myself in the rubbish heap, were pulling it down and stacking it in a fresh place, and the lighter stuff had been thrown over the very spot where I lay buried.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

STAGE FRIGHT IN OLD SPEAKERS.

Cases of Timidity and Dread Among Seasoned Orators.

It has been recently stated by those who knew him well that Mr. Spurgeon was still another example of the fact that public men often quake on the eve of their great successes. Though few guessed it, he was nervous in speaking, and one result of the disastrous panic at the Surrey Gardens in 1856 was that he ever afterward dreaded excitement in great audiences. At the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, 1872, the orator was in buoyant and brilliant form. Yet before delivering his address he had been attacked by nervous sickness in the anteroom. As we have suggested, this curious preliminary recoil seems to be a frequent characteristic of the efforts that establish or increase fame. Inquiry shows that some form of timorousness dogs distinction like its shadow. It may have peculiar and even eccentric features. Mr. Edmund Yates has mentioned the case of a distinguished living politician, noted for his dash and aplomb while in the House of Commons, to whom on one occasion Sir Henry Halford, the eminent physician, gave an account of a railway accident. The narrative was elaborate in his description, and it was too much for his listener's nerves. In the midst of the story the Doctor had to break off. His friend was on the point of fainting.

Condition of mind bordering on panic has often prevailed up to the test moment with men who have had to face critical audiences. The late Lord Derby earned the title of the "Rupert of debate" from his dashing alacrity, but he declared, "When I am going to speak, my throat and lips are as dry as those of a man who is going to be hanged." He never rose to speak without experiencing a peculiar and very unpleasant "nervous tremor." The same was said of Lord Lyndhurst. That eminent jurist and statesman was totally unable to free himself, from beginning to end of his career, of trepidation and nervous emotion when he got upon his legs to address either a court or Parliament. Canning, too, told his friends that he knew beforehand, by a disagreeable set of symptoms, when he should win and hold the ear of the House and extort the admiration even of his adversaries. He was always conscious of an ominous chill of fear. It meant not failure, as was his dread, but a fine oration. Emilio Castelar, the silver-tongued Spanish tribune, is simply miserable on the eve of a great speech. His unrest and anxiety on such occasions are a characteristic feature of the man. He wanders distraught about the building in which the Cortes is in session. "He rushes into the cafe to take a glass of water; seems to be seized with a fever; fancies he will not know how to put the words together; that he will be laughed at or hissed; not a single lucid idea of his speech remains in his head; he has confused and forgotten everything"—until the moment when he looks around upon the expectant faces and delivers the first sentence of his address. Then words do not fail; they come to his help in statelly sonorous order. Then courage does not flag. He is a statesman with a mission, inspired and earnest. Every atom of timorousness has evaporated.

Marvels of the Under-World.

The mystery of the under-world appeals with irresistible force to the imagination. Tales of the wonders concealed in caverns and hidden under the ground have always interested the inhabitants of every country. And the strange and splendid scenes frequently discovered in such places as the Mammoth Cave, the Luray caverns, the sea caves of Bermuda and the Blue Grotto of Capri have lent wings to the fancy which pictures still more marvellous spectacles "underneath the ground."

As a matter of fact it is probable that we are by yet acquainted with but comparatively few of the spacious caverns that exist at no great depth beneath the earth, and which, filled with air, are capable of being explored by men. The explorations of M. E. A. Martel in France, have recently added very largely to our knowledge of what has been called the "subterranean geography" of that country. Similar work in other countries would undoubtedly produce many surprising revelations of what the earth contains.

It is well known that a vast quantity of water exists beneath the surface of the ground, and that even considerable streams are flowing there. Mr. Baldwin Latham has lately called attention in England to a very interesting method of tracing the courses of these underground streams.

At certain seasons, especially in September and October, peculiar lines of fog may be observed close to the ground, and he says these indicate where streams of water are flowing at a considerable depth beneath the surface. During the greater part of the year some of the strata between the surface of the earth and the underground water are sufficiently cold to condense the vapor arising from the water and thus prevent its appearance at the surface. But in the autumn the soil is frequently warmed so deeply that no condensing stratum of cold exists, and then the vapor reaching the surface forms lines of fog following the course of the concealed streams of water underneath.

It is suggested that here is another of those curious provisions of nature which benefit the living by furnishing the earth; for the vapor which proceeds from streams deep underground, being ordinarily condensed not far under the surface, may serve to sustain the life of plants during seasons of drought.

Mr. Latham thinks that this is the a on the great chalk downs of England

A Curious Bird.

