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Author: Charles M. Sheldon

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THE HIGH CALLING

BY CHARLES M. SHELDON AUTHOR OF "IN HIS STEPS," ETC.

HODDER & STOUGHTON
NEW YORK
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TO MY SON MERRIAM WARD

FOREWORD

The story, "The High Calling," was written at two different periods, in 1909 and 1910, and was read at two different periods, chapter by chapter, to the young people in my church, on successive Sunday evenings. The main purpose of the story is to illustrate the value of the average American family training and the final victory of the spiritual ideals over material or physical attractions. The final outcome of the struggle which Helen Douglas makes between her natural inclination to follow a life of ease and luxury, and the real training which she has received at home, is the picture of what is going on in the best American homes to-day. It has been my hope that the story would help many young people to realize the great difference between the finest type of manhood and womanhood, and that which in some cases has grown up on American soil, where the

standards have been low and the ideals have been obscured by fashion, by false home training, and by superficial ideas of happiness. In other words, my purpose has been to describe, in the main characters in the book, the manly heroic type of Christian struggle and final victory which realizes the response which the higher nature makes to the call from above. This idea which runs through the story gives it its name of "The High Calling." As my own young people gave the story a beautiful reception in their listening to it, it is my earnest hope that if the book has the good fortune to find a larger audience it may reach more young people with the same message.

Topeka, Kansas, 1911. CHARLES M. SHELDON.

THE HIGH CALLING

CHAPTER I

PAUL DOUGLAS and his wife, Esther, were holding a serious council together over their older boy, Walter.

"I can't help feeling a little disappointment over the way things are going. I did so want the boy to come into the office with me."

"I know," said Esther, with a grave smile, "but he seems to have his mind made up. I don't think we ought to thwart him if he is made to do that for his lifework."

"No," said Paul, looking at Esther with great thoughtfulness, "I have always believed that a boy should have freedom to choose his lifework. But what puzzles me is where did Walter get his leaning toward electrical engineering? None of my ancestors, so far as I know, ever had the slightest tendency that way, and the Darcys for generations have been business men.

"I was in the boy's room the other day," continued Paul, meditatively, "and he had the floor and his bed and the chairs covered with models of electrical machines. I was afraid to sit down or lean up against anything for fear it would go off and give me a shock or something. While I was asking questions, what did the boy do but start a contrivance that hung from the ceiling and it reached down

a metallic arm that grabbed my hat off and began to comb my hair. I yelled, naturally, or unnaturally, and tried to get loose, but another contrivance shot out from the wall somewhere and clutched me by the leg and began to make frantic gestures at my shoes like a wild boot-blacking emporium. I decided to stand still rather than run the risk of getting hit somewhere else. Meanwhile Walter was laughing so hard he couldn't answer my emphatic request to know what the thing was going to do. He finally explained that it was a new device he was experimenting with to give the patient head treatment for nervous prostration, and black his shoes while he waited. I made him turn off the power and then I cautiously backed out of the room and gave him my testimonial on the efficacy of his invention adapted to give anyone nervous prostration and general paralysis who never had them."

Esther laughed, the same good, generous, contagious laugh she had always known, and Paul had always loved to hear.

"Walter is a genius. I always said he would make his mark."

"I was afraid he would make several on me before I could get away," said Paul, smiling. "Well, of course, we have really decided to let the boy go to Burrton. If he is going to have a thorough course in electricity, I want him to have the best there is."

"I shall miss him dreadfully. O, dear, my darling!" Esther suddenly yielded to a good cry that somewhat upset Paul. Only once in a while in their married life had Esther given way to such a display of feeling. But before Paul went down to the office that morning she had dried her tears and with a hopeful smile prepared to make out a list of Walter's school necessities for the eight months he would be away from home.

Walter was twenty years old, tall and slim, with his father's features and his mother's voice, and a very strong liking for all scientific and mechanical work. He had within the year graduated from the Milton high school with honors in the physics department, and had at once set his ambition on going to Burrton Electrical and Engineering School, the best school of its kind in the East. His father had made him a tempting offer to come into the *News* office, but the boy had frankly told his father that if there was anything in the world he disliked it was a newspaper. So Paul, with a sigh of disappointment, had yielded to the inevitable and agreed to the Burrton plan, simply stipulating that Walter, who

was disposed to be luxurious in his tastes, should make up his mind to a school course stripped of unnecessary expenses and devoted to the main thing.

"I am willing, of course, to help you with your education," he said, in a very plain, frank talk with Walter when the decision was finally made. "But I expect you to do something for yourself. The Burrton catalogue mentions stewardships which students are allowed to choose in part payment of tuition. Isn't that so?"

Walter looked annoyed and answered his father sullenly.

"Yes, but the stewards at Burrton have to wash dishes and mess around the clubhouses doing odd jobs for the other fellows. It cuts them out of pretty much all the best social life of the school."

Paul looked at his oldest boy indignantly. If there was anything he ever feared it was that his children would grow up to despise manual labor and shrink from it.

"Do you mean to say you are not willing to do your honest part at honest work to get through school? Or do you mean to say, Walter, that the social part of the school is so important that you are going to make it count in your program for an education?"

"No." Walter looked anxious and his tone was changed. "I—well—I naturally don't want to be rated in a class below the rest—I———"

"Do you mean that the stewards at Burrton are looked down on for doing physical work? I understood you to say that Jack Alwin said every fellow at Burrton stood on his merits, and that real scholarship really counted. If I thought there was a spirit of toadyism or aristocracy at Burrton, I wouldn't let you go there."

"They are measured by scholarship," said Walter, in alarm now, lest his father would decide to withdraw his consent to the Burrton plan. "But, of course, if I go in with the stewards I can't expect to go out much, or—but I'm willing to apply for a place, father, I want to go. Don't change the plan, will you?"

"I want you to go, Walter. But I don't want you ever to think that the work of your hand is any less honorable than the work of your head. What little you do won't hurt you at all. And it makes no difference what others think. If you go to Burrton, you go to get an education. And perhaps one of the best parts of it will

be in the training you receive outside of the classroom."

So Walter's ambition, so far as his school was concerned, was finally met, though secretly he chafed at the conditions imposed by his father, and when the day came for him to say goodbye and start on his journey of fifteen hundred miles he was not as happy as he should have been, anticipating his position in the school and feeling restless over the task it imposed. At the same time he was so eager to get on with his engineering that he would endure many hard and disagreeable experiences. Paul and Esther took leave of him at the station with a feeling, which they kept from being too sad on the boy's account, that he was going to face a new world and meet some overturning events in the course of the school year.

Helen Douglas, their second child, was eighteen, just entering Hope College, and beginning to face some questions that gave Paul and Esther much thought. She was a girl blessed with her mother's vigorous health, so overflowing with vitality that her mother said to her one day, "Helen, if you feel so strong and outbreaking, I don't know but I will let Jane go and put you in the kitchen."

"That's all right, mother," replied Helen, calmly. "You know I am going to be a professor of domestic science and I would just as soon practice on you and father and the boys as anybody. But I feel so well all the time I believe I would like to join a circus."

"Helen Douglas!" Esther said, shocked at her daughter's remark. And then she thanked God for the girl's abounding life. "There are so many sickly girls and women, Helen, you cannot be thankful enough for one of the most beautiful of all things, health."

"I am thankful, mother. You know I never even had a headache. Isn't it fine to be so well that you don't know what to do?"

Mrs. Douglas, however, had some serious thoughts of Helen, and at times she was anticipating possible sorrow for this creature with the strength and grace of some forest animal. Helen was careless and thoughtless in many ways, selfish and arbitrary in the home circle, although in many cases she was quickly penitent and ready to acknowledge her faults. She was inclined to be very critical and openly judged everyone, from the minister to her own father and mother. She was constantly calling Louis to account for his failings, and one of Mrs.

Douglas's daily crosses was due to the habit Helen had of provoking Louis, partly in a spirit of banter, partly because Louis offended the girl's nice feelings about certain customs and courtesies in polite society. There were great possibilities in Helen for a rich and rare womanhood, but many a hard fight ahead for her in the overcoming, and many humiliations perhaps for her sensitive soul before she reached the place of victory.

Louis was fifteen, just entered high school, a little backward with his studies on account of trouble with his eyes and a nervous attack which left him somewhat irritable and timid. He was an average boy, a great lover of his mother and a hero-worshipper toward his father. He was a handsome-looking boy who bade fair to develop into a business career of some sort, but with doubtful habits which would be settled one way or another as his nervous physical condition improved or grew worse. Paul watched him closely and counselled much with Esther over Louis, realising more as the boy grew that his case was one which called for much wisdom and care.

Two months after Walter's departure his father received a letter from him which he read aloud to Esther in the family circle. It was Paul's custom to take the whole family into his confidence in all matters that belonged to all, and the habit was one that strengthened the ties of comradeship among them.

"Dear father and mother and all," Walter wrote, using a phrase common to the Douglas children whenever they had been away from home. "I'm having the time of my life at Burrton and thought you might like to hear about it.

"There are about five hundred in the school and some pretty fine fellows. They come from fifteen different States and of course I haven't met many of them yet and don't expect to for some time.

"I can't say that I like the steward business. I have to wait on the swells at one of the fraternity houses and I don't like it. Father, I wish you would let me do something else for my expenses. I can't complain of any treatment of the fellows. They are all civil enough, but I can't help feeling the difference between us. You see some of the fellows come from swell families in New York and Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Six of the tables waited on have suites at the club house that beat anything I ever saw. Their furniture is hand carved and one of the fellows has paintings in his room that cost ten thousand dollars. Half the upper classmen keep automobiles and dog kennels and spend a lot of money on wine suppers

and spreads. You can see for yourself that I'm not in the same class with these fellows, but it must be fine to have money and not have to scheme how to get on.

"As for the work, I enjoy the plant all right. There isn't anything like this equipment anywhere else. Lots of the fellows are here to fit themselves for work on the Isthmus. A good many of them are going to fail out on the finals. For all it's a rich man's son's school it's only fair to say the standard is kept up and I am told that over fifty failed to get through last half. I have been fortunate enough to get a position under the assistant foreman in the coil shop and he has been kind enough to say that if I keep on as I have begun I may have a place in the new experiment division just planned under Wallace, the government expert recently sent here. If I can get this position it will carry a scholarship and in that case I suppose you will not object to my dropping the stewardship. It takes an awful lot of time and I don't like it a little bit.

"There is fine boating here on the Wild River and we have a great crew this season. We row against Brainerd Technology School three months from now. Nothing else is talked about just now. There isn't much doubt about our winning. Everyone knows that Carlisle, our stroke, is the strongest man that ever sat in a Burrton boat and we have never had such a crew for team work since the big race in 1891. There is lots of betting on the game and the odds are four to one on Burrton.

"Now father, you won't object, will you, to my dropping the steward work if I get the Wallace appointment. I have almost no time for anything now but digging. I don't care to be known just as 'dig,' but that is all I am so far. The scholarship will pay me twice as much as the work I'm doing and give me leisure for something besides digging. I haven't had time to be homesick, but I would give a lot to see you all.

"With much love from the constant 'digger.'
"WALTER DOUGLAS."

Paul's reply to this was brief, and characteristic of his insight where Walter was concerned. After assuring him that he had no objections to his leaving the stewardship in case the scholarship was open to him, he wrote:

"I notice you speak several times with more or less disparagement of the fact that you are getting to be a 'dig.'

"I understand by this word is meant that the student is actually applying himself with unusual enthusiasm or persistence in his studies. I also understand that it is in some schools a term of reproach and that a 'dig' is regarded as a slow fellow who has made the mistake of supposing a college is a place where scholarships may be acquired.

"Now, I don't want you to miss the social side of college life and all the jolly things that rightly belong to it. But if it comes to a choice between being a 'dig' and being a 'jolly fellow' in college, you need never hesitate concerning which one of these two we want you to be. The main object of a college course is an all-around manhood and a fitting of yourself for the best possible service in the world. The world does not need jolly good fellows so much as it needs persons who know how to do things, and do them right, and do them when they are most needed. Wine suppers don't add anything to the happiness or well-being of the world. And I hope you will live to see the time, if I don't, when the American college will cease to be a soft retreat for rich men's sons and be a real training school for service. Service is the great word, my boy. No man is truly educated who does not have that word at the center of both his heart and his head.

"I inclose a check for a hundred dollars and leave it to your judgment as to its use. I want you to have all that rightfully goes with the college course, and I hope you can get the scholarship if that will mean for you more leisure for all-around development. But I don't think the work you have done so far has hurt you any.

"All send love; your father,
"PAUL DOUGLAS."

Esther felt relieved to know Paul had sent Walter some money. She had feared the boy was working too hard.

"Not a bit," said Paul, stoutly. "The boys that work their way through are not hurt by it. Walter is perfectly well and strong. He is able to stand it."

"His tastes are very refined," murmured Esther. "I can understand how he feels about waiting on the table."

"Waiting on the table is a great business," said Paul. "What would happen to the old world if everybody now waiting on tables should refuse to do it any more? It would disarrange our civilisation more than a universal war. There is nothing

finer or more needed than waiting on tables."

But there was one phrase in Walter's letter that Paul dwelt over after he had gone back to the office. Walter had written of the luxury in the rooms of the rich fellows, evidently with some spirit of envy, and closed his brief comment by saying:

"You can see for yourself I am not in the same class with these fellows, but it must be fine to have money and not have to scheme how to get on."

Paul had a perfect horror of money-loving, of soft and toadying habits, of the worship of style and society, and nonsense of high life generally. Nothing cut him deeper at heart than the feeling, as Walter grew up, that the boy had a streak in his character somewhere of the very thing that his father detested. It was this knowledge of a weakness in Walter that led to Paul's great desire to give the boy another Standard, to impress on him the nobility of labor and the disgrace of getting something for nothing. The one thing so far that was saving Walter from becoming a victim to his luxurious tastes was his real love of scientific knowledge and his desire to make of himself a first-class engineer. Paul counted on this factor to keep Walter steady to the main thing, but he realised as he read the boy's letter that there were influences in the Burrton school powerfully pulling him in other directions, away from the simple and plain habits he had always known at home.

Walter's next letter acknowledged with much evident gratitude the receiving of the money his father had sent and spoke again of the scholarship opening. That matter, however, would not be settled until a trying out of several applicants for the honour.

Two months later Paul received a short letter from Walter, written evidently in some bitterness, saying the scholarship had been finally given to an upper class man, "one with a pull," Walter declared, adding, "I shall have to keep at the steward business, I suppose. I can't make much more than my board at it, father, and the midterm tuition is due in two weeks. I haven't money enough to settle. My laboratory fees have been doubled since Wallace came in with his expert division work and expenses generally are heavy."

Paul replied by sending Walter another check and writing as encouragingly to him as possible. Walter answered briefly and seemed to be feeling somewhat

more reconciled to the disappointment connected with the scholarship matter.

Two weeks later Paul had a letter from the publisher of one of his books, asking him to come East on business relating to the book. He decided hastily to go on and found he could visit Burrton school on the way. He wrote Walter of his intention, giving him the date of the day he should probably reach Burrton. Esther, Helen, and Louis sent many special messages and Paul was glad of an opportunity to see Walter in his school surroundings.

When he reached Burrton it happened to be the date of the great boat race with the Brainerd Technology School. For several stations before the train reached Burrton, crowds came aboard for the college town. When Paul reached Burrton an immense and yelling mob filled the station and swarmed out to the racing course at the meadows, below the school grounds.

Walter was watching for his father, and in the excitement at the time Paul did not note what he afterward could not help marking. When the two were finally seated on the great bank of seats at the end of the river course, just before the crews were given the signal to start, Paul thought to himself he had never seen Walter so nervous or so ill at ease. He attributed it all at first to the general excitement, but the more he looked at Walter and the more he watched his actions, the less he could account for them, even making allowance for all the unusual outbursts of hilarious feeling on the part of two great schools met in rivalry.

