A Woman's Crime.

BY AN EX-DETECTIVE.

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(CONTINUED.)

"Thank you, Philip," he said, making an entry in his note-book. "Now, then, who was the first to connect this lady with her husband's death?"

"Why, sir, now I think of it, nobody thought about who did it until Mrs. Artevelt came. She knew in an instant."

"To be sure," said the detective, with a queer intonation; "can you tell me precisely what your first thought was, when Mrs. Artevelt accused her son's wife of the murder?"

"Why, sir, as true as I live, I was shocked just for a minute. Then I saw the sense of the thing. It was no burglar, for nothing was stolen."

"Nothing was stolen, oh? Well now, Philip, you may send John Riley here."

Philip bowed himself out, and presently John Riley approached. The same questions were put to him, and after him, to every servant in the house; in turn. As he dismissed them he charged each one to say nothing of his business with them, and then go sent to ask if Miss Kate Seaton could grant him an interview.

CHAPTER XX.—A LETTER IN THE GRATE.

In a very short time the door again opened, and Miss Seaton herself entered the room.

"I am so glad you sent for me, Mr. Bathurst," she said, coming straight toward him. "Mrs. Artevelt is sleeping now, under the influence of Doctor Worthing's opiates. But when she wakens, I fancy it will be difficult for you to hold interviews with anyone, except in her presence. She has become possessed of the idea that she must have a hand in everything, and—I wanted to talk with you alone."

"I suppose you have me to thank for inspiring Mrs. Artevelt with the idea that her aid is indispensable," replied the detective, bringing forward a chair, which she promptly accepted. "She must have something to keep her from going quite mad. Miss Seaton!" this with sudden surprise, "good heavens, how pale you look."

"I have not closed my eyes since Lenore's strange flight, sir."

"What! you passed a sleepless night, and ever since have been by that poor woman, and in this house of horror. You will certainly be ill." He arose quickly and rang the bell. "Bring some wine for Miss Seaton," he said, to the prompt Philip.

The wine was brought, Miss Seaton drank it without so much as the ceremony of an objection.

"Now we will talk," said the detective, seating himself near her. "I want a little help from you, Miss Seaton."

The girl looked startled.

"Not to hunt down Lenore?" she almost gasped.

"Not to hunt her down. You were her friend, I am told?"

"I am her friend, Mr. Bathurst. I wanted to talk with you about Lenore—and, that shameful coroner's verdict. I want you to believe that Lenore Armyn is no murderess."

"What! in the face of all the evidence? Do you believe her innocent?"

"In the face of all the evidence! In the face of everything. I do!" said Kate excitedly.

"But—what of her words of last night, Miss Seaton?"

"Her words! I believe now that Lenore fully intended to run away on her bridal night. I believe that was the revenge she had planned, and that she alluded to. Now, when it is too late, I can recall many things that should have aroused my suspicions; but I tell you, that if Lenore is alive to-night, she is as ignorant of the truth concerning this murder, as you or I."

"If she is alive! You don't think she would take her own life?"

"I don't know. I can see now how worthless life must have seemed to her. I can conceive how she might have thrown away her own existence, but not that she could rob another of his."

"That is to say you can imagine yourself under similar circumstances, taking refuge in a suicide's grave. Women invariably judge others of their own sex, by themselves."

Kate Seaton colored.

"I have not been able to gain much of an idea of Mrs. Lenore Artevelt," went on the detective, "but from what I have heard I should say that she was not the person to destroy herself;" then in a lower and more earnest tone, "Miss Seaton, I sent for you this evening to ask for information concerning her. I was not aware that you was so firmly her friend, or that you doubted her guilt. As for me, my task is to find her, my next to prove her guilty or innocent. Rest assured that if she be innocent she shall never suffer at my hands. I want to get a correct idea of her, and depend on your memory to aid me. Will you tell me, as briefly as you can, all that you can recall of your friend since you first knew her."

"Yes," replied she, "for by so doing I shall help, not damage her cause."

Beginning at the time when she had first known Lenore, at the young ladies' school, Kate related reminiscence after reminiscence of the beautiful fugitive; told of her beauty, her brilliancy, her wit, her affectionateness, her impulsive generosity. She dwelt upon Lenore's fierce hatred of shams and deceit, of trickery, treachery, and all manner of petty meanness; told how she was ever the champion of the right, and the oppressed, of the weak and those mentally deficient. Suddenly she paused; in telling of Lenore's championship she must needs not say too much concerning that fierce, fiery temper, perhaps indirectly she had already said too much. She reflected for a moment, for in espousing the cause of her friend little Kate Seaton was becoming wise as a serpent. The detective, who had been making notes from time to time, looked up as she ceased speaking, but did not urge her to proceed, seeming like herself, to be occupied with his own thoughts. At last Kate looked up.

"I suppose you are beginning a systematic investigation?" she said seriously.

"Yes."

"And—you will question others beside me concerning Lenore."

