

# The Left Hand of Samuel Dodson

I.

"Smoking, as usual, and wasting our time after luncheon, instead of hurrying to your offices and coining time into money like old Sam Dodson, who can give the cash value of every five minutes," and Welsby sat down beside three other young Liverpool merchants in the club—all men who had one eye on business and the other on the good of the city. "Something's happened since I saw you fellows last on 'Change. Guess."

"Cotton up 3 points? A corn corner at Chicago? A big bear in sugar? Anything to do with fruit?"

"Nothing whatever to do with such prosaic subjects, and I am ashamed to notice your mercenary tempers; this is a public affair, and is to be a profound secret for exactly seventy minutes, after which it will appear in the fourth edition of the Evening Trumpet."

"It's a pity that the early news could not be used for an operation in cotton, but I'll take it along to the 'Fags' and tell it under pledge of absolute silence to half a dozen brokers. If you are really interested in the matter, this will give it a wider and more certain circulation than any Trumpet could."

"We're all ears, Welsby."

"Well, to begin at the beginning, you know our people in Liverpool are crowded together in courts and rookeries without room or air. It's hard on the men and women, but it's hardest on the children, who have no place to play in but the gutter."

"So a man wrote a letter to the papers about a month ago pleading for a fund to put down small playgrounds in the crowded districts, where the little folk could come of an evening, and the mothers could sit, and the men might smoke a pipe—"

"I remember the letter," broke in Cotton; "it was signed 'Philanthropist,' and was generally supposed to have been composed in a moment of inspiration by some proprietor of insanity property; it was an eloquent letter, and affected me very much—to tears, in fact."

"It was signed Charles Welsby, and you never read a word of it because it had no reference to polo nor the Macfarlane institute for working lads, the only subjects which you give any attention. Four people read it, however, and wrote to me at once. One man denounced the scheme as another instance of the patronage of the rich. He added that it was a sop, and that the toilers would soon find open spaces for themselves."

"He would mean your garden, Welsby," suggested Produce. "The socialist has two main principles of action; first, to give nothing to any good cause himself, and second, to appropriate his neighbors' property on the first opportunity. And your other correspondents?"

"I had a letter from the inventor of an unintoxicating beer offering £5 on condition that we advertised his beverage, which he discovered by supernatural guidance and sold for philanthropic ends."

"All queer beverages and patent medicines are owned by high-class religious people, as far as I can understand," remarked Corn, Go on."

"A third letter warned me that such spaces would be abused by bad characters and sap the morals of the people; the writer also wanted to know whether they would be closed on Sabbath."

"A publican, evidently," remarked Cotton; "no man is so concerned about Sabbath observance. And so you got sick of the whole affair?"

"Rather till I got this letter. I'll read it, and then you can make your guesses at the inclosure."

"Liverpool, June 9, 189—My Dear Sir: Your letter of the 7th ult. in the issue of the Morning Trumpet of May 8, caught my eye, and received my most careful attention. As you appeared to have established a prima facie case for what you designate 'people's playgrounds,' I have occupied my leisure time in examining the sanitary and social conditions of certain parts of our city which were more or less distinctly indicated in your letter. As the result of my investigations, I am thoroughly convinced, in the first place, that you have proved your case as regards the unfortunate circumstances of the children in such parts, and, in the second place, that your plan for the relief is practical and wisely considered."

"It then became my duty as a citizen of Liverpool to consider what I could do to further the ends of your scheme, and it seemed to me on the whole most advisable to place a sum of money at your disposal, on condition that it be spent with such other sums as may be sent you in purchasing decaying property and creating playgrounds—said playgrounds to be vested in the parks and gardens committee of the City Council—and I would suggest that people interested in each district be allowed and encouraged to distribute to the furnishing and adornment of the playgrounds."