"I never thought about the date of the boat race, Walter, when I left home. I'll be glad to see it. I haven't seen a boat race since the Harvard-Yale contest in ninety-three."

"It's going to be a great race, father. We're sure to win, don't you think? Carlisle is a power. We can't lose, can we?"

"You know more about it than I do, of course."

"But they say Brainerd has a great crew. I don't believe they can beat us, though, do you?"

"I don't know a thing about it, Walter. Naturally, I'll yell for Burrton with you."

"We'll win, I think. Yes, I'm sure we will."

Walter grew more and more nervous as the time slipped away and the signal was hoisted up the river that in five minutes the race would be on. His father looked at him curiously, conscious that the boy was unduly excited over something more than the race.

But when the signal went up, Douglas was absorbed with all the rest of the howling, jumping, gesticulating crowd of undergraduates.

A gun went off up the river. The white smoke puff rose gracefully above the trees on the bank. The course was a straight-away three miles. Two thin black streaks side by side on the water began to move toward the red and green goal posts, and the great race was on. The minute the starting gun was fired, Paul saw Walter lean forward and put his face in his hands. He then lifted his head, put both hands on the rail of the seat in front of him, and gazed up the river with a look so intense that even the faces about him by contrast were calm. Paul found himself looking oftener at Walter than at the race. From where they sat it was impossible to tell which crew was in the lead. The black streaks up the river grew more distinct and another gun fired sent the news along the course that the first mile of the race had been covered, with Burrton slightly in the lead.

CHAPTER II

WHEN the gun marked the second mile of the race there was not a quarter of a boat's length distance between Burrton and Brainerd, but Burrton was leading. By a system of flag signals, the spectators on the grandstand at the end of the course were informed of the relative situation of the two crews at every quarter mile. Both crews were apparently in good condition and rowing in splendid form. The last mile was always the hardest fought. As the boats began to enter the last quarter of this mile, the excitement rose to the highest pitch. First Burrton made a spurt that put them a boat's length ahead of their rivals. Then Brainerd responded to its coxswain's call and closed up the gap, gradually lapping its bow past the stern of the Burrton shell. Then Burrton drew away again for half a boat's length. Brainerd doggedly clung to that position for a short distance and then began slowly to fall behind, as the boats shot into the last eighth of the mile. Only a hundred yards now, and the race was won for Burrton. Pandemonium reigned on the seats at the goal post end of the course. Shouts of "Carlisle! Carlisle!" rose up through the din of megaphones and screech of

whistles from the launches. Paul looked at Walter. The boy had risen, flung his hat up anywhere and was waving his arms like a maniac, screaming out the name of Carlisle, the crack stroke of Burrton. And then, without a second's warning, the big stroke, the hero of the Burrton crew, whose name was on a thousand tongues, suddenly bent forward and collapsed over his oar. The oar itself crashed into the line and the Burrton boat lurched over on the opposite side.

"Row on, row on!" screamed the Burrton coxswain. "Only ten yards to the green and red post."

But Brainerd shot by grimly, her bow slipped past the crippled shell and across the line, a winner by more than a length, and the race was over.

For the first few seconds the Burrton crowd did not realise what had happened. The Burrton's shell swung up sideways to the referee's boat and the crew sat sullenly stooping over their oars. Carlisle lay in a huddled heap, a sorry spectacle for a school hero, while the coxswain scooped up handfuls of water and flung them over him.

Then a hubbub of questions rent the air.

"How did it happen?"

"Are we really beaten?"

"Did Brainerd foul?"

"Was Carlisle doped?"

"What was it? Half a length?"

"Ours by a fluke."

"Who was to blame?"

Added to all the rest, Paul was smitten with the torrent of profanity that burst from scores of Burrton men as the truth that they were beaten began to come forcibly home to them. Paul had lived long enough to know that the passion of gambling always rouses the worst exhibitions of human selfishness. But it was a

new revelation to him to see these smartly dressed rich men's sons cursing God and profaning the name of Christ because they had bet heavily on their boat crew and lost. In the midst of all their oaths the name of Carlisle came in for heavy scoring. From the heights of the most extravagant hero-worship he had suddenly tumbled into this cesspool of profane unpopularity. All of which goes to prove any number of useful things, among them the necessity, if you are going to be stroke oar of a boat crew, it is best if you would retain your popularity to keep in training until the season is over, and even then it is not certain that you will always escape the other extreme of being overtrained.

But Paul's attention was speedily directed to Walter. The boy looked perfectly dazed as the final result of the race broke upon him. After two or three eager questions put wildly to those nearest him, he had sunk upon the seat, and when his father spoke to him he did not at first seem to hear. Then he roused up and slowly went down off the stand and walked along by his father like one going to execution.

It was a characteristic of Paul Douglas to go straight at a difficulty or a question and make a frank and honest attempt to clear away all mystery and trouble.

He saw plainly that some unusual thing was agitating Walter. The boy was under some great stress of feeling and could not conceal it.

So when the two were back in Walter's room, Paul at once began to seek the cause of the boy's trouble.

"What is the matter with you, Walter? You have not been yourself all day."

Walter was very white, and what he said to his father's question was so inaudible that Paul could not understand it.

"What is the matter with you, Walter? Are you sick? Tell me," said his father sharply.

"I can't, father, I can't," Walter stammered and looked so wretched that his father said more gently:

"Don't be afraid of me. Speak out if you are in any trouble. I want to help you. Don't you know that, Walter?"

"Yes, but———"

"Has it any thing to do with money matters? Tell me."

"Yes, I can't! Can't do it, father. I don't mean——"

And then Walter broke down completely. He laid his head down on his arms and cried hysterically. Paul sat looking at him sternly. For the first time that day an inkling of the truth began to dawn on him. At first it did not seem possible to him that his boy could do such a thing. It was so incredible to him at first that he sat silently eyeing the bowed head with an entirely new and bitter feeling.

When he finally spoke it was with a slow and steady measure of speech revealing great self-restraint.

"Did you bet on the race? Is that what's the matter?"

Walter lifted up his head and looked with a terrified face at his father.

"O father, don't be hard on me! I felt so sure we would win! I didn't see any risk! And all the fellows in Burrton bet on the race. A fellow isn't considered loyal to the school unless he bets something."

"How much did you lose?"

"I put up that last one hundred you sent me and fifty more."

"When do you have to pay?"

"I suppose at once. That's the rule."

"What other debts have you?"

Walter hesitated; then he said feebly, "I owe five week's board and some items at the men's furnishing."

"How much will it all come to?"

"I don't know."

"About how much?"

"About seventy-five dollars."

"When do you have to pay that?"

"There's no hurry. It can wait."

"Do you mean to say that a bet, a gambling debt, an obligation made on a dishonourable basis, takes precedence in time over honest claims for food and clothing?"

"It's the rule here in Burrton," said Walter sullenly. "If a bet is not settled at once the fellows lose their standing. The same is true at all the eastern schools. You have got to meet debts of honour promptly."

"Debts of dishonour, you mean."

"That isn't the standard here, father. The standard at Burrton is different from the one at home."

"I see it is," replied Paul, drily. "But the one at home is———" he paused, rose from his seat and went over by the window and stood there looking out over the school campus.

Paul Douglas had had in his fifty years of life many interesting and profoundly moving experiences, but it is doubtful if in all his life he had faced anything which stirred him so deeply as this. His high standard of conduct made him loathe the entire gambling transaction. It was agony to him to find that his own son was swept off his feet by a custom which had nothing except common custom to excuse it. Above all, Paul felt the bitterness that comes to a father when he realises that the careful teaching of years has been deliberately disobeyed or ignored. There was a mingling of bitterness and shame and anger and sorrow and heartache in Paul that Walter could not possibly understand as he sat there looking dully at his father's broad back and wondering what his father would do.

After what seemed like an hour, Paul turned around.

"Give me an itemised account of your obligations outside of your gambling expenses."

"I don't call it gambling to bet on the races," said Walter half defiantly.

"It make no difference what you call it," said Paul sternly. "What is all betting but trying to get something for nothing, and what is that but gambling? Every boy in Burrton who bet on the race is a gambler?"

"The authorities never say anything against it," said Walter sullenly. "The president knows that thousands of dollars are put up at every race and he never has said a word about it."

"We will not argue about it," said Paul coldly. "Give your accounts, your honest accounts, with the tradesmen here and then pack up your things."

"O father, you don't mean———"

"Pack up your things. We leave for Milton in the morning."

Walter took out of a drawer the bills which had accumulated there and without a word handed them over to his father. Paul summed up and found a total of $81.

"Is that all?"

"Yes, except my tuition for this last half."

"How much is that?"

"Forty dollars."

"Is that all?"

"Yes."

"I'll settle this all up. You can begin packing while I am out."

Paul took the bills and went out abruptly, not concealing from Walter, what was very apparent, that he was tremendously angry.

He went to the various tradesmen and settled the accounts, went to the boarding place and paid the arrears and after some difficulty on account of the holiday, finally succeeded in settling the tuition at the school office.

He then asked the way to the president's house, and on presenting himself at the door was invited to go into the reception room and wait for a few moments.

The president was having a call from some old classmates who had come down to Burrton to see the race. When they went out, the president accompanied them to the door. Paul could not avoid hearing one of the visitors say, "I put up my last dollar on Burrton. May have to borrow to get out of town."

"Don't borrow of me," said the president, laughing. "I've never been able to get back what you owed me at Cambridge."

There was some jesting reply in the familiar language of old college chums and the visitors went out.

The president came into the reception room and greeted Douglas heartily. He had heard of him, had read some of his stories and was glad he had a son at Burrton.

"It's my son I came to see you about, President Davis," said Paul quietly, when he had returned the president's hearty greeting. "I am going to take him out of the school and I thought it was only fair to you that I tell you frankly why."

"Going to take him out! I'm sorry to hear it."

"But the atmosphere of Burrton does not seem to agree with my son." Paul frankly told the president the incident of Walter's bet and the consequences, without any care to hide the facts of his own intense convictions on the matter of betting which he mentioned several times as "gambling."

President Davis listened gravely and before Paul was through, his face had reddened deeply more than once. Paul spoke very bluntly and it was plain to be seen that he was under a great stress of feeling in which was mingled a real, deep, strong anger, a part of which was directed against the Burrton school and its management.

"And so," Paul said as he finished his statement, "I don't care to keep my son in an institution where the standards are so low that a gambling habit like betting is not even discouraged by the authorities."

"How do you know it is not discouraged?"

"My boy tells me that during his whole stay here he has not heard a word of disapproval or protest against this prevalent habit."

The president turned to a bookcase near by and took down a small volume entitled "Chapel Talks." He opened it at a certain page and without a word pointed to a passage.

Paul read it. "There is a prevalent idea in the school that in order to be loyal to Burrton the students must all stand together, no matter what is done by the student body. That idea is false and in the end it is harmful to the best interests of the school.

"Take for example the custom of betting on the athletics and especially on the annual boat race. This is a custom which should be discouraged by every lover of the school. Betting is gambling; it is an attempt to get something for nothing. That attempt is destructive to morals and dangerous to character. The fact that many of the alumni who come to see the games bet on them is no reason why the undergraduates should bet on the games. I look to every student to discourage this practice and use his influence to help abolish a harmful and dangerous habit."

Paul looked up from the reading and eyed the president with a new feeling of respect.

"I beg pardon for judging you, sir, without knowing all the facts. But this volume was published over a year ago. My boy never heard these chapel talks. I take it that there has been nothing said about betting here for several months."

"No, perhaps not," replied the president with some hesitation. "But the students generally know my views on the matter. That knowledge, however, does not stop the betting."

"Why can't you put an end to it by forbidding it altogether?"

In reply to Paul's question, President Davis smiled.

"How much power do you think the president of an American college has, Mr. Douglas?"

"Why, I suppose he has enough to stop things that are absolutely wrong."

"Pardon me, Mr. Douglas, but he has no such power. He may try to stop them, but his power to do so may be very limited. For a year the great president of Harvard, Dr. Charles Eliot, did his best to abolish or amend football in that university. As head of the institution he spoke out against the game, which he honestly believed to be brutal and demoralising. What was the result of his protest? It had no influence toward abolishing the game and very little, if any, toward modifying it. The fact is our colleges and universities are just now controlled in a large measure by the opinion of those who support them. In other words, the alumni in many colleges run the college, not the president or the officers. I may say to you frankly that such is the case at Burrton. Two of the visitors who were here a few minutes ago are really more influential with the board of trustees than I am. They are heavy contributors. One of them gave us a gymnasium last year. They are very fond of athletics. Both of them are betting men. It would be a very difficult task to regulate the athletics in Burrton in opposition to these alumni; so there you are, as to a president's influence. All this in confidence, Mr. Douglas."

"It must be great fun to be president of a university," said Paul in disgust. "It seems to me if I were president of this school I should want to be president, especially in matters of conduct and morals."

"You would see it differently if you were president," said Davis with a faint smile. "Among other difficulties that we face here is the fact that Burrton, being unusually well equipped for technical high-class preparation in electrical engineering, is a favorite school for the difficult sons of rich men who do not know how to get on elsewhere. We have on our hands the greatest of all problems—how to make useful men out of a class of individuals who from boyhood have been reared in habits of the most princely luxury and disregard of all rules of restraint. The fact that we don't toady to all these rich men is seen in the records, which show during the year over two hundred men suspended for failure to meet the Standard requirements. And as to the betting, Mr. Douglas, your boy has now learned his lesson and will not do that again. Hadn't you better reconsider? Will he find conditions any different or any better in any other school that you know? Do you know any college East or West where the student atmosphere is absolutely free from all evil customs and habits?"

"I must confess I don't," said Paul, slowly. "I don't mind saying that this action of my son's has made me very angry. Still, I don't deny that it might have happened in any one of a dozen colleges in any part of the country. A large part of my

grievance was because it seemed to me and, pardon me, seems yet, that the institution was to blame for keeping so still about these things, and doing so little to create a different moral Standard. But I'm not asking Burrton to take all the blame. My boy has got to take his punishment, and I don't know of a better one than to take him home."

"I hope you won't resort to that measure," said the president, earnestly. "Your son has unusual talent. He holds the highest place in the shops for original research. Give him another chance. It is my opinion that he will not disappoint you again."

"Perhaps not," answered Paul as he rose to go. "But I have about made up my mind."

"I hope you'll change it," said the president as Paul went away.

"Perhaps," answered Paul briefly.

He walked slowly back to Walter's room, asking many questions as he went along. His talk with the president had given him another angle from which to judge the boy's conduct. He could not hide from himself that his heart was sore over the whole matter, because he had never dreamed that his own boy would fall before a temptation which he had so often heard his father condemn at home. Paul Douglas was humiliated, as a man always is when his children begin to show the bad habits he has been fond of criticising in other people's children. And he had not yet been able to find any reasonable excuse for Walter.

When he went into the room he found Walter packing things up and evidently with no purpose of remonstrating or trying to change his father's decision.

"There's a letter from mother," he said briefly as Paul came up to the table in the middle of the room.

"You want me to read it?"

"Yes."

Paul sat down to read and Walter went on with his packing.

"Dear Walter," Esther wrote, "I am so glad your father has this opportunity to visit you and I presume he is at Burrton now. You will have good times together

and I am envying him the privilege. I have missed you, boy, more than you can imagine. But then you will never know how much your mother has depended on you here at home. You were always so thoughtful and kind, how can I help missing my eldest.

"I have been thinking a good deal lately about the different standards that prevail in different places and I have no doubt you have noticed that some of the things we have always taught you here at home are not held by others in the school where you now are. I believe you will be able to decide fairly when it is necessary as to what is right and wrong and not allow the fact of a different Standard to confuse your judgment. I simply want you to know, Walter, that I have the utmost confidence in you. I am proud of my boy's ability. I expect you will make one of the finest engineers in the United States, and better yet, one of the finest men in the world.