The detective began to see her drift. "Assuredly," he said. "I begin with you, because I wanted some information from those not prejudiced against her. I shall eventually have to interview those who will picture her in a more lurid light."

"You—you intend to talk with Mrs. Warren and Miss VanBuren."

"The women she denounced as accomplices with Artevelt?"

"Yes."

"I shall see them, of course."

"Then I may as well forestall them; they will put poor Lenore's faults into the worst dress possible," and she hastened to give a full account of Lenore's attack upon the German wife-beater.

The detective listened with keenest interest. "What!" he exclaimed, "did she actually strike the man down?"

"She actually did, and he certainly deserved it. I have told you this, because I know they will make capital out of Lenore's furious temper, and use it against her. Jess Warren ran screaming home, and told my sister that the police had arrested Lenore. We got there just in time to hear her, and Lenore, who was trembling with anger, said some very cutting things to Jess. I think that was the foundation of Jess Warren's hatred for her. Now, let me tell you all I know concerning the inveigling of poor Lenore into a gambler's den," and she hurriedly related the little that she knew concerning that shameful plot, together with the suspicions, amounting almost to certainties, that they were the natural result of Lenore's spirited defiance on the previous evening.

"I really never liked or trusted Mrs. Warren," she concluded. "And my aversion for Miss VanBuren was second only to Lenore's dislike for her. Let me suggest, Mr. Bathurst, that you do not lose too much time, if you are determined to see Jess. I am very much mistaken in my brother-in-law if he allows her to remain under his roof."

"I shall certainly lose no time," replied he, smiling a little; "and will you favor me with a description of the person of this mysterious bride?"

Kate gave him a vivid, glowing, thoroughly womanly word-picture of Lenore; and the detective said:

"Thank you, Miss Seaton; I will detain you no longer. By the way, can you tell me if the bachelor effects of the deceased are still in his old room at his mother's house?"

"They are, I believe. He had not ordered the removal of anything except his wardrobe."

"Well, I must visit that room to-night."

"To-night!"

"Yes. It is now seven o'clock; I must run out for a few moments, meantime may I depend upon you to speak to Mr. Hale when he comes. If I have not returned by that time, ask him to get the necessary keys, and, if possible, without disturbing Mrs. Artevelt. And to-night you must rest, even if I have to take your place at the bedside."

"Oh? But you are worn out like myself."

"Nonsense! I slept last night, remember. Besides, I am trained to endure loss of sleep."

"It's an odd position for a detective," said Kate, wearily. "But I may have to take you at your word. If she does not waken much calmed, the others would find her unmanageable."

"I'm a capital nurse," smiled the detective; "trust me you shall rest tonight; and now, I will go, and you shall lie in wait for Mr. Hale."

A few more words and then they separated, Kate going back to her charge, with weary limbs, aching head and a sad heart; and Neil Bathurst hastening toward his own apartments, where, if he did not find him already there, he must leave a message for Jocelyn.

"I shall have to come the old woman dodge, and pin a piece of paper on the door, telling where I am and all about it," thought Neil, with a half laugh, as he approached his rooms.

He had hoped to find Jocelyn, or that he would come soon.

"I shall need his help, perhaps," he muttered, putting his key in the lock. "If I leave the city I shall want Rob to look out for things hereabouts."

He pushed open the door and entered, striking a match at almost the same instant. Reaching up he lighted the gas, and then turned to close the door. As it swung forward his eye fell upon a yellow envelope that had evidently been pushed under from without. Picking it up he saw that it was a telegram, and opening it wonderingly his eyes fell upon these words:

Old Man:

B. and self have gone into the country; length of stay not known. Write later. ROB.

The message was dated from a station some ten miles out on the Michigan Central Road.

"What luck!" ejaculated the detective. "Jocelyn is worse than Paddy's flea. Well, my business here is done, I think, and no need to pin the old woman's tag to the door. 'B. and self have gone to the country,' that's Rob all over. Brady must have had news from his private enquirer."

Holding the telegram up to the gas flame he watched it crumble to ashes, and then turning out his light, locked his door and retraced his steps. Almost within the same hour he sat alone in Clarence Artevelt's old dressing-room, carefully examining the contents of a costly desk. There were horribly scrawled notes from bon vivantes and horsey notes from well-known jockeys, scores of billets from fair ladies, many photographs, and—of course—some locks of hair.

He turned over the photographs; there were pictures of prominent actresses and vocalists, some of ladies with questionable faces and many of ladies who probably at one time or another had enjoyed the brief adoration of the young man, once so fascinating, now shorn of all his charms and sleeping his last sleep. From these he turned to the billet doux. It took a long time to master their contents, and so much sweetness was a trifle nauseating; nevertheless he kept on. Having perused them all he singled out one from the mass, muttering as he re-opened it:

"This has a slightly different flavor, but, after all, doesn't mean much perhaps."

The note was in a fine, but firm, woman's hand, and was without address or signature. It ran thus:

"I begin to doubt you. Don't think me blind, or that I am one to submit to neglect, after what has been. Remember, you are not dealing with one friendless or helpless; I must see you to-night.