A very strange bird, about which people in general know very little, is the mound fowl of Australia and Guinea. This family of birds works things largely on the common wealth principle of Bellamy. They scratch up a large mound of earth and foliage, in the thickest underbrush of the forest, scoop out a hole on top of the knoll some distance toward the center, there deposit their eggs; fill up the hole, round off the top and leave their eggs to be hatched by the fermentation of the decomposing vegetable matter. The strange thing about it is that several females work in harmony, each depositing one or more eggs in the mound. The young chickens are full fledged as soon as they make their appearance, and are not so much a source of care and trouble to their mothers as youngsters usually are.

These mound fowls have been studied with great interest by naturalists. One who examined several mounds, some of which had not yet been completed, says they are about 45 feet in circumference, and if rounded in proportion at the top would have been fully 5 feet in height. Mounds with their tops rounded contain eggs. Those mounds that do not contain eggs have the centres so scooped out as to form a hollow. The eggs are deposited in a circle with the strictest regard to geometrical precision. They rest on their smaller apex, and the earth around them has to be very carefully removed to avoid breaking the shell, which is extremely fragile when first exposed to the atmosphere. The interior of the mound is composed of the finer particles of gravel mixed with vegetable matter, the formation of which produces warmth sufficient, as stated, for the purpose of hatching. The heat around the eggs is about 89° In appearance these birds resemble the domestic fowl, but they are extremely wary and so effectually conceal their hot-beds in the thick underbrush as to make their discovery almost wholly upon chance. The fact that the mounds resemble the forest debris adds to the illusion that they are natural elevations of the ground, and increases the difficulty of finding them.

A Plausible Story.

Lady—"Why are you wandering around the country, I should like to know, instead of staying at home and taking care of your family?"

Tramp—"You see, mum, my wife had a very good servant girl—a regular jewel, mum."

"That doesn't seem possible."

"There never was but one perfect girl, and my wife had her, mum."

"Mercy! What a lucky woman!"

"Yes, mum, so my wife often said. But, you see, mum, the girl didn't like me."

"She didn't."

"No, mum. She said, my wife would have to discharge her or me, so she discharged me."

"O, I see. Here's some money."

In nearly all the markets of German cities fish is sold alive.

YOUNG FOLKS.

Not A True Story.

There is a funny little girl, who reads no every day
The most surprising travels from a volume worn and gray,
In lands where monkeys buy and sell, and talk and go to school
And there are lions, numerous as fishes in a pool
And cannibal savage men who build great cities out of bones,
And dwarfs, whose woods are bits of moss, their mountains pebble-stones.
But the book in which the roads about these travellers of renown
Is the Family Receipt Book, and she holds it upside down.

The Pumpkin-Pie Tree.

AGNES CARR SAGE.

Little Juan and Juanita Pettitoes stood in front of the farmhouse, biting half-moons out of generous pieces of such delicious, rich, spicy, hot pumpkin pie as only an old-fashioned housekeeper knows how to concoct. Now, some nineteenth century wiseacres contend that pumpkin pie making is a lost art, one that went out with the Pilgrim Mothers. But Mrs. Pettitoes' pastry was good enough for anybody, and, as the savory morsels melted upon their tongues, her offspring nodded, and gurgled, and smacked in a manner that expressed most entire and complete satisfaction.

"Dood! Ithn't it?" lisped small Juanita.

"Prime! A regular Jim Dandy of a pie!" agreed Juan, with a beaming smile. A smile that was almost grotesquely reflected and exaggerated in the shining black countenance of poor Almanis Crow, a lank Negro boy, who just then ambled up, casting green glances of envy upon the tempting brown and yellow slices fast disappearing down two narrow "red lines." For this son of Africa, who had breakfasted very lightly that morning, was painfully conscious of an inward craving in the region of the waistband, while his "sweet tooth" seemed suddenly possessed with a jumping toothache.

But if hunger sharpens the appetite, it sharpens the wits as well, and, instead of whining out a piteous appeal for a crumb of charity, in the manner peculiar to the professional beggar, this worthy namesake of the Bible falsifier came to an abrupt stop in the middle of the road, and held up both hands in horrified amazement, exclaiming:

"Well, well, bress my soul! Ef you chilluns isn't jest de most wastefullest critters I done come across in a month of Sundays! To be gobblin' down punkin' pie in dat ar fashion, when you might raise a tree dat will gib yer a dozen turnobers ebery day in de week?"

"What do you mean by that?" demanded Juan, pausing in his crescent making, while little Juanita hid her last piece of crust—the part fancifully decorated by the jigging iron under her apron as though she feared the newcomer had designs upon it.