"What do you think has been the great event of the last week? Helen had a young man caller two nights ago. It was the oldest son of Judge Randolph on Chandos street. The boy is a little younger than Helen, I think. He called in a formal way and to hear him talk to Helen convulsed me. I finally had to retire, but Helen was furious with me after young Randolph went away. The child was very much disturbed and claims to despise the youth, etc. It was like the story I was reading the other day:

"A young man had been calling now and then on a young lady, when one night as he sat in the parlour waiting for her to come down, her mother entered the room instead, and asked him in a very grave, stern way what his intentions were. He turned very red and was about to stammer some incoherent reply when suddenly the young lady called down from the head of the stairs: 'Mamma, mamma, that is not the one.'

"But, oh dear. Must I realise 'old age is creeping on apace' when my girl begins to have gentlemen callers? Helen will have many admirers. She is a girl who has very decided views and is very frank to express them. Now don't tease her when you write her, for this is in confidence. You must not betray me.

"Louis is doing very well now at school. His headaches trouble him some. I am giving him a course of careful training. He was much interested in the set of models you sent him. It was good of you to remember him. He admires you vastly. Don't forget that, boy, will you?

"You must come home for the holidays. We want the family all together then. Make your plans accordingly.

"All send love, and most of all, your Mother."

Paul finished the letter and laid it down. He sat there for a while in silence. Walter did not venture to break it. Finally Paul said: "Walter, I've been thinking over this affair and perhaps I have a new look at it. I want to tell you about it."

A light came into Walter's face which had been fixed and dogged and he got up from in front of his trunk where he had been kneeling and came up to the table.

"Sit down there," said Paul gravely. Walter sat down opposite his father, and the two, father and son, looked at each other earnestly across the table.

CHAPTER III

PAUL DOUGLAS was trying to think of his own boyhood and his temptations as he faced his own son on that memorable afternoon. His anger at the boy had almost subsided. The feeling that remained was a feeling of grief and fear mingled at the anticipation of a failure on Walter's part to realise the grave nature of the crisis through which he was passing.

"I've been thinking over all this, Walter," Paul began slowly, "and I am willing you should remain here on certain conditions."

"Oh, father, I'll do anything," Walter began impulsively.

"Let me state them," his father went on gravely. "They may seem hard to you. But I'm older than you and have a right to expect obedience if the terms are just.

"In the first place I shall expect you to earn the amount you have incurred with your gambling and repay me. Is that fair?"

"Yes," Walter spoke, wincing at his father's use of the word. "I wish you would not say 'gambling' father. It was a friendly wager. It is the regular college custom."

"I do not care what you call it or what the custom is here," said Paul, his anger beginning to flame up. "The wager, the custom, the whatever you call it, is gambling. It is gambling as much as any custom at Monte Carlo or any of the gambling halls of Europe. The principle is the same always; it is the desire and the hope of getting something for nothing, a thing totally contrary to every divine law of life. Don't you see it, Walter? Do you think I would be so much disturbed about the matter if it were of little account?"

"No, I suppose not."

Paul looked at the boy with growing earnestness. It was not reassuring to consider the possibility of his boy growing up with blunted ideals, with feeble convictions and a faint sense of the eternal difference between sharp cut right and wrong. The most sorrowful experience in Paul Douglas's life might be coming to him at this time if he should find his own son lacking in the real essentials of moral earnestness.

"Then," he went on, "another condition of your remaining here is that you promise me never to bet on anything again."

Walter interrupted eagerly, "You don't need to worry over that. I've learned my lesson. You don't think I feel especially drawn towards that sort of thing, do you?"

"I hope not," said Paul with a feeling of relief. There was a pause. Then Paul said as he picked up Esther's letter, "You will write mother. I'll leave it to you to tell her what you think you ought. But she is building great castles on your estate, my boy. Don't disappoint her, will you?"

"No, father, I won't," Walter replied in a low voice. There was another pause and then Paul said cheerfully, "I must go back on the night train. It's only fair to you to say that President Davis paid you a fine compliment speaking of your rank in the engineering department. We all expect great things of you in that line." Walter coloured with pleasure at the statement.

"They've got a great equipment here, father. That was the first reason I felt awfully bad to leave. I don't believe there is another school like Burrton for electrical engineering."

Paul rose to go and Walter went with him down to the station. Paul's parting

word was affectionate and hopeful.

"Do your best, boy, and don't forget to pray."

Walter remembered that brief but serious appeal a long time. His father had not often talked religious matters with him. At the same time Walter had grown up with a strong impression of his father's own religious character and without much having been said he had always had the deepest respect for his father's splendid Christian character. That same evening he wrote home to his mother. Under the influence of his father's treatment of his conduct he made a full and frank confession of his actions but at one point he could not help saying, "I told father I did not feel as if the bet was such an awful thing on account of it being a regular custom here at Burrton. You know I've written before about the Standard being different. But father was all upset by it. Mother, I don't think I have any temptation to gamble as a regular thing, and I have promised never to bet again, but you know I like nice things and I wanted the money so I wouldn't have to bone quite so hard. Father is good to me to let me stay on. I don't know what I would have done if he had taken me out. There is no other school quite up to this for equipment and I'm not fit for anything else. I'm working on a new lamp for city street lighting. We are allowed so many hours a week for original study and research. I can't describe my work and you would not understand it if I did. But my problem is to find a way of making an electric arc light which will go without an expensive mechanism and be self-regulating without machinery. There is a German student in my class by the name of Felix Bauer who is working at the same problem. Bauer is a good friend of mine and we have our laboratory tables in the same number. Now, mother, you won't think I am altogether depraved, will you? I am planning to stick close to work from now on. I don't want to disappoint you and father and I don't believe I shall. But you will remember, won't you, that the Standard here is different from the one at home in many ways. For example, mother, most of the fellows talk very freely and even coarsely about girls, and a good many of the rich set have pictures of actresses in their rooms and tell stories about them that I can't repeat. All that disgusts me and I have never heard anyone utter any protest in a crowd where the stories are going around. You see the Standard is different here. And I told father of a number of other customs that are different from those we are used to at home. There is a different atmosphere about everything. I can't describe it exactly, but I can feel the difference. I don't believe there is very much of what we know at home as 'spiritual life.' There are some fine fellows here and some high ambitions, but the chapel service is all voluntary, and only a handful of fellows

ever go unless some big gun comes to give a chapel talk, and then the president allows only fifteen minutes for the whole service.

"What you wrote about Helen having a beau was funny. I can't imagine what Helen will do when the callers begin to come. Well, mother, I want you to think of me as too busy with my work to get into any more trouble. I am awfully interested, especially in the original problem—I believe I almost stumbled on the making of a successful arc light, without a regulating mechanism, a few days ago. I have been dreaming over it ever since and I am quite confident it can be done. Felix Bauer said the other day he thought he had it all right, but the plan escaped him. It's exciting, mother, to keep trying different combinations, not knowing any minute when you may hit on a new discovery. I hope Louis is behaving himself in his studies. I am sending him by mail a time switch that he asked me about.

"Much love to all. Your affectionate son
"WALTER."

Esther read this letter over carefully twice, and then, as her habit was, answered it almost immediately. It was a part of her training of her children that she had frankly taken them into her confidence when they were little and had had the wisdom and courage to discuss with them the questions that were really vital to their bodies and minds. There was one reason Walter wrote as frankly to his mother as he did about everything, knowing she would understand exactly. And that was the reason his mother in her turn could write as she did in reply, entering fully into the boy's real life.

She did not take much time to reproach him for the betting incident, believing that Paul had emphasised that quite strongly, but she did express the hope that her son would not be afraid to be independent of surroundings and stand on his own feet and have his own convictions, and then she went on to say: "One of the hardest things you will have to do all your life is to be independent. This will take more courage often than for a woman to be out of fashion. But there isn't a finer thing in all the world than an independent soul, one that knows the right and does it even if the whole world around is doing exactly the other thing. If the coarse stories you mention are told in your presence you don't have to join in the laugh over them. There is a number of ways in which you can clearly make those fellows understand your attitude in that matter and of course you have the right and privilege of guarding yourself from any talk of that sort in your own room.

Your room is your castle. Guard it from impurity. I feel as if almost any kind of wrong could be excused in a young man who has the virtue of a pure heart and maintains constant respect for womankind. But, if I ever gave you any advice about the choice of a friend, I think I should be quite safe in saying to you, be very slow to accept into the sacred place of your friendship any young man who talks with impure lips of womanhood. Such a man is a blight on all he touches.

"I trust you, Walter, to make the most of your opportunities and make us all proud of you. Success to the arc lamp. Write us the minute you succeed. Tell me more about the German schoolmate. We are interested in him and somehow I feel from the little you have told us of him that he is a fine young fellow.

"Helen is very dignified about her callers. There is nothing more to tell about her."

"All send love, most of all, mother."

When Paul reached home he told Esther somewhat in detail the incidents of the boat race and his interview with the president. He was hopeful for Walter and believed the boy had learned his lesson and would not fail at that point again. But he could not understand the particular "streak," as he called it, in Walter's make up, which seemed to demand expensive and needless luxuries.

"The boy had bought a very elaborate dresser. It was quartered oak and had a number of patent arrangements about it that made it unusually expensive. Walter confessed it cost him forty-seven dollars. This was one of the things he went in debt for. It seems he had become enamoured of just such a dresser in one of the rooms he had been caring for, a suite belonging to Van Shaw, the son of the steel magnate at Allworth. Of course, we want our son to go through school with all the comforts around him necessary for his proper culture and education. But I cannot see for the life of me how a forty-seven dollar quartered oak dresser is going to make any more of a man of him, especially when he goes in debt for it. I told him so and to my disappointment he took what I said rather badly. That is, he flared up some and seemed hurt at my criticism of his luxurious habits. But it isn't the luxurious tastes I object to so much as the reckless and inexcusable act of going in debt for such a thing; that is perfectly inexcusable. Where did Walter get his tastes, do you suppose?"

"Oh, dear, I don't know," said Esther with a sigh. "You know Louis used to have

just a streak in him. Perhaps some of my ancestors on father's side were French aristocrats before the revolution. You know the Darcys had estates in southern France in the sixteenth century. I don't believe any more than you do, Paul, that a forty-seven dollar dresser is at all necessary to Walter's education. He will have to learn better ways. We must not forget his splendid good qualities in other directions. He has a great many. I can't believe he is going to disappoint us."

"No, I can't believe that," said Paul gravely. "But the boy has much to learn and I hope he will learn it without unnecessary suffering."

It was this same week, two days after the receipt of his mother's letter, that Walter had an unusual and rather dramatic opportunity to act on his mother's advice, in the matter of asserting his rights about the kind of conversation he would permit in his own room.

Walter had very little acquaintance with Van Shaw and the rich men's sons' set at Burrton. But incidentally it had come out during his chance meeting with Van Shaw that Walter's mother was a Darcy. The Darcys were at the time immensely influential at Allworth, Van Shaw's home. The fact that Walter was doing manual labor at Burrton did not affect his social standing very seriously, as at the time, there had not come into Burrton the social stigma against a student working his way through which had already come into several state universities and technical schools in this country. Besides, there was in all of Walter's make up that indefinable stamp of high breeding and refinement, helped on by an unusually attractive and handsome bearing, which made him look distinguished in any group of young men. When he had put on his best suit before the forty-seven dollar dresser and come out on the rare occasions when he could spare time for some function, he was in many ways the most elegant person in all the company.

Van Shaw had gradually taken a peculiar attitude toward Walter, partly of recognition of his family and its antecedents and partly of patronage, as if he took for granted Walter would welcome his attentions. As a matter of fact, Walter resented Van Shaw's bearing toward him, but in his weakness and his leaning toward the upper society he envied, Walter endured what otherwise he would have been ashamed to acknowledge. On two occasions it had been a relief to Walter to be of help to Van Shaw in the electrical rooms. And on the particular occasion we are now to describe Van Shaw had come into Walter's room one evening to ask him about a point in connection with some original work which had to do with the winding of a single phase alternator.

While they were talking over the problem and Walter was trying to make Van Shaw see how important it was to take account of the position induced in the several turns and the fact of the reaction of the armature current, half a dozen other fellows dropped in. Walter was quite popular and not infrequently eight or ten students might be found in his rooms, as on this occasion.

Van Shaw was soon in possession of all Walter's knowledge on the subject, for he was bright enough mentally, and he carelessly sauntered over to the dresser and made a comment on it. Then he noticed a picture of Helen Douglas, a new one which Helen had sent Walter within the last few days.

"Sister, isn't she?" asked Van Shaw.

Walter nodded.

"Mighty handsome girl. Hope she'll visit you some time," said Van Shaw, as he picked up the photograph and started to pass it around among the other fellows.

There was something so offensive in the tone and manner of Van Shaw that Walter, who was standing near him, intercepted the picture before anyone in the room could take it. He put it back into its place without a word. Van Shaw laughed.

"Say, maybe she isn't your sister, either. That makes me think," and before Walter could realise what he was doing, Van Shaw had begun a questionable story, while the group in the room sat and lounged around with looks of anticipated amusement.

Walter Douglas will never forget that scene and his part in it if he lives a hundred years. Van Shaw was leaning up against the dresser, in a vain way mindful of the impression he was about to make, when Walter interrupted him. Walter was very pale and what he said came from lips that trembled with a mingling of anger, and fear of the result.

"Wait! I would rather you would not tell that story in my room."

Van Shaw could not have been more astonished if Walter had pointed a gun at him. The rest of the company simply stared in the most profound silence at Walter. Ten or fifteen seconds ticked away. Then Van Shaw, who had turned very red in the face, said, slowly: "I don't know as you have anything to say about

this. I don't intend to let a good story go untold."

"You don't tell it here in my room."

"I don't? Who will prevent it?"

"I will."

Van Shaw turned a little toward Walter. Douglas was smaller, shorter, and of lighter build in every way than himself. But he was in the real point of vantage, in his own room. The other students did not seem disposed to take any sides in the matter. But one of them said: "Oh, cut it out, Van, if Douglas doesn't like it. A fellow has a right to say what he wants in his own room. It's only a matter of taste anyhow."

Van Shaw looked at Walter savagely. Then he sauntered across the room.

"Come out in the hall, fellows, and I'll finish there. This air is too pious for my health."

Some of the boys laughed, and three or four fellows followed Van Shaw out. The rest stayed. When the door shut on Van Shaw, one of the older students, who had been silent throughout, walked up to Walter and shook hands with him. Then the rest of the group followed. Not a word was said by anyone. These youths, some of them already hardened by dissipation, had at least the native good sense not to mar the occasion by any silly attempt at words. They simply shook Walter's hand and went out. And when the last one was gone, Walter turned the key in his door and went into his bedroom adjoining, and flung himself down on the bed and cried.

I don't know that he could have given any real reason for his emotion. But he was somewhat unstrung by the event. And a number of tumultuous feelings were stirring deeply in him. He turned hot and cold at the thought of his own possible cowardice. And then he felt a reaction of shame in the thought that after this, Van Shaw and all his set would cut him dead. He was ashamed to feel, even after all he had done, that he still shrank from the possibility of social scorn, even from a set of men who had no more moral standing than Van Shaw had.

But, on the whole, having stood by his rights as he had, and having the pleasant consciousness of being true to his own principles, he was disposed to feel a glow

of commendation, and later in the evening as Helen's splendid picture looked at him almost as if she was present, Walter said to himself: "I'm glad I spoke out. I'm glad."

And then, because he had been brought up from a small boy to confide in his mother, he found great relief for his feelings that same night in writing to her. He mentioned no names, simply said that curiously soon after his mother had written as she did about guarding his own room from evil talk he had had an opportunity to do it. He did not dwell upon the matter at all, and did not take any special credit to himself for his action, but simply reminded his mother again of the difference in standards and conduct. He expressed gratitude that some of the fellows had at least silently stood by him. And he ended his letter by saying that he was almost on the edge of discovery of the arc light, although it still eluded him.