August 9th, 187—.

"No signature, no address," he murmured, "and bearing date only three months back. I will keep this."

He put it carefully in his pocket and arose to examine the closets and dressing cases.

From the pocket of a coat, which hung in a small wardrobe, he drew a few letters. He instantly recognized the garment, as one Artevelt had worn when last he saw him. And glancing at the dates of the letters he saw that they were very recent.

"That must be the coat he discarded to put on the wedding garment. Poor fellow, better if he had continued to wear this coat," he said, looking at it ruefully. "Now for these letters."

There were several bills from upholsterers and tradesmen, and from one of these a smaller missive dropped. Picking it up hastily he glanced at the superscription. "How is this?" he exclaimed, at the same time diving in his pocket for the note he had just stored away. "Ah!" glancing from one to the other. "It is the same writing, and dated—just four days ago."

Thus ran the second billet:

"I have seen the girl you think to make your wife. And—she does not love you—I swear it. I have warned you before. I repeat that warning. Break off this marriage, even at the last moment. Break it off—or the thunderbolt that hangs over you will fall.

"Is this a threat or a warning?" said the detective, musingly; "the first billet embodies a threat, and whichever way this may be intended, the thunderbolt has fallen."

He put the two notes carefully in his pocket and resumed his investigations.

Every pocket of every garment was searched, but nothing more could be discovered.

Approaching the grate the quick eye of the detective saw something which made him start forward suddenly. Evidently the late occupant of the room had been burning papers on that last evening of his tenantship. The remains of that last fire had not yet been cleared away, and down there among the charred dead embers a scrap of scorched paper was visible. The detective seized it and scanned it eagerly. It was the fragment of a letter in the unmistakable handwriting of Clarence Artevelt. The upper half of the sheet and a portion of the lower had been burned away, so that a part only of the concluding lines were preserved, making of course incomplete sense.

The fragments of lines read as follows:

—this day returned your —and gifts. Have retained nothing —these useless threats —the admiration your beauty commands —position warrants. I shall be your friend —two must not meet.

This fragment bore no signature, and the detective was quick to connect it with the other unsigned notes.

"This looks business like," said he to himself. "If one could only get at the meaning of these documents. This last, which sounds like an answer to the one of recent date, would indicate that the writer of that one did mean a threat rather than a warning. If it is a threat, then the plot thickens; it would seem that poor Artevelt had injured more than one woman, and that he had more than one enemy."

He finished his search, but without further discoveries, and then closing the room and locking it carefully he left the house in possession of Mrs. Artevelt's old and tried housekeeper and the under servants, and hastened back to that other house of gloom.

Yesterday these two elegant dwellings had been glowing with color and gay with preparations for bridal festivities. Surely never was wedding so swiftly followed by desolation and gloom. Only twenty-four hours had passed, and the curtains are drawn, stillness and desolation are everywhere. The servants have cast away their wedding favors, as if they were living deadly things, and go about with white, scared faces. The second act of Clarence Artevelt's drama closes on a murdered bridegroom, a fugitive bride, a half-crazed mother and horror in the hearts of all beholders.

CHAPTER XXI.—STARTLING NEWS STRANGELY RECEIVED.

On reaching that other house of gloom, the detective goes straight to the room where Mrs. Artevelt lies in a half stupor, and Kate Seaton sits wearily watching.

Opening the door softly, he signals the girl to come out to him, and noiselessly, without disturbing her charge, Kate obeys.

"I must have a word with you," he says, as they stand together under the dimly burning hall chandelier. "I will be as brief as possible. Can you sit on that hall chair—uncomfortable looking thing—and answer a few more questions?"

She bowed, and, with a look of utter weariness, sank upon the seat designated.

"We are quite alone here," he said, looking about him, "as safe from interruption as if closeted in the library. Now, then, please answer my questions frankly. I am now seeking for evidence that will turn the suspicion away from your friend, not for evidence against her.

Kate Seaton started up eagerly.

"Oh, is it possible," she cried—"is there anything that may be used in her favor?"

"It is possible," he replied, gravely. "I won't say as to the probability, however; that's another thing. But a detective must neglect no shadow of evidence for or against. If we could prove that Clarence Artevelt had another enemy—if we could prove that another had breathed out threats against him, don't you see that your friend's case would look a shade less dark?"

"Yes. Oh, yes!"

"Then don't ask useless questions, but believe that all I do has its meaning. First, have you some of the bride's writing in your possession?"

"Yes; we were correspondents after I left school."

"In those letters did she make mention of any friends whom she especially trusted or felt a regard for?"

"Do you mean any lover?"

"I mean—any one.

"I am sure Lenore never had a lover until she came to the city, her mother guarded her so jealously. After her mother's death she did sometimes speak of a Doctor Austin, who was some sort of a guardian over her property, and in whom her mother had reposed fullest confidence."

"Doctor Austin! Did he live in the same village with her mother?"