"I mean what I sez," replied the wily youth, "Ain't you neber heard tell ob a pie tree?"

"Why,—no!" and now the tiny pair drew near in curious wonder. "Is there really such a thing?"

"To be sho dere is! To be sho! And I low you is drefful iggerant not to know dat?"

"I know there is a bread-fruit tree!" reported Juan, who, being counted rather a bright scholar, was stung by this slur; "we learned about it in our geography. It is a native of hot countries, and bears a fruit resembling a loaf of bread in appearance." The lad rattled off this quotation with considerable pride.

"Yep! and I spect de pie tree he belong to de same fambly. What I was raised dey was thick as posiup; apple pie trees, mince-pie trees, crumb-pie trees! Ef you is hongry, all you hab to do step out an' help yourself to a hot tart."

"Oh, dear! How nithe! I with they grew here," signed little Juanita.

"So dey would. So dey would of you planted 'em. That's why I sez you is wicked, wasteful chillens to be swallowin' down dose slices instead ob turnin' 'em into seed."

Big and bright as full moons became the four blue eyes gazing into the mischievous Ananias's ebony features, which never flinched a muscle, while Juan asked, with an excited tremble in his shrill, boyish voice, "Do you want us to believe that these pieces of ma's pie would grow up into a tree?"

"Grow! Grow like Jack's beanstalk if you plant um right; in a nice, sunny spot, wid a little fence aroun' um, but no cur'ous top. Dey jest want de sun an' de air, an' dey spring up like toad-stools, so in few days you hab enuff ripe pies to stock a bake-shop. S'pose yer try it an' see."

"But we haven't a great deal left," said Juan, contemplating, somewhat ruefully, the remains of their feast.

"There are five whole pithes in the pantry shelf," suggested Juanita, in a stage whisper.

"Den jest you borrow de biggest, an' next week you kin return two for one," prompted the shrewd Ananias, who already saw prospects of a delectable meal floating before his mental vision; while a few more highly-colored statements from his roay imagination soon sent the small Pettitoes dancing off in a perfect ferment of enthusiastic anticipation. And, in the dusk of evening, two figures might have been seen emerging from the farmhouse, bearing something carefully between them; something which they hid, or planted, in the south corner of the One Acre lot.

"Now, we mustn't look at it for three days," remarked Juan, as he hammered in the last paling of a protecting inclosure. "But, then, we can make a Thanksgiving and Christmas for every one in the neighborhood. Oh, won't it be fun! and how surprised and pleased ma will be!"

But I fancy the mother would have been more astonished than delighted if, an hour later, she could have beheld a certain naughty, black Crow, supping upon her masterpiece, and chuckling gleefully at the result of his strategy. "You is cut out for a politician, 'Nias, my boy! You is, an' no mistake!" he ejaculated several times, as he smacked his lips with enraptured gusto.

Strange, too, to relate, the dreams which that night visited the pillows of Juan and Juanita and those which crept under the Negro lad's kinky wool were very much of the same character. For both took the form of an extremely flourishing and wide-spreading tree, that bore an hundred pumpkin pies; but, while one showered tempting tartlets upon the happy little white folks, the other appeared to spring from the chest of the wretched dreamer, crushed him to the very earth, until he awoke with a gasp and a scream, to find himself in the clutches of a wild and distressing nightmare, caused, who shall say, whether by the late, rich repast, or by the qualms of an uneasy conscience? Only, I fear, harum scarum Ananias was seldom troubled with moral dyspepsia.

But, the next morning an East wind blew in the Pettitoes, homestead, and Mrs. Pettitoes,—whose temper was almost as hot as the ginger with which she flavored her pies,—was sadly put out by the disappearance of her largest and finest pastry. The one designed for the minister's own eating, she demanded again and again, until, observing the red cheeks and sheepish looks of her son and daughter, she pounced upon them, and by main force as it were, dragged from their unwilling lips an account of their attempt at pastry farming.

"But—but, it won't sprout if you look at it for three days," stammered the urchin, who was on the verge of tears.

"Three days! fiddlesticks! Lead me to the spot at once!" commanded the irate dame, and, sorely against their will, the children were obliged to conduct her to the south corner of the One Acre lot.

"No, it never will grow, becauth it ithn't here," announced Juanita, who skipped ahead, and first stooped down to examine the seed.

"Of course it's not there!" exclaimed her mother. "That chip of the old Scriptural block has seen to that. You may be sure, and, if I could catch the pious fraud, I'll teach him the moral of his fairy tales!"

"Only dis weasel ain't gwine to be cotched," chuckled an cavesdropper behind the fence.