For the next two weeks Walter was completely absorbed in his studies. Every spare hour he could get he pored and worked over his original problem. There were points about it which perplexed and exasperated him. Felix Bauer was as hard at work on the same problem as himself, and said one evening with a good-natured laugh that he believed he had mastered it. "All I lack is that one thing necessary what we call the 'Beduerfniss' the '*einege gewolite*,'" said Bauer, as he took off his shop cap and thoughtfully ran a lead pencil back and forth through the short curly hair over his ear.

"That's all I lack," said Walter. "If I could get your '*einege gewolite*,' I would have my answer."

"Hope you will get it," said Bauer, pleasantly, as he closed up his locker and went out to meet another class period.

After he had gone, Walter worked on until he was the only person left in the workroom. He had the entire afternoon and evening, as it happened, and was so absorbed in his experiments that he was hardly aware of his being alone until he looked up and saw that the big room was empty, and that it was dusk. Without any thought of supper he turned on the light over his table and made some mathematical calculations. Then he ran out of paper and looked about over the litter of stuff in front of him for another piece, but not finding any, glanced naturally over to Bauer's table, which was next his own.

There was a folded bit of paper there, and Walter reached out for it, took it, and opened it up. It was covered on one side with some drawings and diagrams, and as Walter looked at them, not paying much attention at first, as he worked a high power formula over in his head, a little at a time it dawned on him as he continued to stare at Bauer's drawings, that without having realised it himself, perhaps, Bauer had actually suggested in his own drawing the key to the arc light Walter had been puzzling over for several months without success.

"Yes! yes!" Walter was saying, excitedly, to himself. "I see it! I see it! What a dummy I was. The electrodes can be fitted with teeth at equal distances. Let the tooth rest on the porcelain plate. It will gradually soften and melt under the heat of the arc. Then—then. I see! I see—the electrode will, or it ought to, drop down of its own weight upon the next tooth. Then that will melt and the electrode will drop again. The two electrodes can be coupled together with a scissors coupling, so the teeth will have to be made in only one of them. I see the whole thing! Hurrah!" He said the last word out loud. The echo of it in the big, empty shop startled him. The glow of the discoverer, of the inventor, was on him and within him. Then he received a distinct reaction. That was Bauer's paper, not his! He had left it out of the locker when he went away! It was Bauer's discovery, not his, even if Bauer did not yet realise the real value and meaning of his diagram. He was on the road to the discovery.

Walter stared at the paper again and wished he had never seen it. For he was face to face with a real temptation, one of the hardest and most alluring his young manhood had ever confronted, and he was afraid, as he continued to stare at the diagram made by Felix Bauer.

CHAPTER IV

IT was ten o'clock at night when Walter finally went out of the shop and up to his room. He did not turn on the light at once, but went over by his table and sat down.

The temptation he still faced had assumed alluring shapes. In the first place, he was saying to himself, "Bauer's drawings differ only a trifle from my own and I had practically gone as far as he, only one or two points were suggested to me by his diagram of the electrodes resting at an angle on the porcelain plate. The cutting of the teeth in the soft metal was also suggested by him. But I had thought out other points that were essential."

Then, again, Walter kept going over the great advantage it would be to him if this discovery were made by him first. He knew that the commercial value of any real improvement in city lighting was very large. There was money for him in this discovery. And Walter was growing more and more restless over his stewardship and the burdens it involved. He hated the drudgery and the time it took, and of late he began to feel quite certain that the same attitude displayed in other schools was creeping into Burrton, an attitude of contempt for the working student, nothing very pronounced, but enough to make him feel disagreeable and annoyed, for he was a finicky youth, sensitive to a great degree and with the taste of an aristocrat at heart.

"I don't see that I do Bauer any harm if I go ahead and make a model. I'll do that anyhow," he said out loud at last, as he got up and turned on his light. And then he saw under the edge of his door a note which had been slipped in there.

He went over, picked it up, opened it, and found it was a note from Bauer.

"My Dear Douglas:—Within an hour after leaving the shop to-night I had a telegram calling me home. I do not know how soon I shall be able to return to Burrton, if at all. Will you kindly see if I left any of my apparatus or papers on my table and return them to my locker? I enclose the key with this note. Thank you. "FELIX BAUER."

So Bauer was going to be away indefinitely. He might not come back at all. He had not given any reason for the call to come home, but Walter remembered one remark the German student had made one day which led him to believe that Bauer's home life was unhappy and the relations between his father and mother were unpleasant. Suppose he never came back. Suppose he never finished his investigation of the lamp? Suppose—there was a number of possibilities to suppose. Why, then the field would be open to him and he could go ahead with a clear conscience. But could he? In spite of all sophistry and special pleading with himself Walter knew he had caught the idea of the electrodes from Bauer's drawing, which suggested the secret. How did he know but that Bauer had discovered it as indicated in his own diagram and was making that preliminary to the finished lamp?

There was one honest and plain way out for Walter. He could write to Bauer and frankly tell him that he had seen his drawings and had received from them a hint for the discovery and ask him if he were willing to share with him, Walter, in the result if the lamp proved worth while financially. But here was Walter's weak point. He was proud of his technical knowledge. Already it was conceded by all the students in the electrical engineering department that Douglas of Milton was the star. The instructors had given him special notice. He had already made one or two very valuable and original contributions to the problems that faced the shop every day. But nothing he had so far done would begin to compare with this new arc light. The thought of sharing his discovery with any one else touched his pride in its most sensitive and personal spot.

He threshed it all over back and forth and when he finally went to bed he was still undecided as to his course. The fact is, he could not escape all the time the standard he had been trained in at home. If Paul and Esther had done nothing else for their children they had certainly done this; they had implanted in their minds a deep and strong feeling that one of the things to be most desired in life is honesty; clean, frank, wholesome honesty, free from cant and hypocrisy and double dealing. And Walter knew in his heart that what he was going to do was not honest to Bauer, even after he had juggled with his conscience and proved to himself that Bauer had no real rights in the matter. He knew perfectly well that the German student did have rights of prior discovery. No amount of argument or defense of his own discoveries could remove that fact.

Nevertheless, next day in the shop after he had put Bauer's belongings, including the paper with the drawings, into Bauer's locker, Walter found himself working

with nervous haste over his model. It went together with wonderful exactness and in spite of his feeling that he was acting the part of a miserable cheat, he was, at least, during a part of the time, in a glow of enthusiasm. For the most part he worked at night, when he was least liable to watching from the other fellows. There were several reasons why he could do this, among them an unusual interest in the school at that time in evening functions which drew most of the shop workers out.

Walter took parts of his model up to his room each night and studied them. At the end of two weeks he had completed the lamp and it remained only to give it an actual test. No word had been received from Bauer, and inquiry from different professors had failed to discover any news from him. It seemed to Walter almost certain that Bauer would not return, and each day of his absence gave Walter less uneasiness, if not an actual dulling of the keen edge of his conscience.

The day before he planned to test his lamp at the shop, Walter received another letter from his mother, one part of which annoyed him greatly. His mother wrote chiding him good-naturedly for not sending his usual weekly letter. In fact, since his discovery of Bauer's plan, Walter had failed to write home, for the first time since coming to Burrton. He could not account for this failure except on the ground that he was too busy.

But his mother wrote without any knowledge of all this, telling him bits of news that she thought he would most want to know.

"Your father has been asked by the Citizens' Committee, to let his name go on the primaries for senator from the Fifth district. I have my doubts about the wisdom of a newspaper editor going into politics, but your father, while he had some hesitation, has finally agreed to let his name go down. So now we can expect lively times in the Douglas family until after election next fall.

"Helen has two more beaus, one of them ten years older than herself. I am not making fun of this, as you know, for I have tried to teach you all that the love part of life is in some ways the most serious as well as the most happy of all your experiences. Helen has good sense when it comes to a final decision on anything. I am not afraid for her.

"Louis is better than he has been for a long time. His eyes are stronger and his headaches have almost ceased. He seems to enjoy his studies this term and is

making progress. We all feel pleased of course. Louis has had an offer from his uncle to go into the store, but your father and I would much prefer to keep him in school if his health will allow. We are ambitious for all of you and want you to have an education and do in the world what you are best fitted to do.

"We want you to come home for Christmas. And from the different bits you have written about your German friend Bauer we have been wondering if he could not come with you. I understand from one of your letters that he is rather a lonesome fellow, without many friends. If he is not going to his own home at Christmas time, give him a good, strong invitation from father and me to come with you. You know we have never been separated at the holiday season, and it will be my treat to pay your expenses home this time unless you make a new arc light and get it patented and make a lot of money out of it. We are all interested in the light and speak of it almost every day. Your father was saying this morning that our street lights are a disgrace to Milton. There is a citizens' war going on at present over the situation and every number of the *News* contains letters from angry taxpayers calling the city government to account for the wretched nature of the street lighting. If you should happen to discover an economical and satisfactory city lamp, the people of Milton would be ready now to compel the council to purchase and install it. Of course this all sounds rather like a story, but stranger things have happened in the history of inventions. And if you should happen to be the fortunate discoverer, we would be very proud and happy.

"Don't forget to make the invitation to Mr. Bauer as hearty as you can.
I am anxious to see you, as all of us are.

"YOUR LOVING MOTHER."

The things which annoyed Walter in this letter were, first of all, his mother's invitation to Bauer. Of course if he did not return to school, that would be the end of it. But if he should return, why, then, under the peculiar conditions that existed it would be more than embarrassing for Walter to bring Bauer home with him. And to add to his annoyance Walter began to feel hard toward the German student, as if Bauer had done him a wrong. It is, of course, true that one of the surest ways to acquire a hatred of anyone is first of all to do him an injustice. Having already wronged Bauer in stealing his ideas, Walter was fast entering on the second stage of his relations to him and beginning to feel hateful toward him.

The other annoyance caused by his mother's letter was due to the fact that in her ignorance of the situation she was all unconsciously strengthening his temptation

to complete the light and get it before the public as his own as soon as possible. The street-lighting conditions in Milton were duplicated in hundreds of municipalities all over the country. There was no doubt in Walter's mind that the first really successful economical lamp offered the public would find a quick and remunerative sale. With a growing excitement he began to see the great probabilities before his invention. And all that his mother had written simply tended to push him on to complete his work before Bauer could return and make the necessary discovery for himself.

He was vexed and annoyed to a degree he had never before experienced. And he knew deep down in his heart that it was because he was acting a dishonourable part toward the absent classmate. He began to lose sleep over it, and grew nervous and exceedingly unhappy. On the one hand, his home training had made him sensitive to moral standards. He would not have dared to write to his mother about the affair to ask her advice as to what he ought to do, because he knew without writing what she would say. On the other hand, his ambition goaded him to ignore what it called a technicality, tried to befog the issue by whispering that Bauer could not succeed without putting into the lamp the things which Walter had discovered already himself, and constantly insinuated that even if he had not happened to see Bauer's diagram, Walter would probably have worked it out in a day or two anyhow.

He replied to his mother's letter briefly, saying he was unusually busy and adding that he did not think Bauer could come with him because he had been called home and would not in all likelihood return to Burrton. He said nothing in this letter about the lamp; he could not bring himself to mention it. And he knew when he posted the letter that the tone of it would make his mother ask questions because it was so different from the enthusiastic, jolly letters he had written before.

It was during this week that he fixed on a certain evening to make a practical test of his lamp. He had guarded his secret successfully. Not a soul, including both instructors and students, knew the special work he had been doing. Among the great number of special and changing experiments going on in the shop it had not been difficult to keep his discovery to himself.

He chose a night when a great social event was occurring in hopes that he might have the shop to himself. There were a few enthusiastic specialists who did considerable night work, but on this particular evening they went out early and

by nine o'clock he found himself alone. The power which lighted the town of Burrton was the same as that in use at the school and was in operation day and night. The conditions seemed absolutely favorable to a test of his invention, and by ten o'clock Walter had made all connections and brought his electrodes into position.

The only question with him was whether the heat of the arc would melt the soft metal teeth at the right time and with even regularity. He was pale and nervous with the tension of the work, his loss of sleep and his goading of conscience, and when the carbons started to glow with the familiar hiss, he started back as if someone had come in, and looked around the shop fearfully.

Then he laughed hysterically and turned again to his machine. His whole attention was now fastened upon it, and with the true inventor's ecstasy he forgot Bauer, forgot his mother, forgot that he was at the center of a great moral tragedy for his own soul, forgot there was a God, and a judgment day and any such things as conscience or remorse, or injustice.

His whole soul flung itself on that point of dazzling light and the soft metal teeth which he had coupled in a strip to the electrodes. He watched it, fascinated and fearful. He saw the tooth begin to glow to a red, then to a white, heat and then it melted softly away, letting the electrodes fall gently, keeping the points of their position in perfect place while the second tooth slipped down in turn to be transformed into a soft and yielding point.

The lamp worked! It was a practical success! It had stood the test! He did not know how long he had been in the shop or how long he had been watching the mechanism. He switched off the power, and adjusted a part of the scissors-coupling. Then he turned on the current again and with the same feeling of fascination watched the softening and dissolving of the metal tooth.

A noise of a door opening aroused him and he looked up. Someone had come in, and was walking directly toward his bench.

The glare of the lamp blinded him, and his eyes had to become adjusted to the dimness as he turned his back on the lamp. But when the person was ten feet away he recognised in a moment the face of Bauer, as he came walking slowly toward him.

CHAPTER V

WALTER'S mind worked with what he afterward described to himself as an unquestioning obedience to a first impulse, at the centre of which was an instantaneous fear of discovery. Before Bauer had taken another step nearer him he had turned, switched off the power from the lamp, and snatched up a hammer from his bench.

With one blow he smashed the electrodes and then, as if made frantic over the act, he struck at the mechanism until it was a heap of bent and twisted wires and metal. It lay on his bench in a tangled mass and he stooped over it and began to sweep it off into the refuse box. Bauer had not yet said a word. Only with the first blow of the hammer he had ejaculated "Ach!" As Walter was flinging bits of the lamp into the box the German student came up and stood near, looking at Walter in astonishment.

"What is the matter?"

Walter simply muttered some unintelligible thing. He was, to tell the truth, tremendously excited, disturbed, overwhelmed by Bauer's return at this particular time.

"I've—I've been experimenting and have failed," he finally managed to say, stammering out the words with great difficulty. He was terrified to think Bauer might read in his face the whole story.

But Felix Bauer was one of the most simple-hearted and unsuspicious souls that ever lived. If he had not been, some of the things that are going to be true of this story could never have happened. He looked at Walter and then at the broken mechanism and simply said: "I am sorry you have failed. But it is nothing by the side of dishonor."

And then for the first time Walter looked openly and squarely into Bauer's face and saw tragedy there. The incandescent light over the bench was not a strong one. But Bauer was close to him and Walter quickly saw that he was not thinking of what Walter had done, was not going to ask him any questions about it, because some other thing was gripping him, some other thing so strong and insistent and sorrowful that it took possession of him and dominated him. Walter's action had already passed out of his mind as simply an incident

connected with some disappointing experiment, and he was looking at Walter with an appeal in his great, sad eyes which smote Walter like a blow in the dark.

He felt almost faint and instinctively he sat down. Bauer had gone over to his own desk and stood leaning against it.

"I ought not to come in here and annoy you at this time," he said in his slow, almost stammering manner, "but I—you see, somehow I felt so lonely, so afraid, when I got off the train to-night, that I could not help the desire to see you, and they told me you must be in the shop. Heine says in the Lorelei, you know, 'Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten, das Ich so traurig bin?' But I do know why I am so sad. It is disgrace which has befallen me, such deep disgrace to my home, my father———"

He stopped and looked at Walter timidly as if not quite sure how his confidence might be received. Walter sat with his head bowed, and smitten into silence. He did not know what to say, but Bauer probably took his silence for quiet sympathy, being of that nature himself and mistaking Walter's attitude for earnest attention.