"I beg therefore to inclose a draft in your favor on Messrs. Goldbeater & Co., Lombard street, London, and I have only to add my sincere approval of the good work you are doing among the poor of Liverpool, and my wish, which, as a man of honor, you will doubtless carefully respect, that you will take no steps to discover my name. I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

ZACCHEUS."

"Satisfactory, very, although a trifle pedantic and long-winded. And the sum, Welsby? I say £250."

"Five hundred pounds," said Cotton.

"One thousand pounds," cried Produce.

"What do you say to £10,000?" and the draft was handed round.

"Congratulations you, old man," Fruit shook hands with Welsby, and so did they all, for he had worked hard in many a good cause. "You deserve your luck; think I'll take to writing letters for my pet hospital. Who can he be? Do you suspect any one?"

"Half a dozen, but I'm bound not to inquire; and I rather think that the trail is covered at Goldbeater's beyond finding. But I know who did not give it—Sam Dodson."

"No, of course I did not ask him for help. One does not court refusals; but you know his meddling, ferreting ways. If he didn't stop me on the street and ask fifty questions till I was off in a minute."

"Nothing frightens him like a suggestion of that kind. He has raised meanness to the height of genius. They say that he is worth £200,000, but he wouldn't change with him," said Produce, "for a million. When he dies Dodson will not leave a soul to regret him, and there'll not be six people at his funeral."

"You can't be sure, gentlemen," said a quiet voice behind; "I've overheard you on Dodson, and I hope what you say is not true."

The speaker was one of those rare souls God sends forth at a time to establish our faith in goodness, who are believed in by all parties, and respected by all creeds, and loved by all classes; who sit on all the charitable boards, and help on every good cause, and make peace in quarrels; whom all men consult in their perplexities, and young men turn to in trouble, and people follow with affectionate glances on the street; who never suspect their own excellence, always take the lowest seat, and have to be compelled to accept an honor.

"You have a good word to say for everybody, sir," said Cotton, with deep respect; "but have even you ever got a penny from Mr. Dodson for a charity?"

"Well, I can not say that I remember; only I'm sure that he has his own way of doing good. Everyone has unless he is utterly bad, and I'm 70 years old, gentlemen, and I never met that kind yet."

"Greatheart is the only man in Liverpool who would say a word for Dodson," said Lard a minute later, "and in this case his charity has rather overshoot the mark; but it does one good to hear the old man. He is a walking sermon on the mount, and the best thing about him is that he believes in everybody; and very sight of his white hair makes me a better man."

CHAPTER II.

"How tired you must be, Fred, after four hours' begging in offices. I'll bring you a cup of tea in the study at once, and then you are to have a nice little dinner all to yourself."

"O, no, I've not been extravagant at all, and I've not taken any money out of our almsbox, and I'm not a wicked parson's wife who gets into debt; but a hamper came from the country with lots of good things in it, and you will have the chicken; the children and I simply rioted in plenty to-day. Now I'll not hear a word about your expedition until you have had some food."

"There, I feel a perfect g-gutted, Laura. I hope you have sent home the hamper to the sick."

"I've done nothing of the kind; every single bit is to be eaten in this vicarage of St. Ambrose's; you would starve yourself and your family for the parish, and I am sure you are the hardest working man in it. Well, have you got the money to furnish the playground for St. Ambrose's?"

"Do you mean have I come home with £5 in my pocket as the result of one raid by a poor, dull, s-stammering parson, who couldn't make an eloquent appeal to save his life?"

"You don't remember, Fred, and I wish you wouldn't say such things; you may—hesitate at a time, and I'm sure any one would give you money for a good cause because you are—so sincere, and—"

"There, that will do, Laura; it's a great help to an obscure parson in the poorest of parishes to have a wife who believes in him, and makes £400 out of £200."

"And now about the money. Was the asking hard?"

"It might have been, but every one was so j-jolly. The first man I went to was Mr. Welsby, and as soon as I came into his room, he cried out, 'Was just thinking of you; I hope you're on the warpath for that playground for I've a £5 note ready for you.'"