"Yes, sir; he lived and, of course, still lives at Fairleld."

"You think that your friend trusted this Dr. Austin?"

"I know she did."

"Miss Seaton! must ask for one or two of the letters of your friend—those referring to this doctor, and, it would aid me very much in forming correct conclusions if you would allow me to peruse the entire correspondence on her side."

Kate hesitated a moment, and then arose.

"Yes," she said; "I will let you see Lenore's letters. They are gems; as I said before, they will help her cause, not hurt it—and, sir, she needs help."

"Yes; she needs help. When may I have the letters?"

"To-morrow. They are locked in my desk at the other house."

"Thank you. Now, please use your memory. Did Miss Armyn have any female acquaintances—in the city, of course—who were strangers to you?"

"No; I am sure she did not."

"You went out together usually?"

"Nearly always."

"In your walks or drives did she ever meet and converse with any strange woman? Remember you over, at any time, since her engagement to Clarence Artevelt especially, know of her meeting with a stranger?"

For a moment Kate seems thinking intently, then a light breaks over her countenance.

"Why, yes. I do remember now," she exclaims; I admitted the woman myself."

"Tell me all about it," eagerly.

"I will. It was one night, a little more than a week before this awful marriage—rather it was early in the evening, not yet fairly dark. It was raining, and the wind was blowing dismally. I remember thinking, when I opened the door, that it could be no pleasure caller who came out in such a storm. The hall was dimly lighted, and I could not see her plainly; but it was a woman—a lady, I should judge. She spoke in a very low voice, and was completely muffled in a huge cloak and thick veil. She was not tall—just a little higher than I, perhaps. She asked for Lenore, and I left her in the parlor and went up to Lenore's room. When I told her a veiled stranger was down stairs she seemed surprised, and then started to go down, saying in that scornful way of hers: 'A veiled stranger, in a flowing storm! Bah! a mere farce, I suppose.' I wondered then what she could mean; but she has been so haughty and reserved of late, that I never dared question her about any of her odd sayings. The stranger stayed perhaps twenty minutes, and Lenore herself conducted her out. As she closed the door and came slowly up stairs again I heard her laugh, the low, scornful laugh that was all the mirth we had ever heard from her lips since that fatal engagement. She never mentioned the woman or the object of her visit, and no one liked to question her."

"And that is all you can tell me?"

"That is all."

"Thank you, Miss Seaton. Now I am going to take your place by Mrs. Artevelt; she will be broad awake soon, and you must go and rest."

It is useless to oppose him; Kate sees that, and she breathes a sigh of thankfulness as she goes to seek the repose she so much needs.

As Neil Bathurst takes her place by the bedside of the woman, who slumbers as if in a trance—then wakes suddenly, to rave and cry piteously, for the dead idol lying so motionless, not far away, his face is shadowed, his brows are contracted, his lips compressed. He bends the whole strength of his splendid intellect to the solution of a strange, knotty, woeful problem. While the detective watches and ponders, let us look in upon some of the inmates of the Durand mansion.

In her green and glittering boudoir the lovely heiress of the Durand wealth reclines upon a satin-covered couch that is drawn forward to catch the warmth from a glowing grate fire. The room is brilliantly illuminated—not with the too glaring gas, but with the soft light from many wax candles, that are upheld by numerous costly and quaint candelabra. Aura Durand is a thorough sybarite, and she knows better than to mar the green loveliness of her maiden's grotto with the cold glare of the gas jets. She has not left her couch all day, and her silly little maid has been kept constantly at her side. No one else has been admitted to her room. Hours have passed since the body of the murdered bridegroom was discovered, and the entire city has rung with the news, but it has not penetrated to the boudoir of Aura Durand. Neither is she aware of the scene of last night and of the flight of Lenore. Fussy, fidgety Mrs. Durand, pale and, could not tell her; tender-hearted Mr. Durand would not, so it has been delegated to Miss Armin to break to her the news. Mrs. Durand has kept her room all day, only sending to inquire after Aura, and Mr. Durand has only presented himself long enough to make the regulation inquiries, and since has kept aloof from the feminine portion of the house.

"Aura is so sensitive," he says, "and she and poor Artevelt were such good friends. It will be a shock to her."

Perhaps Miss Annin also feared the shock to Miss Durand's nerves; at all events, she hall held herself aloof from Aura all that day, and at 10 o'clock that night her task of disagreeable news breaking is yet to be accomplished. Perhaps Miss Annin is one of those conscientious young ladies who cannot sleep leaving a duty unperformed. For, now, late as is the hour, she enters the green boudoir, without knocking, and unannounced. An expression of annoyance flits across the face of the invalid, and then she says, with almost her usual tone:

"Oh, it's you! Where have you been all day?"

Miss Annin crosses the room in her fashion and seats herself comfortably where she can have a full view of the invalid's face.

"I've been—making a mental calculation," she replies coolly. "Isn't Laura well?" with a meaning glance; "she looks as if it would do her good to run down to the kitchen and get a cup of tea. You had better go, Laura."