"My father—you will understand what it means—has deserted my mother, and she has run away, the home destroyed is to be, and the disgrace—Oh, it is greater, more than I can endure, I said as I was obliged to come back for my things. It is more than I can bear alone, and you are so strong, so principled."

Walter cowered in his chair, appalled at the thing that was happening to him. Here was a soul in desperate need who had come to fling itself on him for companionship and courage, and he with his own soul stained with deception for the love of fame and money! He would have cried out; he wanted to, but Bauer went on, now he had broken over his natural reserve. He eagerly awaited Walter's sympathy, and his spirit hungered for light in his darkness.

"Yes, you see, I don't know anyone here, and your action about the story telling in your room—I heard of that—I counted it a brave thing to do. And, oh, I am so hungry for a friend! I need one; do you think you could be friend to me, do you, Douglas? Friend to a disgraced family? It is asking a great deal, but I feel the dark, the dark—it is so heavy for me———"

Bauer, looking at Walter in his almost animal-like appeal, saw at last that there was something he did not understand in Walter's attitude. Walter's mind was not

confused by the strange situation, it was clear and vibrating with feeling. But it was a long time before he could speak. How could he tell Bauer the truth now? Why not let him remain in ignorance of the purpose to steal his ideas? Nothing had been done so far to really wrong him. The lamp was destroyed. Walter would not make another, and the basis of a possible friendship, such as Bauer needed, could be established without any explanation or foolish confession.

But somehow Walter could not rest with that suggestion. He felt that if Bauer had his friendship it must rest on truth and a frank outspoken revelation of the character of the soul he was appealing to for help.

It was very still in the big shop when Walter finally looked up and said to Bauer:

"I am not worthy of your friendship. I am not what you think I am."

"Not worthy? Not———" Bauer looked at him in amazement.

"No, not worthy. Look!" Walter spoke fast now as if afraid he might fail in courage. "Open your locker! Here! here is the key! You left it with me."

He thrust the key at Bauer, and Bauer turned around, and under the pressure of Walter's look and voice opened his locker and stood in front of it holding on to the door.

"There! That paper! Your plan, your drawing of the lamp! Open it. Let me show ———"

Bauer obeyed mechanically. Walter got up and stood by Bauer's table. Bauer slowly unfolded the paper. His look showed he had almost forgotten it.

"There! See! You were on the right track! The soft metal teeth coupled to the electrode! Don't you see?" Bauer's face began to glow for the first time that evening, for he, too, like Walter, had the inventor's sensitive hunger. "You left the paper here the night you were called home. I saw it and copied it before I put it back. I made the model and it works. That is it there," and Walter pointed to the stuff on the table and in the refuse box. "Do you understand? I stole your plans. I was going to get out the lamp without telling you if you had not come back. And I am the person you want for a friend. Am I worthy? Do you understand now?"

A dull red spot began to creep up into the German student's face. He was still holding the locker door with one hand. His eye travelled from the diagram to Walter and then back again. Walter stood very erect, his head thrown back almost defiantly now that he had made his confession, and he was absolutely in the dark as to the effect of it on Bauer. He would and could not blame him for being angry. And he was angry for a moment. But only a moment. Then his great brown eyes softened and he said in a quiet, gentle way that moved Walter more than any burst of passion could have done:

"I am not a judge for you. While on the way home I suddenly thought out the secret of the metal teeth. See! I have it here." He took out of his pocket a paper and opening it spread it out on Walter's desk. Walter saw in a second's glance that Bauer had discovered the working basis for the successful light. "And I was going to work on the plan when I came back. But all my trouble drove it away. I lost my ambition. And I understand what you did. I might have done the same. But still, Douglas, do you know, I don't care. I—I am hungry for a friend just like you. What you have said does not change anything. What difference does that make? That is not trouble, not for me."

Walter looked at him a moment and then in the reaction which was really the taking off of the strain of weeks, he put his head between his hands and sobbed. Bauer did not venture to say anything. When Walter could control himself he reached out his hand. Bauer took it, and in that grasp the two young men understood each other for life. I think each gave as much as he took. The sacred compact they sealed in the big empty shop that night was made with few words, but it was never disturbed nor broken in after years. And each one of them realised something of the depth and joy of real friendship. Do you? Does anybody? Our human friendships, when they are real and permanent, are the finest and richest possessions of our lives. Pity we treat them so lightly and measure them so tamely.

That same night Bauer in his simple manner told Walter something more of his home troubles, enough to give Walter a glimpse into the real sorrow of his heart. Walter in his turn told in part the story of his temptation and of his struggles and tortures to escape. To this Bauer listened with a faint smile and with perfect understanding.

In the days that followed, they agreed to construct the lamp between them and share in the profits from it. And when they began work on the mechanism each

found that the other had discovered little improvements which were necessary to the best construction, finally producing a lamp far more perfect and practical than Walter's first attempt.

The day after that memorable scene with Bauer in the shop Walter wrote home a long and exuberant letter, a part of which we may read.

"Mother, I can't begin to tell you what a relief I have experienced since I told Bauer all about it. I believe I had a little taste of hell for a while and I don't want to go through it again. Bauer and I are the best friends you ever saw. He is just the opposite of me. I'm impulsive and quick and get mad quick and all that. You know all about it, but he is slow and calm and talks only a little at a time. He is not what you would call handsome, but he has the most beautiful brown eyes I ever saw. If I was a girl I would think he was handsome because his eyes are. He has told me a good deal about his home life and I have told him something about ours, and he has asked some questions. And, oh yes, he is coming home with me for the holidays. At first he refused, but when I told him how much you wanted him to come and how lonesome it would be for him here he consented to come. I hope you will all like him. Helen will probably think he is odd and solemn, but I hope she will be kind and all of us can make him feel at home.

"We are working on the lamp together and it is almost finished. We are keeping the construction of it a secret because we want to spring it on Anderson, the foreman. I haven't told you about him. He is all up on electricity, knows as much about it as Edison, at least he almost says so at times, and he really does know a lot, but he is the one teacher in the whole bunch I don't like. There is a manner about him that makes you feel he has on a dress suit and a stovepipe hat all the time. I heard the other day he is related to the Van Shaws, a cousin or something of the steel magnate at Pittsburgh. I have never had any trouble with Anderson, but I felt relieved the other day to hear that I was not the only fellow in the school that he ruffled. He is mighty unpopular. Bauer and I are going to make sure of our lamp first and then give Anderson a look at it. If the thing goes as well as we expect I don't know how much there will be in it for us. But if it is anything like what I expect, no more stewardship for me. I'm tired of waiting on the swells, and since the Van Shaw episode I've not had a very pleasant time with some of them. You see, mother, there is a crowd here that seems to think it is necessary to be coarse and fast in order to be men. The more money they can spend, the more beer they can drink, the more chorus girls' photographs they can get to paste up in their rooms, the more tobacco pipes they can display over and

under their mantels, the more slang and indecency they can learn, the more college atmosphere they think they are creating. I wonder sometimes why the professors don't seem to care about the morals of us students. We never hear anything in the class room or the shop except the technical parts of our studies. I haven't a single teacher at Burrton that I would go to if I were in real trouble and I never would think of going to President Davis about anything. He is a great scholar and hustler for money, but I should hate to have to go to him for advice or sympathy.

"Well, I have made the letter long enough. I'm getting a little homesick to see you all, and looking forward to the holidays. Expect me home with a trunk full of money from the sale of the lamp. If we get it patented we may either sell the thing outright, or Bauer thinks we can better make profitable terms with some good electrical manufacturing firm like Madison Brooks & Co., New York. Love to all. "Walter."

Mrs. Douglas answered him at once and in the course of her letter expressed her delight at the happy outcome of Walter's experience with the lamp and with Bauer's friendship.

"I don't know when you have given your mother more happiness, boy. I was so happy I cried all the forenoon while your father and Helen and Louis were out of the house. I am delighted that you have made a friend. Do you know what that means? If Bauer is what you think he is, you and he have something more than a trunkful of money. A man or a woman can live to be fifty years old without gaining more than two or three such friends as Bauer. So what has really happened to you is a splendid thing. And I hope you will feel very rich indeed. Of course we would all be pleased if the lamp turns out to be a success. But I suppose you will make up your mind to be ready for anything. There are many slips between models and patents, and it will be well for both of you not to buy expensive trips around the world on the strength of your discovery until the money is really in hand.

"Louis is giving us some trouble lately. He is very slow in his studies, especially his English, Your father, I think, feels annoyed by it, because he wants Louis to be literary. But Louis's English teacher brought to your father the other day a composition Louis had written on the Tuberculosis Outdoor Hospital recently established at the Mansfield farm by the State Board of Health. Miss Barrows, the teacher, is a very practical person and she went out to this tuberculosis

station with a section of her class in English, and told the members to keep their eyes open and on their return to the school to write one hundred words about what they had seen. And this is Louis's contribution to the symposium:

'"Tuberculosis was started in 1884, by Dr. Trudeau, who had it in the Adirondacks. Although consumption is not inherited and does not belong in the climate it is getting very popular. The sleeping bags are very useful to the consumptive people because they can keep their heads out and put the rest of their bodies into them. I saw the germs. It is a big white ball with blue spots on it. I think it would be fine to sleep in one of those beds with the head inside and the lungs outside.'

"Well, when your father read this, he simply choked. In fact we all choked, and Helen who happened to get hold of it somehow, just screamed. Poor Louis was mad at every one of us and especially at Miss Barrows when he heard she had taken his account to his father. At first your father thought Louis was trying to be funny at the expense of the English department in the high school. But he wasn't. He was in dead earnest, and doing his best. I tell your father that it isn't fair to ridicule Louis. Ridicule is a dangerous form of criticism and Louis is very sensitive. I don't blame him for saying that the teacher ought not to make fun of him when he is trying to get his lessons. He fairly hates some of his teachers because they use sarcastic or ironical remarks about him in the presence of the whole school. It seems strange to me that any teacher will do that, especially in the case of a boy like Louis. They defend themselves by saying it is the only way to wake up the students or shame them into doing good work. But I believe they are wrong in their methods with boys like Louis and I am going to talk with them about it for his sake.

"We will welcome Bauer with you at the holidays. He will feel at home with us if your mother has anything to do about it. We all anticipate his coming. If you are a little homesick to see us we are all more than a little eager to see you. I pray the good God to keep you pure and true. Lovingly, "MOTHER."

Two weeks after this and two weeks before the Christmas holidays, Walter and Bauer had completed their lamp and given it a test. It was more perfect by far than Walter's model. It worked with a practical certainty that left no doubt in their minds that unless some unforeseen factor came in to change conditions they had a workable, economic mechanism which was automatic and durable.

Within a day or two they decided to let Anderson into the secret and Walter asked him to come into the shop at night to see the result of some special original work. This was a common request and the foreman simply made his engagement at the hour assigned, and when the hour came he went in and Watched Walter and Bauer bring out the lamp and make the necessary connections. Anderson had respect for Walter's ability, recognising in him the brightest mind for electricity that Burrton had ever seen in a student. He stood by silently at first while Walter in considerable excitement and some evident pride did the explaining. But when the light started in the arc and the brilliant glow of it began to fling out its dazzling shafts through the shop the professor started forward, a look of astonishment came over his face and he asked Walter a question, so unexpected, that Walter turned pale and looked first at Anderson and then at Bauer in blind wonder and a great sinking of heart.

CHAPTER VI

"DIDN'T you know that this lamp has already been made and patent applied for by Gambrich of New York?"

"No! When?"

"Within the last week. Wait. I'll show you."

Anderson went over to his own desk at the end of the shop. In the few minutes he was gone, Walter and Bauer exchanged questions.

"Do you suppose that's true?"

"Doesn't seem possible, does it? If it is, our cake is dough."

"Anderson seemed pleased when he announced the fact, if it is one," said Walter bitterly.

"It may not be true, you know," said Bauer hopefully.

Anderson had come back in time to hear the last sentence.

"It is true, though, young man. See."

He had the last copy of the *Electrical News*, and it was open at an illustrated page.

He laid it down on Walter's bench and he and Bauer eagerly bent over it.

Almost the first glance revealed the fact that the lamp described in the paper was identical with their own and application for a patent had been made within ten days. The account of the discovery, moreover, made the date earlier than the discovery made by Walter.

"You see, don't you," said Anderson. "Gambrich has exactly the same device of metal teeth coupled to one electrode. It's an ingenious device and you fellows have certainly great credit for thinking it out almost simultaneously with Gambrich."

"According to this account, our lamp was made before Gambrich's. Does that give him priority of invention?" asked Walter eagerly.

Anderson shrugged his shoulders.

"Priority of manufacture does not legally cut any figure by the side of priority of invention. You might be able to prove that you had made the lamp before Gambrich made his, but that would not help you any if he invented his arrangement first, long before you made your lamp."

"Is that really strict justice?" said Bauer slowly.

"It is law," said Anderson grimly, "and you must remember that law and justice are not in every case synonymous. I'm sorry for you fellows. There's a lot of money in that invention for the manufacturers of the lamp, and considerable for the inventor if he knows how to make terms."

"Do you mean," asked Walter gloomily, "that really we have no right at all with what we have made?"

"Don't you see you haven't? What can you do? Ask any lawyer, if you don't believe me."

Anderson spoke somewhat testily as he started to go away.

"I believe you're glad we missed this opportunity," said Walter angrily. He was tremendously discouraged over the event and could not control his feelings.

Anderson grew very red and turned on Walter in a rage.

"I don't mind saying I am glad your pride has had a tumble. You have been unbearable for some time. Maybe this will teach you a lesson. There are people in the world who know a little about electricity as well as yourself."

All of which was not calculated to sweeten Walter's sense of defeat or make him more friendly to Anderson, who, after glaring at Bauer, who had not said a word, abruptly went out of the shop.

The lamp was working all this time, with an exasperating smoothness and precision that spoke eloquently of its financial possibilities. There were a few workers in the other parts of the shop who, realising that some unusual event was on, began to gather around Walter and Bauer and ask questions. Among the group was Van Shaw.

In a few moments everyone knew the story of the lamp, and Walter and Bauer came in for congratulations over the invention and sympathy for its uselessness to them.

"I could have told everybody about that lamp two months ago," said Van Shaw, speaking with an indirect manner peculiarly offensive to Walter. "I have had advices from a near friend in New York that Gambrich was at work on this device. It's a pity some Burrton man can't have the credit and the cash that are going to Gambrich."

Walter's fingers closed around one of the tools on his bench and he felt mad enough at that moment to throw it either at Van Shaw or the lamp. He did not do either, but when the crowd had finally gone away, he sat down at his bench and said to Bauer: "What chumps we were not to apply for a patent weeks ago. We might have contested it. We have let a fortune slip out of our hands through our stupidity."

"It's because we did not take anyone into confidence. I never thought of a patent. I was too much absorbed in the lamp itself to think anything about anything else."

"Whom could we have taken into confidence? Van Shaw or Anderson? But I don't feel like giving up. Why can't we contest our rights? There are cases in the courts every day over patents and inventions."

"But it takes a lot of money to hire a lawyer and go to law," said Bauer with real Teutonic caution. "And I haven't a dollar to spare. According to Anderson, it's as good as settled that Gambrich has the legal right to the lamps."

Walter stared at the arc gloomily. He felt the disappointment with deep bitterness. Not only was his pride smitten at the thought of others who were working out his ideas, but the thought of the money he might have made, and the relief that money might have brought him, rankled deepest in his mind.

Bauer took the affair more philosophically. He went over to Walter and put a hand on his shoulder.