"He sent me on to a bottom broker, and he thanked me several times for coming on such a good errand, and person had a kind word, and by five o'clock I had—"

"The whole sum?"

"With £3 over, which will get a little sheltered seat for old people. How good these city fellows are when they fancy a cause."

"And when they fancy the man who pleads it, Fred. Did you not get one refusal?"

"Well, I was h-hurt by one man, who treated me rather shabbily. He allowed me to explain the whole scheme—swings, sandheaps, seats and all—and he asked me a hundred questions about the parish and my work, till I think he knows as much about the place as we do ourselves, and then sent me off without a penny,—said he didn't give to subscriptions on p-principle."

"What a mean hypocritical wretch!" I left rather down, for I had lost half an hour with him, and I was afraid I had offended him by some remark, but when I met Welsby again on the street and told him, he declar-

ed that I ought not to have been sent there, because D-Dodson—that's his name—was the most inquisitive and the hardest man on 'change.

"He can't be a gentleman at any rate, to question you for mere curiosity; I hope you gave him something to think over."

"No, I didn't; it's no use, and only frets one's self. He had a big chance and lost it. What do you say to inviting the subscribers down some evening when the playground is in full occupation? They will get full value of their money at the sight of the girls on the swings, and the boys at ball, and the b-baies scooping up the sand and the old folks sunning themselves on their seats."

"It will be splendid, but, Fred, it goes to my heart that our own boys can have no holiday, and when their schoolfellows are away in Wales will be sweltering in this close house."

"How much have we in the h-holiday fund?"

"Just £2 6d. Save as I would, that is all I could manage. . . . If we had not given so much away we might . . ."

"You are just as r-ready to give as I am, my little wife, and none of us regret anything we've done for the poor souls around us; but I'm sorry for the boys. Did you tell them?"

"No, I hadn't the heart, so I played the coward, and said you were thinking the matter over, and that you would tell them, perhaps, to-morrow morning."

"Do you know, I r-rather suspected this would be the end of it, and I was planning how to make the best of things. I made up a series of cheap trips, personally conducted, to New Brighton and Cheshire and Hale; you'll give us our lunch, and we'll have a regular picnic. I have some old knick-knacks of my school days at Shrewsbury, and I'll offer them as p-prizes for the best account of the day. You'll come with us, too, and we'll have a particularly jolly time."

"Letters? The post is late to-night. That is about the c-contract for swings, and this is a diocesan circular, and there is a new company p-prospectus—rather an irony sending it to me—but here are two unknown hands; let us see the news."

"Now isn't this good? Three pounds for the playground from a dissenter who c-complains I didn't call on him, and has a kind word about my hard work, as he calls it; and I've been often annoyed at that man for the things he said on disestablishment. He may say anything he pleases now on a platform; I know there is a kind heart behind the words."

"Will this be more money for the s-swings? Hurrah! here's an inclosure of some sort. But what is this?"

"What's wrong, Fred? Is any one dead? Are you ill?"

"Laura, you are an excellent m-man-ager. The vicar, very white as to his cheeks, and somewhat wet as to his eyes, stood on the hearth rug and waved his wife to a distance. 'Be g-good enough to secure a commodious farm house in North Wales, somewhere between Bettws-y-Coed and Llanberis, for the month of August—with a little f-fishing attached, if possible.'"

"Please sit down, Laura, and don't interrupt, I'm sane, quite sane; much p-playground and domestic affliction have not made me mad. Now, where 'was I? Yes, and arrange a quite new s-series of tours round by Festiniog, and up Snowdon, and down to Llanudno, and another to the Menai Straits."

"You are an extravagant, d-dressy woman, Laura, so you may get a n-natty walking dress and three blouses, but keep a trifle for f-fishing apparatus and special provisions—you are th-throttling me—then read it yourself, read it aloud, and—I will p-process round the table, I wish the boys had not gone to bed."