For a moment it would seem that Laura's mistress will countermand this advice, which amounts to an order. Then she seems to reconsider and says, languidly, "You may go, Laura—for a little while."

Laura murmurs her thanks, and is glad to go, and for a moment Miss Durand and her companion eye each other in silence; a silence which Miss Annin is the first to break.

"How is your poor ankle?" she asks, with mocking solicitude. The invalid stirs impatiently, but vouchsafes no answer, asking a question instead.

"Have you been out to-day?"

"No," carelessly.

"What! You are taking things quietly. I thought you were getting impatient."

"So I was. I have had other things to occupy me to-day."

Miss Durand eyes her coldly.

"If you have anything to say you had better say it," she says, with a half sneer.

"What a queer girl you are," with an affectation of intense astonishment. "If I have anything to say! Don't you want to hear about the wedding?"

"No," shutting her eyes as if the light hurt them.

"But it was a very strange one."

"No matter."

"Such a finish!"

Miss Durand says nothing; her face looks very white under the wax lights.

"And such a furore as it created. No one ever before saw such a demoniac looking bride. And then—her horrible revenge."

Miss Durand grects her head suddenly.

"What are you talking about?" she cries, almost wildly.

"About the bride, who denounced her husband and ran away on her wedding night. About the beautiful demon who is missing two hours after the wedding and cannot be found, although she has left a terrible 'farewell' behind her."

Aura Durand sits erect; her face is fairly livid.

"Ran away! Missing!" she almost shrieks. "What do you mean? Explain instantly, instantly!"

"Then don't glare at me so wildly. I am not the awful bride. Lie down and don't excite yourself. You will only injure your foot moving so carelessly," said Miss Annin maliciously. "I mean what I say. Clarence Artevelt's wife stood before her guests at her wedding feast and declared that she had been entrapped into the marriage; declared that she loathed the man beside her; that she would never live with him; that his eyes should never look upon her face again. She called on heaven to witness her words, and swore that to-day all the world should know how she had avenged herself. Then she vanished as if the earth had opened and swallowed her."

"You lie! You lie!"

The words are almost a shriek. Again the form of the invalid becomes suddenly erect. She looks as if she were going wild.

"I wouldn't!" Miss Annin speaks in a low, steady tone, and looks her straight in the eye. "One would think you were deeply interested. It looks bad."

Something in the words or the look or the tone causes the invalid to sink suddenly back among her cushions, and lie there motionless and silent for some moments. When she speaks again, the expression has gone out of her face, all the intensity out of her voice.

"Tell me what you mean. I believe you are trying to annoy me."

"No; this is too terrible a thing to jest about." Miss Annin draws her chair nearer the couch as she speaks, and fixes her eyes fixed on Aura's face, tells the story of the bride's denunciation and disappearance, concluding thus:

"The bride was not seen after, but—last night Clarence Artevelt, half crazed with grief and wine, lay down upon the couch prepared for his bride—and this morning was found—a corpse."

"What!" The voice is very low this time, but full of horror unutterable.

"I repeat it—Clarence Artevelt was murdered last night."

"My God!" Again that horror-stricken tone. Miss Annin gazes and gazes, but the face is locked in sphinx-like calm. Only the voice betrays emotion, and she does not hear that again. Miss Durand lies like a statue under her gaze. A puzzled expression comes into the face of Miss Annin. She draws from her pocket a folded paper and throws it upon the couch.

"There," she says, in an almost sullen tone, "there is the evening paper; read for yourself."

"Thank you."

Miss Annin rises and moves toward the door. "Shall I send Laura?" she asks, rather ungraciously.

"No."

"Then good-night."

No answer; Miss Durand does not so much as glance her way. When the door has closed behind her, however, Miss Durand springs up again and clutches at the paper.

"It can't be! It can't!" she whispers, in horrified aspirates. But her eyes fall upon the awful head-lines. It is all there; it is true. With a moan of anguish she flings the paper from her; and then the crippled heiress stands erect in the middle of the beautiful room; her eyes are distended, her face is livid, ghastly, horrible—there is no trace of beauty there.

"He dead! He murdered! Clarence, my Clarence, lying lifeless and cold! Oh, I am going mad. His life sacrificed and she escaped! Horror! horror! She escaped! She—his murderess! Ha! ha! ha! ha!"

She flings her arms aloft; she writhes like a serpent. Then, with that awful, maniac laughter upon her lips, falls senseless.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

What Dollar Bills Weigh.

Several customers were chatting in a grocery store one evening recently when the grocer pointed to a half-barrel of small beans and asked how many of them it would require to make a bushel. Various estimates were offered. One man recklessly put the number down at 50,000, which occasioned a laugh from all the others who had guessed a much lesser quantity, ranging all the way from 5,000 to 20,000.

"Well, gentlemen," remarked the grocer, "you are all wrong. There are approximately 119,000 beans in a bushel."

No one was inclined to believe him until he showed them that it took sixty beans, selected at random, to weigh half an ounce. The rest of the calculation was simple.