"When we are beaten we might as well accept it and make something else. I don't like to see you take the thing so hard."

"What else can we make?" Walter said after a moment. "I've lost my ambition."

"Oh, no you haven't; not for good and all. Why, we might invent a typewriter telegraph."

"It's too late, that's already been done."

"I'll tell you what would bring us fame and money," said Bauer with his usual slow manner and his friendly smile. "What the world needs is a letter writer that will take letters at dictation, first hand."

Walter stared at Bauer gloomily. "What's that?"

"A direct letter writer," said Bauer. "A machine that the business man and the minister and the college professor and the politician and the railroad man and the lover could talk into. As fast as he talked, it would make a visible mark on the paper and when the person was through dictating his letter he could pull it out all typewritten ready to send. Just think what a blessing this would be to the busy letter writer."

Walter stared at Bauer as if his friend was crazy. Then, after a moment of doubt,

he burst into a great laugh.

"Well, of all the—It's the first time I ever knew a German could be out and out funny. Do you know what your letter writing machine would have to do? It would have to know how to spell right."

"No, it wouldn't. All it would have to do would be to spell phonetically. Every machine would spell and print just as the person talked."

"Yes, and what will become of the great army of stenographers and typewriter girls who make their living now at taking dictation? I don't want to invent something that is going to deprive thousands of people of a living."

"You could marry one of them and I would marry another. That would take care of two of 'em," said Bauer solemnly.

Walter looked up at him a moment, and then he roared. It was what Bauer wanted him to do. And when they finally went to their rooms Walter was feeling somewhat better, although he did not get a good night's sleep. His dreams had in them fitful glimpses of Van Shaw and Anderson and a red hot arc lamp that glared and flamed at him with a diabolical grin that rejoiced in his defeat.

It was two days before he could bring himself to write home a full account of the matter. Both his father and his mother replied to this and each wrote in full sympathy with him and a knowledge of what his disappointment would be to him.

"Of course," Paul said, at the close of his letter, "if it is true that the New York man really invented the idea of the lamp before you did and then patented it before you did, that settles it, even if you were first to make an actual model. The patent laws recognise priority of invention where no unreasonable delay has followed the invention and the application for patent. Looking up the subject in the *Electrical News* and consulting with Alvord, our best patent lawyer here in Milton, I am afraid you are too late to do anything, and a contest, Alvord thinks, would result in nothing but expense for you and your friend. If I thought there was any legal right you possessed and ought to have I would be willing to help you contest for it. But that seems to be out of the question.

"Don't let this defeat mean too much to you. It is not a defeat. You did your best and actually made a very important discovery, you and Bauer. If you can do that,

you can do other things as well. The unknown, undiscovered world of electricity is boundless. You have as much right to enter in as anybody, and far more probabilities than most persons that you will find something worth while. We are all anticipating your home coming for holidays and expect Bauer to come with you. Affectionately your father.

"PAUL DOUGLAS."

Walter's mother wrote in much the same way and cheerfully urged him to take all the disappointing things with hopeful equanimity.

"The longer I live, the more I find the real joy of life consists in doing our best with God's help and leaving the results with Him. Of course we all like to get results out of our efforts. But we forget that results always do follow honest effort, only they are not always the results we expected and wanted. No doubt, boy, you feel like saying to us at home, 'Yes, it's easy for you to sit there at your ease and deal out calm chunks of sympathy to me and tell me not to worry or feel bad, but if you had worked as hard as I did you wouldn't find it quite as easy to be happy over this disappointment.'

"Well, we confess all that, but your mother doesn't want to see her son give up and go down to defeat from one or two or a dozen or even a hundred blows. You have had the joy of making the lamp (after you cleared your soul by confession to Bauer), and you know that your brain works at its best along inventive lines and you know the field of invention, especially in electricity, is limitless. Your mother says to you, we feel proud of you and we will feel doubly proud if you will learn to take this disappointment cheerfully. Don't be a baby over it. Be a man. The tests of manhood are not found in the easy, but in the difficult things of life.

"The great thing after all, is to live up to the high calling. I don't care much, Walter, whether you ever invent anything or not, although I wish you could find out how to make a machine that will take off a woman's hat and hold it in church so that she can take care of her hymn book, her Bible, her gloves, her pocket book, her fan, her umbrella and her handkerchief, but if you never discovered a single secret of nature and discover the secret of a useful life, I would be and shall be the happiest of all women, for that is my ambition for you and always will be.

"Be sure and bring Bauer home with you. We are all interested to see him.

"Lovingly,
"MOTHER."

Helen also wrote to Walter at this time. She was not much of a letter writer but she wanted to add her word of sympathy with the rest and Walter felt especially pleased that she exerted herself on this occasion.

"Dear Bub," Helen wrote, using the name she had always given him in her childhood. "We all feel awfully sorry about the way the lamp came out. It didn't seem fair to you and I hope you will invent something better that will throw that lamp in the shade, so to speak. We all believe in you and I have never for a moment doubted that in time you would be another Edison. I'm enjoying my school this year more than ever. Since our new gymnasium director was appointed I have found favor in her eyes and she has turned over one of the academy classes to me by consent of President Bruce. I did plan to study for a position as professor of domestic science, but since this appointment work opened up I feel as if I could like to be a physical director in a college or a Y. W. C. A. I love the gymnasium work immensely and Miss Rhodes says I am her best pupil.

"We are all wondering what sort of an individual your Felix Bauer is. Does he speak broken English very badly? Will it be difficult to talk to him without a German grammar? I have an idea I shall not like him very well, from what you have written about him. But I don't suppose that will make any difference to him.

"Father has got into politics all right and as he and mother have written you, he has been elected senator and will begin his term in January when the legislature meets. Father is very hopeful about doing things. Mother says he will have lots of opposition from the machine. I don't understand all this political discussion, but you know father. He is dead in earnest as you know and now that he is elected he is going to make the machine, whatever that is, 'sit up and take notice.' This is what my teacher in English would call a disjointed metaphor.

"Father is working over a dozen bills calculated to reform the state. The word 'reform' is a household word in the Douglas family. But you know father. Isn't he the dearest man that ever lived? It makes me mad to read what the papers have been saying about him ever since he was nominated. Anyone who didn't know

father would think from reading these papers that he was an out and out villain. And we all know, and Milton people know, that if ever a man lived who had a pure and earnest desire to help make a better world, father is that man. I hate politics. It seems to me it is the meanest thing there is. I don't know anything else so mean as to take a man like father and question his motives and call him all sorts of names and try to blacken his character. Mother says she doesn't mind, but I believe she can't help feeling it some. It just makes me mad.

"Well, bub, don't be discouraged. We believe in you just as much as ever. We are looking for you home next week.

"Oh, by the way, does your friend Bauer have to have his beer regularly? And must we lay in an extra supply of sauer kraut and pretzels? I am sitting up nights studying my German exercises so I can say 'Eine Schwalbe macht noch Keinen Sommer' and other interesting topics of conversation. Lovingly your sister.

"HELEN DILLINGHAM DOUGLAS."

Walter laughed over this letter, but rather resented the tone Helen displayed about Bauer. "I hope Bauer won't make any bad breaks and I don't believe he will." But Walter had a little talk with Bauer that same evening in which Bauer expressed a little nervousness about his approaching visit at Walter's home.

"I haven't ever been anywhere to speak of, you know," he said a little doubtfully. "And I begin to feel a little afraid of meeting your folks."

"Afraid? Why, you can't even look at mother without falling in love with her. And as for father he will take to you right off. I know he will, for several reasons."

"But your sister?" Bauer looked up at the photograph of Helen on Walter's dresser. "Somehow I feel a little afraid of her. I don't believe I'll get along very well. Does she talk German? I feel a little more at my ease if I can talk what you call small talk in my own language."

"No, I don't believe Helen knows enough German to talk it intelligently. But you needn't be afraid of her. She is interested in your coming as all the family are and she has asked me several questions about you," said Walter, not venturing to tell Bauer what the questions were.

"Is that so?" said Bauer, looking pleased. Then after a moment he added, "It's awfully good of you to ask me to your home. I won't forget it."

And indeed, Felix Bauer, you never will.

The two friends reached Milton three days before Christmas and were met at the station by Paul and Louis. Paul took to Bauer from the moment he first saw him. You know how that is, that indescribable attraction you feel towards certain people even without an introduction, and Bauer had the same feeling for Walter's father. At the dinner table that night Bauer soon forgot his timidity because everyone was so kind. There was any number of questions to ask. Walter did a large share of the talking. Mrs. Douglas looked proud and Helen was on her best behavior and in less than ten minutes Bauer had lost his fear of her and was in danger of entertaining the opposite feeling. Walter Darcy and Louis Darcy, Esther's brothers, were present, and helped to make the meal a lively and entertaining occasion. And Felix Bauer said to himself when the evening was over that it was the pleasantest evening of his life.

The next morning Paul asked Bauer to go down to the office with him, The *News* was installing a recently invented linotype and Paul wanted Bauer to see it.

They looked over the mechanism and then came back to Paul's office room. Bauer was looking over some specimen type Paul had on his table when three men came in.

Paul looked up, his face changed colour for a moment and he asked the visitors to be seated. He knew two of the men and they introduced the third.

"Senator Douglas, this is Judge Livingston of Camford. We want a talk, a private talk with you on political business," said the speaker, the Hon. George Maxwell, as he looked at Bauer.

"This young man is a friend of mine, spending the holidays with us," said Paul quietly, and he introduced Bauer to the three visitors.

There was a pause, and then Mr. Maxwell said, "We want a private conference with you, Mr. Douglas, if you don't mind." Bauer started to go out and Paul said to him, "You don't have to go unless you prefer."

"I'll go back to the house, Mr. Douglas," Bauer said, and immediately went out.

Maxwell started to shut the door after him.

"Mr. Maxwell, that is not necessary," said Paul very distinctly. "I think I know what you have come to see me about. Let me say, gentlemen, once for all, that I have no secrets, and no use for any in my political life. I do not believe in all this private conference and closed doors in connection with any action of mine in the coming legislature. I am not going to do a single thing that will require me to whisper or retire behind any closed doors. So, seeing this is my office, and it is the regular custom to leave the door open, we will leave it open."

The Hon. Maxwell looked doubtfully at Paul and the other visitors did the same. They finally went over to a corner of the office and whispered together. Then they came back, drew their chairs close up to Douglas's desk and Maxwell said:

"Mr. Douglas, we have come to see you about some of these proposed bills of yours. This Reform business is being run into the ground. We are tired of it. The people are getting tired of it. You are going to have a great influence in the legislature. We concede that fact. Now, what we want to do is to talk over some of these bills and get your influence to modify or change in some ways."

Paul listened thoughtfully and when Maxwell was through he said, "Will you mention the particular bills you have in mind? I am not certain I know after all just what your business with me is."

Maxwell coughed and drew up his chair nearer. The other two men did the same. The hum of the presses was beginning to pervade the building as Maxwell, in reply to Paul's request, continued.

CHAPTER VII

"YOU see, Senator," said the Hon. Maxwell, "that the party is not agreed on these bills you are preparing. Take for example that bill, I understand you are the author of it, on public health. As we understand the matter, it is going to work great hardship on the retail dealer, and besides, pardon me, it is so full of fads and absurdities that it will make the party the laughing stock of the state. And there is that bill on public lands and investigating old entries. That will stir up an unnecessary lot of trouble and help to disrupt the party. You must remember,

Senator, that while you call yourself independent in politics, you allowed your nomination to be made by the party, and you are one of us and have no right to split the party into factions. More than half these bills you are advocating in the *News* are of questionable value and all of them, it seems to us, are calculated to make enemies in our own ranks. The thing for you to do, it seems to us, is to stand pat. Wages are good and the people are generally contented. Prosperity is beginning to come back and it is poor policy to stir up matters. I've been through a lot of campaigns and I want to say to you, Senator, that I know the people pretty well, sir, and the people are beginning to feel sore over all this reform business. They are beginning to feel that they can't turn around or do a thing without someone claiming the right to pass a law telling 'em how to do it. The effect of the reform measures you are advocating will be to disrupt the party."

The Hon. Maxwell paused and his two friends nodded assent after his somewhat lengthy talk. Paul's first impulse was to get tremendously mad and tell the visitors to get out, as politely as it could be done in a hurry. Then his sense of humour and of right proportion came to save him.

Maxwell he knew fairly well to be one of the most narrow minded type of politicians, honest enough so far as that went, but without a shred of real patriotism or any faintest glimmer of sense on matters of public welfare. His little soul revolved in a jerky and contracted orbit about the party. This orbit never took him out of sight of the "party." Under good men and bad in office, under defeat and under victory, under the varying vicissitudes of fortune that his meagre political life had known for forty years, he had never gone back on the party. He had held one or two minor offices in the course of his career and was deeply grateful to the party for recognising his right to an office. But when the party ignored him and put in some other creature, Maxwell never complained. To change the figure from the satellite and the orbit to a living organism, Maxwell was like Bill Syke's dog; no matter how the party treated him, he licked its hand just the same and showed the same loyalty and affection for the party when it kicked him down stairs as when it fed him at the pie counter. In forty years Maxwell had not learned a new idea or grown an inch in political stature. He was a party man and was proud of it. His one great virtue was that he was honest. He voted regularly for all sorts of thieves and boodlers and scoundrels nominated by the party, but he had in some marvelous fashion known only to his Maker, kept himself clear of all personal bribery and political trickery.

All this Paul knew quite well, and he was not able to despise Maxwell on

account of his one redeeming factor. But the slavery that had tied Maxwell body and soul all his life was so foreign to Paul's whole makeup that he could not understand it and he had to repress his natural desire to explode over Maxwell's talk. But he did manage to say quite calmly:

"Mr. Maxwell, I appreciate your plea for the party, but I don't see things as you do. While I accepted the nomination, as you say, at the hands of the party, I distinctly outlined my views at the time and made no pledges that bind me either to the party or to measures, if these measures conflict with my own sense of what is for the best interests of the people. I think the people who elected me understand that I am free to act in that way. And, frankly, that is the way I intend to act. There may be some mistakes in some of these bills. It would be strange if there wasn't. But I believe they are for the good of all the people or, of course, I would not urge them."

Maxwell shook his head doubtfully.

"This reform business has gone too far. My friends here know that. Judge Livingston can tell you how the people out his way feel."

"Yes, sir," said Livingston in a dry, machine-made manner; "Senator, the people in our district are growing restive over the reform business. They want to be let alone. We have too many laws now, laws that interfere with our personal liberty." (The judge grew eloquent.) "Laws that attempt to dictate to us what we shall eat and drink and where to go, and I for one say for my district that these continual efforts to legislate on personal matters will not only disrupt the party, but lead to a counter revolution that will surprise the so-called reform bosses of the state."

Paul looked at the judge steadily. If he could have looked at him with an X-ray eye he would have seen a small sample whisky bottle in the judge's coat pocket, one of the adjuncts of "personal liberty" the judge was defending. Not seeing that, Paul did size up the man for about what he was and answered him accordingly.

"As to legislation that affects personal liberty, these bills you say you have come to see me about deprive no man of any liberty he has a right to possess. But I am ready to confess they do deprive some persons of the liberty to steal the people's land and water power. They do aim to take away the liberty of certain food

makers to poison the people, and of certain other food sellers to give the people short weight. Some of these acts are also designed to take from certain persons the liberty to demoralise youth, as for example the measure a number of us hope to get through the legislature regulating bill boards and indecent posters. For years a little company of men has insulted all the people with these public monstrosities. I am frank to say I have no scruples in depriving them of the liberty to do so any more. And as to dictating to the people what they should eat and drink, don't you think the saloon and the patent medicine men and the adulterated food makers and the dirty food sellers have been dictating to the people centuries enough, to give us some excuse for depriving them of their long monopoly to deal out sickness and death at wholesale? When you talk of 'personal liberty,' it is well to remember the fact that no man has any right to a personal liberty which results in evil to his neighbour or to society."