"Liverpool, July 16, 189—Reverend and Dear Sir: It has come to my knowledge from various quarters that you and your devoted partner in life are doing a most beneficent work, both sacred and secular, in a very necessary district of our great city, and that you are discharging this duty to your fellow-creatures at severe cost to yourselves and your family."

"My observation of life leads me to believe that some of our citizens live harder lives or make greater sacrifices than clergymen of limited means whose sphere of labor lies in poor parishes, and without being in any sense a good man—for my whole life is a struggle with one besetting sin, which often getteth the victory—I have been filled with respectful admiration, and have wished to assist, after a humble fashion, in this Christian service."

"As you may have some difficulty in securing a suitable holiday for your family through your notorious charity work, for such is the report concerning you—I venture with much diffidence to inclose a draft on London, which can be cashed at any bank, for your use, under two conditions, which I must charge you to observe: 1, that the whole sum be employed to the last penny in holiday expenses—including such special outfit as may be judged fit by your wife for you all; and 2, that you make no effort to discover the name of your unworthy friend. The indorsement of this draft will be sufficient acknowledgment."

"Trusting you will all have a health-giving, happy and long holiday—I have the honor to be, your humble servant,

ZACCHEUS."

"Your voice is a little shaky, Laura. . . . don't wonder. . . . such nonsense about me and such c-compliments to you. . . . yes, it will be g-glorious, another honeymoon, and those rascals of boys, why won't they let us thank God, wife; it came from him."

To be Continued.

VIGILANCE.

Stubb—Is that new prison guard vigilant?

Penn—I should say so. Why, some one told him the gas was escaping, and he grabbed his gun.

FAMOUS DISHES OF LONDON INNS.

Bel Pies, Tripe Suppers, Green Turtle soup and Oyster Patties.

It is not many years since practically every London tavern, with any pretensions at all, had its own special dish, upon whose excellence it prided itself, and to partake of which people often traveled considerable distances. Bel pies, for instance, were once the great feature of the duelist's breakfasts served at the old Sluice house, near Finsbury Park, the necessary quantity of fish being regularly dredged up from the stream that used to run under the windows. The pies can still be had, but the eels are now obtained from a fishmonger, who carries on business in an adjoining thoroughfare.

Dating back to about the same period are the oyster patties, for which Rule's, in Maiden Lane, is still famous, while not far away, in the Strand, is Simpson's noted for its fish dinners. These latter were quite an institution in days gone by, and even now there are to be found certain old-fashioned bon vivants who swear by them. The guests pay a certain fixed sum and eat as much fish as many different varieties as he may care for.

The Daniel Lambert has been celebrated for tripe suppers from time immemorial, and up till quite recently brown stout in tankards used to be the only correct accompanying beverage.

The Ship and Turtle, in Leadenhall street, is noted for three things—its turtle soup, its toubot and its Madeira. The first named is prepared after a recipe which has been in the possession of the host of the house for over a century. The only portions of the fish used, it appears, are the calipee, the calipash and the fins. These are stewed together for some time in a specially prepared stock, and the result is a peculiar gelatinous green liquor, which tastes of nothing in particular.

To this foundation are added, however, at different times and in varying proportions, allspice, marjoram, thyme, whole pepper, salt, green basil, rue, flour, butter, parsley, a few small shallots, half a bottle of Madeira, the juice of a large lemon and a stick of mace, with the result that a basin of the finished preparation is something to be supremely thankful for.

Both the Cock and the Rainbow pride themselves on their shops. It should be born in mind, however, that the former hostelry is by no means identical with the tavern immortalized by Tennyson in his "Will Waterproof." That particular house stood, in fact, on the opposite side of the street, and was of far less pretentious proportions.

Beside its chops the Rainbow boasts of a special dish in the shape of a saddle of real Southdown mutton, which is wheeled up to the dinner on a little movable table, in order that the individual may be able to direct the carver's attention to the particular tit-bits and slices he most fancies.

INDIAN MAGIC.