THE OARSMAN DEFEATED.

THE MEN ROWED HARD.

Dr. Talmage Points out the Helplessness of Man, and Contrasts with It the Power and Willingness of Christ

Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is still absent on his round-the-world tour, has selected as the subject of to-day's sermon, through the press: "The Oarsmen Defeated," the text chosen being Jonah 1: 13, 14: "The men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not; where fore they cried unto the Lord."

Navigation in the Mediterranean Sea always was perilous, especially so in early times. Vessels were propelled partly by sail and partly by oar. When, by reason of great stress of weather, it was necessary to reef the canvas or haul it in, then the vessel was entirely dependent upon the oars, sometimes twenty or thirty of them on either side the vessel. You would not venture outside your harbor with such a craft as my text finds Jonah sailing in; but he had not much choice of vessels. He was running away from the Lord, and when a man is running away from the Lord he has to run very fast.

God had told Jonah to go to Ninevah to preach about the destruction of that city. Jonah disobeyed. That always makes rough water, whether in the Mediterranean or the Atlantic, or the Pacific, or the Caspian Sea. It is a very hard thing to scate sailors. I have seen them, when the prow of the vessel was almost under water, and they were walking the deck knee-deep in the scrf, and the small boats by the side of the vessel had been crushed as small as kindling wood, whistling as though nothing had happened; but the Bible says that these mariners of whom I speak were frightened. That which sailors call "a lump of a sea" had become a blinding, deafening, swamping fury. How mad the wind can get at the water, and the water can get at the wind, you do not know unless you have been spectators. I have in my house a piece of the sail of a ship, no larger than the palm of my hand; that piece of canvass was all that was left of the largest sail of the ship Greece, that went into the storm two hundred miles off Newfoundland. Oh, what a night that was! I suppose it was in some such storm as this that Jonah was caught.

He knew that the tempest was on his account, and he asked the sailors to throw him overboard. Sailors are a generous-hearted race, and they resolved to make their escape, if possible, without resorting to such extreme measures. The sails are of no use, and so they lay hold of their oars. I see the long bank of shining blades on either side of the vessel. Oh! how they did pull, the bronzed seamen, as they laid back onto their oars. But rowing on the sea is very different from rowing upon a river; and as the vessel hoists, the oars skip the wave and miss the stroke, and the tempest laughs to scorn the flying paddles. It is of no use, no use. There comes a wave that crashes the last mast, and sweeps the oarsmen from their places, and tumbles everything in the confusion of impending shipwreck, or, as my text has it, "The men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not; wherefore they cried unto the Lord."

This scene is very suggestive to me, and I pray God I may have grace and strength enough to represent it intelligently to you. Years ago I preached a sermon on another phase of this very subject, and I got a letter from Houston, Texas, the writer saying that the reading of that sermon in London had led him to God. And I received another letter from South Australia, saying that the reading of that sermon in Australia had brought several souls to Christ. And then, I thought, why not now take another phase of the same subject, for perhaps that God who can raise in power that which is down in weakness may now, through another phase of the same subject, bring salvation to the people who shall read. Men and women who know how to pray, lay hold of the Lord God Almighty, and wrestle for the blessing.

Mr. Latimer would stop sometimes in his sermon, in the midst of his argument, and say: "Now, I will tell you a tale;" and to-day I would like to bring the second of the texts as an illustration of a most important religious truth. As those Mediterranean oarsmen trying to bring Jonah ashore were discomfited, I have to tell you that they were not the only men who have broken down on their paddles, and have been obliged to call on the Lord for help. I want to say that the unavailing efforts of those Mediterranean oarsmen have a counterpart in the efforts we are making to bring souls to the shore of safety and set their feet on the Rock of Ages. You have a father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or child, or near friend who is not a Christian. There have been times when you have been in agony about their salvation. A minister of Christ whose wife was dying without any hope in Jesus, walked the floor, wrung his hands, cried bitterly, and said, "I believe I shall go insane, for I know she is not prepared to meet God." And there may have been days of sickness in your household, when you feared it would be a fatal sickness; and how closely you examined the face of the doctor as he came in and scrutinized the patient, and felt the pulse, and you followed him into the next room, and said, "There isn't any danger, is there, doctor?" And the hesitation and the uncertainty of the reply made two eternities flash before your vision. And then you went and talked to the sick one about the great future. Oh, there are those here who have tried to bring their friends to God! They have been unable to bring them to the shore of safety. They are no hearer that point than they were twenty years ago. You think you have got them almost to the shore, when you are swept back again. What shall you do? Put down the oar? Oh, no! I do not advise that, but I do advise you to appeal to that God to whom the Mediterranean oarsmen appealed—the God who could silence the tempest and bring the ship in safety to the port. I tell you, my friends, that there has got to be a good deal of praying before our families are brought to Christ. Ah! it is an awful thing to have half a household on one side of the line, and the other part of the household on the other side of the line! Two vessels part on the ocean of eternity, one going to the right and the other to the left—farther apart, and farther apart—until the signals cease to be recognized and there are only two specks on the horizon, and then they are lost to sight forever!