The judge turned very red, and was on the point of replying. But Maxwell broke in.

"This is aside from the question, Senator. The main fact you ignore. The main fact is that what you are planning to do will split the party."

Paul lost his temper.

"Let it split, then! I don't worship the party! What is the party by the side of the people?"

Maxwell looked shocked. I think he really felt as he looked. Paul could not have said anything more treasonable.

"Senator, you will regret those words. Mark me. You will regret it. One of the things I was going to say was———" Maxwell lowered his voice and looked around. "I was going to say that you have it in your power so to shape your own future that the governorship would come to you in two years, or the national senatorship. The party would be willing to reward a man like you———"

Paul exploded again. "Governorship! Senatorship!" he almost shouted while Maxwell looked apprehensively at the open door.

"Do you think I care about them as reward for political slavery?" Then he suddenly realised how useless it was to let a man like Maxwell understand.

"Gentlemen," he said good naturedly, "excuse me. The occasion does not call for excitement. I understand your purpose in coming to see me. It will save your time and mine to say that I shall not change my plans to press these bills even if the result is to disrupt the party. And you are as free to say that as I expect to be in my editorial this evening."

Maxwell nervously interrupted.

"You are committing political suicide, Mr. Douglas."

"That's better than hari kari, eh?" said Douglas with a smile.

Maxwell stared. He had heard of hari kari perhaps, but did not know whether it was the name of a new type of airship or a health food. He went away with his two friends, firmly convinced, however, that the editor of the *News* was on the road to political destruction.

After Paul had written his editorial for the *News* he was not certain himself that he had not really done what Maxwell predicted. He had certainly never spoken so plainly and even bluntly on the issues of the campaign, and he knew perfectly well that the Maxwell political type dominated thousands of voters, men who resent any act in politics which threatens to disarrange the smooth running of the machine. In politics it is almost as easy to raise a howl against reform as it is to raise a cry for it. There are thousands of party men in this republic who as long as they can make their bread and butter out of machine politics don't care what price the people have to pay for their bread and butter.

When Paul went home that night he did what he had done for twenty-one years. The minute he was in the hall, he said, "Esther?" with an interrogation point after the name.

Esther was upstairs in the upper hall. She replied in a subdued tone, "Yes, here I am," and Paul ran up three steps at a time to greet her. Marriage may be a failure with some people, but it certainly was not with Paul and Esther who had remained lovers all these years, simply because they had made their married life a joyful, sacred and deeply Christian compact, a genuine union of heart and head and soul. Paul wrote love letters to his wife, sent her flowers and in general courted her in much the same fashion Esther had known when Paul was a struggling reporter. And Esther kept herself bonny for his sake, entered in whole-souled fashion into his ambitions and was not afraid to debate politics with him

and keep womanly. One great secret of their joyful married life was found in the perfect frankness each showed the other, and also in the blessed fact that each of them had almost a perfect physical constitution, not frayed nor tortured with nerves and sensitiveness.

The minute Paul saw Esther he knew some unusual event had occurred. Paul was quick to detect the presence of any new thing because Esther's expressive face could never hide a great secret. Paul was on the point of asking what it was when his eye was attracted by a commotion going on behind the door of a cedar linen closet at the end of the hall. There was a sudden wrenching and tearing of cloth, then a great Jovian sized laugh, the door burst open and a huge figure stepped out into the hall where Esther stood laughing hard.

"George Randall!" cried Paul, and the next minute he and his old pupil were in each other's arms.

"As big as ever," cried Paul, as he stepped back to look at his unexpected visitor.

"Bigger," said George, grinning. "Mrs. Douglas, if you'll get a needle and thread I'll mend my coat. You see, I just stepped in there to surprise you a minute and I backed up against a hook and it caught right under my collar and tore half of it off. What makes you make your closets so small?"

While Paul was overwhelming Randall with greetings and questions, and Mrs. Douglas was sewing on the medical missionary's coat collar, Randall was explaining his unexpected appearance in Milton.

"You see I've been transferred to Feu Chou Fu, the new hospital there. I've been called home by the board to help raise funds for the plant. I left so sudden I didn't have time to write you and I wasn't certain either that I would come here. But my father! Do you know about what's happened to him?"

"No," said Paul. "I knew he'd been travelling with your mother for her health, but I haven't seen either of them for two years since they went abroad the last time."

"My father is going to be a Christian! He and mother never took kindly to my going as a medical missionary, but last year they stopped to see me at Shaowu. I didn't know it at the time, but father was tremendously impressed with the missionary situation. Then over at Ponasang, father was taken ill, and what

should happen to him providentially but he had to go to our hospital there. Dr. Wilder fixed up his body, and what is more he reached his soul, and father wrote me just before I left Feu Chou Fu that he had found the light after living in the dark all his life, and at the close of his letter said he and mother were on their way home to Milton and wanting to know how he could best serve the cause of Christ. I hardly slept all the way over to Vancouver for the joy of lying awake thinking of it. A cable from father reached me this morning from San Francisco, saying they would be at Milton next week. They sailed by way of Auckland and Honolulu. So I thought I might as well come and board with Mrs. Douglas and you until they arrived. You can open a can of something, and that will do for me, and I can hang myself up in the closet if you are short of beds.

"But won't father and I have a jolly time when he gets back? I won't ask him for more than half a million to start with to put into the surgical department. Poor old pater! He has never had any fun with his old money. I'm going to help him have the time of his life now spending it for Christ and the Kingdom. My! But won't we have a jolly lot of fun with that money now?"

That evening at the supper table George Randall simply fascinated the whole company with his stories of Chinese life and the victories of the gospel. Esther invited in her brothers, Walter and Louis. Felix Bauer had never seen anyone like Randall, and he sat the whole evening absorbed, listening to the recital of as marvellous a story of conquest as any to be found in the chapters of Caesar, Frederick the Great or Napoleon. And what a conquest! Not war and pillage and pitiful man's ambition for power, but conquest of that great territory called the human heart.

"My, but I wish you folks could have seen what I saw there months ago at Shantung; five thousand people stood up in a public square in front of one of the old temples, no one knows how old, and threw thousands of idols into a heap on the ground and burned them, and then sang in their own language to our tune, 'Anywhere With Jesus I Can Safely Go.' For five days, much of the time through a pouring rain, more than five thousand people met to listen to the gospel of light and life and healing. We rigged up a sort of field hospital, using part of the temple for a clinic, and Walter and Rice and Colfax and I cut off legs and arms and heads of no end of diseased folks and operated for compound cataract and every known and unknown disease, and the Lord was with us. We didn't lose a case, and you never saw or heard such sights in prosaic money-loving America. Why, those people are born again! That whole district is simply awake out of

several centuries' sleep. I have the consent of the high powers in that district to negotiate over here for a lot of machinery and stuff for agricultural purposes. And those people are putting up a church at Angfu that will beat any church in Milton for work and worship. Think of that, beloved! In a country that has stood still for twenty-five centuries, worshipping the past and bowing down to nineteen thousand filthy gods, you can hear 'My Faith Looks Up to Thee' and 'All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name' sung by congregations so big that they have to meet out doors. And yet I understand from reading one or two high-browed religious magazines printed in this country that the old gospel has lost its power and that the world must have a new brand of religion of the hermetically canned variety suited to the elevated culture and new thought of the times. But the old gospel seems to do the work in China all right. At any rate it makes real men and women out of animals, and changes sinners into saints. I don't know any test of a religion bigger than that, do you?"

Paul asked one or two questions and started Randall off on an account of a missionary tour into the unexplored parts of west China. Then he spoke of the contemptuous criticism offered by a certain type of globe trotters he had met on his way home. In telling about this his great form seemed to tower up and his great head with its mild blue eyes looked sternly gigantic with righteous indignation.

"There was a bunch of naval officers coming over on the *Zarina* with us, and some of them were quite fine fellows. But there was one officer who used to get out with the author of a book on the Eastern situation, and they would spend hours criticising the missionaries and laying the blame on them for all the Boxer troubles and the hatred of foreigners generally.

"I didn't know until later on that the reason for the distinguished author's feelings against missionaries was because some of his own personal immoralities had been rebuked by a missionary in Pao Ting Fu and he had been mad ever since.

"His friend, the naval officer (and I was thankful he didn't belong to our country), took great pride in describing his conquests with the fair sex in the different quarters of the globe where he had been on his war vessel.

"Think of that, dearly beloved! Here was a man who when he touched at a foreign port had no more exact knowledge of the work done by missionaries than the knowledge he gained from going to a high-priced ball or champagne supper held a few feet from the shore, expressing the most emphatic opinions concerning the value of a foreign missionary's life and influence! He changed his costume several times a day. And I learned from a midshipman who volunteered the information that the following comprises the regular and compulsory list of clothes a naval officer in this Christian age is obliged to possess and solemnly wear on the proper occasions. Want to hear it?"

Louis, who had of late been begging his father to let him try for a place in a naval academy, eagerly said, "Yes, tell us, Mr. Randall."

"Well, here is a list of this human being's clothes that he must, according to the naval rules, lug around the world with him:

"A double-breasted frock coat of dark navy blue cloth with a sleeve stripe of gold lace a quarter of an inch wide and a gold star, which indicates the line officer. 'Service coat of blue cloth and with the same sleeve lace and a gold foul anchor on the collar.' 'White service coat with gold shoulder marks indicating the rank.' 'Evening dress coat of blue cloth with gilt buttons and sleeve lace.' 'Blue evening dress waistcoat with gilt buttons.' 'Whiteevening dress coat.' 'White mess jacket.' 'Full dress trousers of blue cloth and gold lace a quarter-inch wide.' 'Undress blue trousers, plain.' 'White trousers and many of them.' 'Service overcoat of heavy blue cloth.' 'Cloak of blue cloth.' 'A black mackintosh.' 'Blue uniform cap.' 'White uniform cap.' 'Cork or pith helmet.' 'Sword with sword knot.' 'Leggings.' 'A suit of rain clothes.' 'Black satin or silk, four-in-hand tie.' 'Plain black tie for evening dress uniform.' 'White gloves.' 'Black shoes.' 'White shoes.'"

In the pause that followed this reading, Louis looked disappointed.

"Would I have to get all these and take care of them if I went into the navy?"

"That's right, my boy, and not only get 'em but wear 'em at the proper times. My! Think of how you would have to hustle yourself out of one suit into another in order not to break some rule of naval etiquette."

"And think of Louis," said Helen, "who can't find his clothes in the morning when he has only one suit to look after, keeping track of all that. Why, that is enough to give a girl nervous prostration, to say nothing of a boy."

"I guess I don't want to enter the navy," said Louis in disgust.

Everybody roared, and then Randall said gravely:

"Do you know, beloved, that while I pray the Lord every day to keep me from judging my fellow men, I just couldn't for the life of me help passing judgment on a civilised custom which keeps alive all this war fuss and feathers and asking men made in God's image to strut around in all this gilt and lace toggery when immortal creatures are starving to death by the million for the bread of life. And I just couldn't keep still when day after day I heard on deck this naval fashion plate girding at men and women whose plain shoes he wasn't worthy to black. One day I up and gave him some real information about missionaries. He had to listen, and when I got through, to my great joy, a plainly dressed gentleman corroborated what I said and went me several better, saying that the real awakening of China and Turkey and Japan and India was due to the great work done by the missionaries. During his talk it turned out he was the British Consul at Hong Kong, quietly travelling home by way of America. I haven't had anything do me more good in years than that little incident."

The Douglas family stayed up late that night and two nights following.
Then Randall went to his father's, to the great regret of all.

Two weeks after that Felix Bauer, who was getting more out of this visit at his friend's than he had ever experienced before, went into the library and sat down by the long table. The family was scattered, Paul at his office, Esther in the kitchen, Walter visiting some old friends out at the college, Louis not yet home from his uncle's. Felix picked up a magazine and began to read. He was fairly started in a story when Helen came in. Bauer instantly arose and bowed in his slow but pleasant manner. Helen went over to a favourite seat of hers in the corner of the library and sat down, looking at Bauer earnestly.

CHAPTER VIII

FELIX BAUER very seldom began a conversation with anyone and on this occasion he did not venture to say anything first. During his whole stay in the house, Helen had learned that fact about his habits as a talker. He was a splendid listener and that made him popular with anyone who talked to him. If you want to be popular you don't have to be a brilliant talker. Being a brilliant listener is better.

But Helen had a touch of her father's stubbornness on certain occasions. She was not in any sense what could be called a flirt, or a girl who planned, out of a set purpose, to make a conquest or use her powers of attractiveness to disturb the peace of her young men acquaintances. But she was vain to a certain degree, and she knew when she looked in her mirror that she was unusually attractive, as every beautiful woman knows, and Felix Bauer was different from the other young men she knew. She said to herself as she looked across the room at him that he was certainly no fashion plate and was in fact extremely plain looking, all but his eyes, and Helen acknowledged that Walter was right when he wrote that Bauer had the most beautiful brown eyes he ever saw in a human being. When Helen was a little girl she had once seen Phillips Brooks, and she had never forgotten his wonderful eyes. Bauer's were like that. She could not help wondering what sort of people his parents were and what his home life was. The stubborn feeling prompted her to say to herself, "I'll make him speak first. He doesn't need to be so stupid. And besides it is not gentlemanly in him always to wait for the other person to begin."

She was working at some piece of embroidery, which is an advantage in helping one in situations of possible embarrassment to keep up an appearance, at least, of self-possession. And the pattern being a difficult one gave her the excuse of keeping her eyes fixed on her work most of the time. She sat there in the corner absolutely dumb, waiting for Bauer to speak. A noisy little clock on the shelf over the grate ticked away at least three minutes. Bauer opened his lips once or twice as if to say a word, but nothing came of it. He looked at Helen almost appealingly and once he seemed on the point of leaving the room. But Helen's eyes were fixed on her work and the silence was unbroken by any movement.

At last Helen looked up after a longer period than any other, and to her disgust saw that Bauer had picked up the magazine he had dropped when she came in, and had resumed his reading, or at least seemed to have done so.

For a minute she looked and felt vexed. "The horrid creature!" she exclaimed to herself, and then out loud she said in a sweet voice:

"Is that an interesting story you are reading?"

Bauer instantly closed the magazine and put it on the table.

"I don't know yet. I haven't finished it."

"Were you going to?"

"Yes, some time."

"Can't you tell me what the story is about?"

"It's about two people," said Bauer tamely.

"Is that all?" asked Helen after a pause on Bauer's part of several seconds.

"They start out with a ridiculous misunderstanding and it seems to be getting worse."

Helen looked amused and said, "Won't you go on?"

"The young woman thinks the young man is in love with her. He isn't at all—that is—not yet, but he is afraid he will be."

"Afraid? Is the girl so bad looking as that?"

"No, she is enough good looking to make up for both of them. And he is in some need of it."

Helen laughed. "These magazine stories are the most absurd things that ever were printed."

"I think so myself."

"What makes you read them then?"

"I was just doing it to pass the time."

"That's flattering."

"Flattering?"

"Yes."

Bauer was silent thirty seconds. Then he said, "Flattering to whom?"

"To me, isn't it?"

Bauer's face was a study. Helen laughed again.

"Why didn't you speak to me when I came in?"

"I didn't know you wanted to talk." Bauer looked actually hurt.

"Honest?"

"How could I know you wanted to talk."

"A woman always cares, Mr. Bauer."

"You seemed intent on your work and I am no mind reader."

"I had made up my mind not to speak first. But I broke my determination." The noisy little clock made itself prominent during the next half minute and then Bauer, to Helen's surprise, actually led off with a question.

"Would you tell me what you are making?"

Helen held up her work. "It's a sofa pillow cover. I'm making it for Walter."