Wonderful feat Performed Before the Late Lord Lytton.

The following story of Indian magic was told me by the person to whom it was told by the late Lord Lytton, says a writer. I give it in my own words, for the excellent though humiliating reason that I have mislaid the MSS.

When in India, Lord Lytton often sought out conjurers but never saw any but the usual feats, such as the mango-tree trick and the basket trick. The method in each case is known, or, at all events, plausible explanations have been given by Mr. Mackelvie and other experts. On one occasion Lord Lytton liked something in the looks of the conjurer who was performing in the open space before his house. After the ordinary exhibition his Lordship asked the magician if he could not do something more out of the common way. The man said he would try, and asked for a ring, which Lord Lytton gave him. He then requested an officer to take in either hand a handful of seeds—some sort was sesame. The name of the other sort my informant did not know. Holding these seeds, and having the ring between his finger and thumb, the officer was to go to a well in the corner of the compound. He was to dispose of the seeds in a certain well, into the depths of which he was to throw the ring. All this was done, and then the mage asked Lord Lytton where he would like the ring to reappear. He answered "in his dispatch box," of which the key was attached to his watch chain, or at all events he had it with him on the spot. The dispatch box was brought out, Lord Lytton opened it and there was the ring. This trick would be easy if the British officer was a confederate of the juggler's, and if he possessed a duplicate key to the dispatch box. In that case he would throw the ring into the well, but box and insert the ring. But this explanation involves enormous improbabilities, while it is unlikely again, that the conjurer managed to insert a duplicate ring into the dispatch box beforehand. Lord Lytton then asked the juggler if he could repeat the trick. He answered in the affirmative, and a lady lent another ring. Another officer took it, with the seeds, as before, and dropped the ring into the well. The countenance of the juggler altered in the pause which followed.

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Tell How Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills Make Weak People Strong.

Mrs. ELIZABETH BARTON, Britannia St., says: "I speak a good word for Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills with pleasure. They proved to me a most excellent remedy for nervousness, nervous debility and exhaustion, and I can heartily recommend them."

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**LAXA-LIVER PILLS.** Take one at night before retiring. They work while you sleep without a grip or gripe, curing Biliousness, Sick Headache, Constipation and Dyspepsia, and make you feel better in the morning.

Something, he said, had gone wrong, and he seemed agitated. Turning to the second officer he asked: "Did you arrange the seeds as I bade you?" "No," said the officer, "I thought that was all nonsense, and I threw them away." The juggler seemed horrified. "Do you think I do this by myself?" he said, and packing up, he departed.

The well was carefully dragged, and at last the lady's ring was brought to the surface. That ring, at least, had certainly been in the water. But had the first ring been as faithfully consigned to the depths? Experts will be of various opinions as to that, yet the hypothesis of confederacy and of a duplicate key to the dispatch box is difficult.

THOSE LOVING GIRLS.  
Maud—Mr. De Jones asked me to sing for him the other evening after we had been introduced.  
Clara—And what did you sing?  
Maud—Why, how do you know that I sang at all?  
Clara—Well, I noticed that he didn't ask you to sing to-night.

**ADVANCE OF ALUMINIUM.**  
Aluminium, which had no commercial existence a few years ago, was produced in the United States last year to the extent of 5,200,000 pounds, valued at \$1,750,000 which is one tenth off he cost 10 years ago.

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**NOTICE.**  
NOTICE is hereby given that I will not be responsible for any debt or debts contracted by my son, Simon Wilder, after date of the first appearance of this notice, as the said Simon Wilder is not capable of doing business.  
W.M. WILDER, Varnoy F.O.  
Dec. 28th, 1899.

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The Durham Furniture Co. Limited  
Will pay the following prices for Saw Logs delivered at J. W. Crawford's Mill, Durham.  
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BIRCH 10.00 8.00 6.00  
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Logs will be classed according to quality and size, and to be cut much as possible, 12 ft. long, allowing three inches.  
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