I have to tell you that the unavailing efforts of these Mediterranean oarsmen have a counterpart in the efforts some of us are making to bring our children to the shore of safety. There never were so many temptations for young people as there are now. The literary and social influences seem to be against their spiritual interests. Christ seems to be driven almost entirely from the school and the pleasurable concourse, yet God knows how anxious we are for our children. We cannot think of going into heaven without them. We do not want to leave this life while they are tossing on the waves of temptation and away from God. From which of them could we consent to be eternally separated? Would it be the son? Would it be the daughter? Would it be the eldest? Would it be the youngest? Would it be the one that is well and stout, or the one that is sick? Oh, I hear some parent saying to-night, "I have tried my best to bring my children to Christ. I have laid hold of the oars until they bent in my grasp, and I have braced myself against the ribs of the boat, and I have pulled for their eternal rescue, but I can't get them to Christ." Then I ask you to imitate the men of the text and cry mightily unto God. We want more importunate praying for children, such as the father indulged in when he had tried to bring his six sons to Christ, and they had wandered off into dissipation. Then he got down in his prayers and said, "Oh, God! take away my life, if through that means my sons may repent and be brought to Christ;" and the Lord, startlingly, answered the prayer, and in a few weeks the father was taken away, and through the solemnity the six sons fled unto God. Oh, that father could afford to die for the eternal welfare of his children! He rowed hard to bring them to the land, but could not, and then he cried unto the Lord.

There are parents who are almost discouraged about their children. Where is your son to-night? He has wandered off, perhaps, to the ends of the earth. It seems as if he cannot get far enough away from your Christian counsel. What does he care about the furrows that come to your brow, about the quick whitening of the hair; about the fact that your back begins to stoop with the burdens? Why, he would not care much if he heard you were dead! The black edged letter that brought the tidings he would put in the same package with other letters telling the story of his shame. What are you going to do? Both paddles broken at the middle of the blade, how can you pull ashore? I throw you one oar, now with which I believe you can bring him into the harbor. It is the glorious promise, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee." Oh, broken-hearted father and mother, you have tried everything else, now make an appeal for the help and omnipotence of the covenant-keeping God! and perhaps at your next family gathering—perhaps on Thanksgiving Day, perhaps next Christmas day—the prodigal may be home; and if you crowd on his plate more luxurious than on any other plate at the table, I am sure the brothers will not be jealous, but they will wake up all the music in the house, "because the dead is alive again, and because the lost is found." Perhaps your prayers have been answered already. The vessel may be coming homeward, and by the light of this night's stars that absent son may be pacing the deck of the ship, anxious for the time to come when he can throw his arms around your neck and ask for forgiveness for that he has been wringing your old heart so long. Glorious reunion! that will be too sacred for outsiders to look upon; but I would just like to look through the window when you have all got together again, and are seated at the banquet.

Though I are ta may in covenant be.
And have their heaven in view;
They are not happy till they see
Their children happy too.

Again, I remark that the unavailing effort of the Mediterranean oarsmen has a counterpart in the effort which we are making to bring this world back to God. His pardon, and safety! If this world could have been saved by human effort, it would have been done long ago. John Howard took hold of one oar, and Carey took hold of another oar, Adoniram Judson took hold of another oar, and Luther took hold of another oar, and John Knox took hold of another oar, and they pulled until they fell back dead from exhaustion. Some dropped in the ashes of martyrdom, some on the scalping-knives of savages, and some into the plague-stuck room of lazaretto, and still the chains are not broken, and still the despotisms are not demolished, and still the world is unsaved. What then? Put down the oars and make no effort? I do not advise that. But I want you, Christian brethren, to understand that the church, and the school, and the college, and the missionary society are only the instrumentalities; and if this world is ever done at all, God must do it, and He will do it, in answer to our prayer. "They rowed hard to bring it to the land, but they could not; wherefore they cried unto the Lord."

Again, the unavailing effort of these Mediterranean oarsmen has a counterpart in every man that is trying to row his own soul into safety. When the Eternal spirit flashes upon us our condition, we try to save ourselves. We say, "Give me a stout oar for my right hand, give me a stout oar for my left hand, and I will pull myself into safety." No. A wave of sin comes and dashes you one way, and a wave of temptation comes and dashes you in another way, and there are plenty of rocks on which to founder, but seemingly no harbor into which to sail. Sin must be thrown overboard, or we must perish. There are men who have tried for years to become Christians. They believe all I say in regard to a future world. They believe that religion is the first, the last, the infinite of all things. They believe in the atonement in Christ. They make sixty strokes in a minute. They bend forward with all earnestness, and they lie back until the muscles are distended, and yet they have not made one inch in ten years toward Heaven. What is the reason? That is not the way to go to work. You might as well take a frail skiff and put it down at the foot of the Niagara, and then head it up toward the churning thunderbolt of waters, and expect to work your way up through the lightning of the foam into calm Lake Erie, as for you to try to pull yourself through the surf of your sin into the hope, and pardon, and placidity of the Gospel. You can not do it in that way. Sin is a rough sea, and the long-boat, yawl, pinnacle and gondola go down unless the Lord deliver; but if you cry to Christ and lay hold of divine mercy you are as safe from eternal condemnation as though you had been twenty years in heaven.