"While as for you, silly children, you can carry the next best pie to the minister, and go without, yourself, for a month."

This was a bitter sentence for the sweetloving little folks, and as, with unusually sober faces, they trotted down the road in the direction of the parsonage, Juan remarked to his sister, "Nita, I guess we'd better go out of the business, and give up trying to raise punkin-pie trees."

A New Hampshire woman, aged 80 years, when asked recently how she had kept herself so vigorous and healthy, replied: "By never allowing myself to fret over things. I cannot help; by taking a nap, and sometimes two, every day of my life; by never taking my washing, ironing and baking to bed with me; and by oiling all the various wheels of a busy life with an implicit belief that there is a brain and a heart to this great universe, and that it could trust them both."

BRITISH COLUMBIA COLLIERIES

The New Vancouver Coal and Land Co.—Prosperous Nanaimo—Contented Work ingmen—Beneficial Effect of the Cornwall Cottage Farm System.

All who are acquainted with the resources of the Province of British Columbia acknowledge the important part the extensive coal fields of Nanaimo are bound to play in the future of the country, being one of the principal sources of its permanent economic industry. In times past the wealth and profits of the Nanaimo coal fields were dissipated in building up other localities at its expense. Happily, however, this undesirable state of affairs underwent a change for the better during the last couple of years and is still progressing favorably. The advent of the New Vancouver Coal and Land Co. altered the state of things generally and inaugurated a new era in the annals of the city of Nanaimo and its extensive coal fields. Almost immediately the new regime gave an impetus to trade and commerce, and wealth extracted from the bowels of the earth which previously vented in the wrong direction is now expended in measures for the improvement and development of the surface ground of the vicinity. Nanaimo has consequently prospered and advanced perceptibly, not only in the paths of trade,

COMMERCE AND ENTERPRISE,

but also in those indicative of refinement, taste and culture, emerging as it does from the crudeness of a mere mining camp into the full fledged dignity of a city, conscious of its own wealth and importance, worthy of its picturesque situation and the inestimable value of its mineral resources. The able, energetic management of the Vancouver Coal Co., has not only started the city on the road to commercial greatness, enormously increased the output of coal and dividends, but also expended and is expending, large sums of money in reclaiming from nature the lands of their heritage. The first was achieved by a master stroke of shrewd business policy, delivered at the proper time, by which the market, was at once wrested from the grasp of powerful rivals and supremacy for the products of their collieries firmly established in the markets of the Pacific coast, thereby vastly increasing the consumption of British Columbia coal. It must be borne in mind that these important results were attained at the time when the labor market was agitated and disturbed, not by cutting prices, nor yet by cheese-paring infringements on the earnings of the toiler, but solely by a simple acknowledgement of the justice contained in the great fundamental principle laid down by Capt. Drummond for the guidance and information of the landed proprietors in Tipperary 50 years ago "that capital has its duties as well as its rights." Avoiding conflict with the sentiment of local labor organizations, although, perhaps sensible of the fact, which has lately been proved, that local organizations are a source of weakness instead of a tower of strength to the cause of labor, and by a few judicious concessions, the management of the new corporation succeeded in establishing a good understanding

FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT

and cemented thereby a firm bond of lasting amity between them and their numerous employees. Having their welfare, comfort and prosperity at heart, besides a conscientious belief in the saying that one contented workman is worth a dozen discontented ones, they introduced a few years ago, under the direction and, it is presumed, on the recommendation of the manager, Mr. Samuel M. Robins, the Cornwall cottage farm system. That gentleman being personally cognizant of the beneficial effects of this system to the miners of the Stannaries in the land of "Tre, Pol and Pen," was not slow in putting the scheme into practical form. As an experiment a large tract of forest land to the northward and immediately outside the city limits proper was surveyed off and blocked out into five acre lots, with cleared roads, one chain wide, at convenient distances. These lots were leased, with the option of purchase, at a nominal rent on condition of clearing, improving and cultivating them. And now, what a few years ago was almost impenetrable forest, the home of the deer, the lear, the wolf and the panther, presents to the eye the pleasing prospect of rural felicity. Well cultivated gardens and orchards surround the neat comfortable homes of these hardy sons of toil, the joyous shouts and laughter of merry children "just out from school" resounds where the

STILLNESS OF NATURE'S SILENCE

once reigned supreme. Satisfied with the unmistakable results beneficial to the workingman by a trial of the system another large tract of unbroken forest land near Chase river is, it is understood, to be similarly laid off. The first allotments will soon be embraced within the confines of the city limits. Schools have been built and established by the Provincial Government and with the roads running through these suburban localities a little more improved, then