I wish I could put before my unpardoned readers their own helplessness. No human arm was ever strong enough to unlock the door of heaven. No foot was ever strong enough to break the shackle of sin. No oarsman swarthy enough to row himself into God's harbor. The wind is against you. The tide is against you. The law is against you. Ten thousand corrupting influences are against you. Helpless and undone. Not so helpless a sailor on a plank, mid-Atlantic. Not so helpless a traveller girded by twenty miles of prairie on fire. Prove it, you say. I will prove it. John 6: 14—"No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him."

But while I have shown your helplessness, I want to put by the side of it the power and willingness of Christ to save you. I think it was in 1695 a vessel was bound for Portugal, but it was driven to pieces on an unfriendly coast. The captain had his son with him, and with the crew they wandered up the beach, and started on the long journey to find relief. After a while the son fainted by reason of hunger and the length of the way. The captain said to the crew, "Carry my boy for me on your shoulders." They carried him on, but the journey was so long that after awhile the crew, fainted from hunger and from weariness, and could carry him no longer. Then, the father rallied his almost wasted energy and took up his own boy, and put him on his shoulder, and carried him on mile after mile, mile after mile, until overcome himself by hunger and weariness he, too, fainted by the way. The boy lay down and died, and the father, just at the time rescue came to him, also perished, living only long enough to tell the story—sad story, indeed! But glory be to God that Jesus Christ is able to take us up out of our shipwrecked and dying condition, and put us on the shoulder of His strength, and by the omnipotence of His Gospel bear us on through all the journey of this life, and at last through the opening gates of heaven! He is mighty to save. Though your sin be long and black, and inexcusable, and outrageous, the very moment you believe I will proclaim pardon—quick, full, grand, unconditional, uncompromising, illimitable, infinite. Oh, the grace of God! I am overwhelmed when I come to think of it. Give me a thousand ladders, lashed fast to each other, that I may scale the height. Let the line run out with the anchor until all the cables of earth are exhausted, that we may touch the depths. Let the archangel fly in circuit of eternal ages in trying to sweep around this theme. Oh, the grace of God! It is so high. It is so broad. It is so deep. Glory be to God, that where man's oar gives out, God's arm begins! Why will ye carry your sins and your sorrows when Christ offers to take them? Why will you wrestle down your this moment you might be saved? Do you not know thing is ready?

Plenty of room at the feast, the ring of His love all round your hand. Come now and hungry ones, at the Bethesda pool! Why will you stand around the pool of Bethesda, when the troubled waters are swamped by the breakers? Why cry to Christ to pilot you through the still waters. On account of the peculiar phase of the subject, I have drawn my illustrations from the sea. I remember the first time I went to places on the Earth many years ago. It had a vessel on board. But the vessel had no effort was made to raise it. years had passed a company of men went out from England, long voyage they reached the spot where the vessel was said to have got into a small boat and found the place. Then the divers went down, and they broke through what seemed like a limestone covering, and rolled out—what was found to be, in American money, $1,000,000, and the foundation of a great business. At that time the whole world over what was called the great adventurers. Oh, ye who have been trying toward the shore, and have not been able to reach it, I want to tell you tonight that your boat has on a great treasure! All the riches of your feet. Treasures that are more than all the crowns that never grow dim. Go down now and seek them! Dive for the pearl of great price, and if you crowd on his plate more luxurious than on any other plate at the table, I am sure the brothers will not be jealous, but they will wake up all the music in the house, "because the dead is alive again, and because the lost is found." Perhaps your prayers have been answered already. The vessel may be coming homeward, and by the light of this night's stars that absent son may be pacing the deck of the ship, anxious for the time to come when he can throw his arms around your neck and ask for forgiveness for that he has been wringing your old heart so long. Glorious reunion! that will be too sacred for outsiders to look upon; but I would just like to look through the window when you have all got together again, and are seated at the banquet.

A POSTMASTER'S STORY,

A STRANGE ATTACK AND GREAT DIRE RESULTS THAT FOLLOWED.

Mr. Robert Sharp, of Starkville, His Sufferings—Lost the Use of Both Hands and Feet and was Forced to Give up Business—The Timely Action of a Friend Pointed the Way to Renewed Activity.

From the Bowmanville News.

Mr. Robert Sharp is a well-known resident of Starkville, Durham Co., and has been living in Canada for ten years. He is by trade a miller, and on coming to this country he settled in the county of Northumberland and after working there for a time he purchased a residence and shop at Starkville, where he worked at his trade and carried on a nice business. Being both