Bauer looked at it gravely. Helen would not have been surprised if any one of a dozen of her men friends had said, "I'd give anything for one like it."

But Bauer simply said, "It's beautiful. Walter is fortunate."

"We are all grateful for your friendship with Walter. It's meant a great deal to him," said Helen with a burst of frankness.

"His means everything to me. I can't tell you all it means."

Another period was marked by the demonstrative clock and then suddenly Helen said, "Mr. Bauer, I wish you would tell me something about your folks, and your home."

The simple question smote Bauer like a blow in his face. Instantly he said to himself, "Walter has not told the family about me, about the disgrace, about the ruined home." And at first he felt hurt that Walter had not put the family on their guard. It was not fair to expose him to such questions. How could a girl like Helen Douglas possibly be made a sharer in his tragedy? His father had been a small diplomat at Washington. His mother a high spirited American girl whose ambition had suddenly terminated on the eve of her husband's promotion to a higher post of responsibility, through a scandal that involved both her husband and herself. Both of them were in the wrong, and nothing but unusual effort on the part of those interested had kept the affair out of the papers, at least to a great extent, and besides, the numerous accounts of such home tragedies lessened the emphasis placed on this one, so that Bauer knew that the Douglas family, outside of the editor himself and Walter, were not associating him with an event which left him alone in the world to bear a disgrace that seemed at times to overwhelm him.

But while Felix Bauer was simple hearted and clear souled as day himself, he did possess to a remarkable degree the power of self-possession and self-restraint. His soul had already to a certain degree learned the sad lesson of bearing disaster with calm inward poise. Whatever the tragedy might mean to him in the future, he was not so poor spirited as to let it ruin his own development or poison the peace of others. So he was able to say, after what seemed to Helen only a natural hesitation:

"My people were both born in Germany. My mother was the daughter of the American Consul. I was born in this country. That accounts for my being so good a patriot."

"And I suppose it also accounts for your unusually good use of English. Do you know you speak very correct and pure English, Mr. Bauer?"

"No, do I?"

"Yes, that is, what little you speak," said Helen with a smile. "Do you want to

know what I asked Walter in one of my letters?"

"Yes," said Bauer, blushing.

"I asked him if you spoke broken English very badly?"

Bauer did not reply to this and Helen came back to the question of his home life.

"Do your folks live in Washington now?"

"Yes, that is"—all Bauer's self restraint could not avoid betraying something, and Helen looked at him quickly, and her quick eager mind could not avoid detecting something wrong. She would not for the world have been guilty of a vulgar curiosity or an intrusion into another's secret, and she had enough tact to say at once:

"I've always wanted to go to Washington. Father has promised to take me some time. There must be a great deal of happiness there?"

Bauer looked at her, his great eyes calmly sad. Then he quoted:

"'Gluck und Glas wie bald bricht das?'"

Helen did not know enough German to understand.

"Would you mind translating?"

"'Happiness and glass, how soon they are broken.'"

"You mean some kinds of happiness, don't you?" asked Helen timidly.

"Yes, some kinds."

"I hope you have had some of the unbreakable kind during your visit here?"

"Yes." But down deep in his quiet soul Felix Bauer was almost saying to himself, "Will it be for me the heart-breaking kind of happiness?"

After another interlude, which the assertive clock took advantage of, Helen said, "I wish you would tell me something about your work at Burrton."

"My work?"

"Yes, your shop work. Your invention work. You know we were all terribly disappointed that you and Walter did not get the patent. But there are a great many other chances to discover things, aren't there?"

"Well, yes. I suppose there are." Bauer began to wake up mentally. His face took on an alert look and the glow of the born inventor enveloped his whole being. "You see, Miss Douglas, the field of electricity is in one sense limitless. We know so little about it. And I suppose it is true that new things are possible to an extent beyond our imagination."

"You mean inventions?"

"Yes?"

"That's what interests me particularly. I should think it would be awfully fascinating to find new things."

Bauer looked doubtfully at her. Helen was quick to detect the slight hint of suspicion as to her sincerity.

"Do you doubt? What makes you?"

"Well, I—it isn't common for girls to care much about such things generally, and I couldn't help———"

Bauer stumbled along painfully and finally stopped, and Helen was cruel enough to enjoy his confusion.

"But I am interested, Mr. Bauer. I really am. And you must believe I am. You will, won't you?"

"Yes! yes!" Bauer flung the last shred of his doubt to the winds and eagerly begged pardon for his distrust.

"All right. Now that we have settled the quarrel, we will be good friends, won't we?"

"Yes," said Bauer, smiling. "If you want to call it a quarrel."

"It was a quarrel all right," said Helen hastily. "Now you must tell me what your ambitions are, what you are really working for. I have wondered often if it wasn't awfully dangerous to be experimenting with electricity, and how do you try new things with wires and batteries and dynamos and—and—things without getting killed several times while you are trying?"

"It's not as dangerous as some other things," thought Bauer, as Helen, in her real earnestness, put her work down and came across the room and took a chair by the table opposite him. If she had been a real coquette intent on making an onslaught on poor Bauer she could not have chosen a more perfect way to do it. For if you want to engage the hearty good will of anyone, ask him rapid fire questions about the one thing he is most interested in and would like to talk about, if his modesty did not forbid.

So Felix Bauer was never in so electrically dangerous a situation in all his life as at this moment when Helen Douglas came over and sat down there with a real eagerness to know about his ambitions as an inventor. For Helen was honestly interested in many things that naturally belong to mere man's domain, especially in the realm of mechanical invention.

"Walter has told me what you said about making a writing machine that would take a visible spelled word on paper when you talked into it. You don't really think a thing like that could be done, do you?"

Bauer looked at the handsome quizzical face opposite, gravely.

"Do *you?* How do you dare say what can or cannot be done in the great universe of electricity?"

"But it would throw out a great army of stenographer girls and that would be a pity. Only, you know," said Helen demurely, "Walter could marry one of them and you could marry another. That would take care of two of them."

Bauer stared, and then blushed furiously and finally laughed.

"Walter has been taking my name———"

"Not in vain," interrupted Helen. "I thought your suggestion for the talking machine was fascinating. I don't suppose you are working at that, are you?"

"No. I haven't got that far yet."

"Can you tell me if you are working on some new thing?"

"I don't mind." Bauer got up and pulled a piece of paper towards him and began to sketch something. Helen got up and went to the end of the table where she could see better.

"There, Miss Douglas. This is my idea for a chicken raiser."

"An incubator?"

"Yes. You see this dome is glass, very much like those domes the glass blowers make to put over their glass ships and flowers. The bottom here is wood. The eggs are placed on it in even rows. Here is a hole in the bottom through which the electric lamp is put. A thermostat will regulate the temperature to a fraction of any degree. And—that is all there is to it except to try it on the eggs to see if they will really hatch out."

"I don't see how they could help it!" said Helen enthusiastically.

"I don't either. There's only one thing I can see that is essential."

"What is that?" Helen asked eagerly.

"The eggs will have to be good," said Bauer solemnly.

Helen in her eagerness to see the drawing, had edged around the table and her face was near Bauer's as she bent over the drawing. She stared at Bauer's solemn face a moment and then burst out laughing, at the same time moving back to the end of the table.

"I believe you are making fun of me," she said. In reality there was a part of Bauer's nature which was unexpected. His quiet habits and his slow speech were apt to give an impression of dullness of intellect and lack of mental quickness. Helen was finding out that Bauer was in many ways the quickest of all her acquaintances. And he had a fund of smileless humour that came as a surprise even to those who thought they knew him best.

"No, I was not making fun of you," said Bauer. As a matter of fact, he was on the

defensive with his own feelings, trying by any means to beat them down into the lonesome place where they belonged when that radiant face appeared so near his own.

"Have you tried the machine yet to see if it will work on good eggs?" asked Helen, after a pause, during which Bauer drew a few more lines on the paper.

"No, I'm going to make a full trial of it when I go back to Burrton."

"And if it should be a success, I suppose there would be money in it too, wouldn't there?"

"I suppose so," said Bauer indifferently.

"Then you might actually become rich?"

"I suppose I might. A man who invented a little mouse trap, I understand, made a fortune from it. There are all sorts of possibilities in the world of invention."

"Would you care to be rich?" asked Helen absently.

"I might." For the first time in his life Felix Bauer had flash into his soul the power of money to buy, what? Love? Would it be worth anything if it could be bought? And yet women like Helen Douglas felt the power of money and—and—demanded it in the young man who aspired to be a possible wooer in this age. Was she like all the rest? And if he should some time be rich would that make any difference? And if so, what difference?

"Money is a great power nowadays," said Helen calmly.

"Yes," said Bauer, slower than usual. And at that moment Mrs. Douglas came in.

"Are you willing to show this to mother?" asked Helen.

"Certainly," said Bauer, smiling. "I am sure she will not betray my secret."

Mrs. Douglas, who had instantly taken a great liking to Bauer from the moment of his arrival, was as enthusiastic as Helen and praised the inventor until he was well nigh overwhelmed.

"I need all this encouragement to help me face Anderson. He will probably pick some flaw in it somewhere. He is merciless with all the fellows."

"I don't see what a teacher is for," said Helen indignantly. "Half of the teachers I know pound at the students all the time instead of giving them encouragement."

"They probably need it," said Mrs. Douglas, wisely.

"Mr. Bauer is going to get rich with his invention," said Helen gaily.

"I'll tell you what I will do, if it goes," said Bauer cheerfully. "I'll divide with Walter. We'll manufacture the incubator ourselves and so get all the profits."

"Don't count your chickens before they are hatched," said Mrs. Douglas, and then added gratefully, "I appreciate that thought of Walter. The poor fellow seems to have lost his ambition since the affair of the arc light. I know you will do all you can to encourage him."

"Indeed I will, Mrs. Douglas. I can't tell you how much I owe to Walter. He is like a brother to me."

The minute he uttered the words he caught himself up and half turned, blushing furiously, towards Helen. But she had already started to go out of the library and Bauer was not sure that she had heard him or paid any attention.

Mrs. Douglas, however, had seen his face and his half startled look and deepening colour, and her own face grew grave. It did not seem possible to her that anything serious could happen to the quiet German student during his brief stay with the family. And yet, she was a wise and observant woman who did not at all blind herself to the fact that her daughter had natural gifts of physical and mental attractions, which young men like Bauer inevitably feel. And it needed only this one glimpse of Bauer's face to reveal to her quick mother's sense the fact that Helen had attracted him, how far or how deeply for the loss of his own peace, of course she could not tell.

It was partly on that account that Mrs. Douglas welcomed Helen's confidence when, that same afternoon, the girl came into her mother's room and after a few moments of nervous, restless and aimless talk came and sat down on a low chair near Mrs. Douglas and said, "Mother, I want a plain talk."

"A plain talk" in the Douglas family meant heart secrets, and Mrs. Douglas knew at once what Helen wanted.

"Hide nothing," said Esther, smiling, and patting Helen's head cheerfully.

"Hide nothing," repeated Helen, with a faint smile; which meant that the utmost frankness was going to be shown on both sides.

"Mother," said Helen, after a pause of some length during which her mother calmly went on with her sewing. "How old were you when you were married?"

"Not quite twenty-two."

"And how old was father?"

"Twenty-six. Almost twenty-seven."

"Were you very much in love with him?"

Esther let her work fall from her hands into her lap, and looked out across the room over her daughter's head. The passing of the years had not dimmed the love light in Esther's eyes nor faded the glow of the love look on her face.

"I can't tell you how much I was in love with him. He was the whole world to me."

"More than your own father and mother?"

"Yes, more."

"More and different?"

"Yes, more and different."

There was another pause and Helen put her hand up to her mother's. The girl had not yet looked up. Her eyes were cast down and she seemed very thoughtful.

"Mother, do you think I will ever feel that way? As you did?"

Mrs. Douglas was startled by the question, in spite of the fact that from Helen's babyhood the utmost frankness had existed between them. She wanted a few

moments before she spoke. Helen was "till looking down, but her hand tightened its hold on her mother's.

"Yes, Helen, I would not wish you any greater happiness than to love as your mother did."

"But men like father seem very scarce."

Mrs. Douglas could not help laughing, and at that Helen looked up soberly.

"You know they are, mother," said Helen almost indignantly. "Just look at that Randolph boy. And—and—Mr. Damon. I don't believe there are any young men like father was when he was young. Wasn't he very handsome?"

"He certainly was, and he is now."

"And didn't he talk sensibly? Didn't he know how to say things?"

"He didn't say anything very wise or deep while he was courting me," laughed Esther. "I would not dare say how many foolish things he said. I don't remember all of them."

"Mother, you know what I mean. The young men nowadays can't talk any. They don't know half so much as the young women. Why, I feel superior to all the young men I know."

Mrs. Douglas looked amused.

"And I could never marry an inferior man. I would just despise myself and him, too. But why should I get married at all, mother? Why can't I just be a physical training teacher all my life?"

"I don't want you to marry an inferior man, You would just despise yourself and if you do not love in a natural way someone who is altogether worthy of you, you ought never to marry at all. What has made you think of it?"

Helen did not look up, and after a long pause Esther said gently, "Hide nothing?"

Then Helen looked up suddenly and burst out: "That horrid Mr. Damon proposed to me last night! I went with him to the organ recital and he was very nice at

first, but on the way home he made a fool of himself and tried to make one of me. I told him I wouldn't marry him if he was the only man left. Why, mother, he is ten years older than I am, and he has false teeth and I believe he wears a wig and he makes a living selling rubber goods!" And at that Helen burst into a flood of weeping, laying her head down in her mother's lap.

When she was cried out, Esther said: "Mr. Damon is a good man, or I wouldn't have let you go with him. But I had no idea he was thinking of you that way. Of course he is out of the question. Not on account of the false teeth, the wig and the rubber goods, for women marry men with those encumbrances every day and are happy, but for other reasons."

"Mother, did you ever have any other proposals besides father's?"

"Yes, I had three while I was in college."

"At my age?"

"I was two years younger."

"That makes me feel better some; but I don't want such things to come to me. It frightens me."

"Daughter, you probably know you are more than good looking. Do you?"

"Yes," said Helen, in a low tone.

"It is a great gift, but it is a dangerous one. You must use it in the right way."

"Mother, I do try. I am not a flirt, am I, mother?" Helen looked up appealingly.

"Look right into my eyes, mother, and see?"

Mrs. Douglas looked and with a sigh of relief saw there as pure and womanly a soul waiting development as ever lived.

"No, thank God, Helen, I believe you realise what your beauty might mean to bless or to curse. But sometimes the hurt comes in spite of one's self."

There was a very long pause and then Helen said timidly, "Mother, you are

thinking of someone in particular. I have tried to be very careful. I had to be kind. But how could I know———"

"You mean Felix Bauer?"

"Yes, mother."

"Do you mean he has spoken to you in so short a time?"

"No, no, mother, not spoken. Only, only, looked at me. You don't blame me, do you, do you, mother?"

Helen began to cry again, but in a different way from the outburst before. She cried softly and Mrs. Douglas could feel the girl's hand pressing her arm convulsively.

She was really puzzled to know what to say in spite of the evident fact that Felix Bauer had simply yielded to the inevitable through no fault of Helen's or anybody's. At last she said:

"Do you feel superior to Mr. Bauer?"

Helen raised her head and blushed as she looked up.

"Why, no, that is, of course, he knows German and I don't, and he knows a lot about electricity and I don't and—and———"

"He's not much of a talker," said her mother.

"No, but on that account he avoids saying so many foolish things. And he is very interesting, and, and, good. But he is only a poor student and it looks now as if he might grow up to be nothing but a manufacturer of incubators to raise chickens."

"Which is almost as bad as rubber goods," murmured Esther.

Helen did not reply. After a while her mother said, "Tell me just one thing dear, if you can. Do you care for Mr. Bauer?"

Helen bent her head and warm colour flowed over her cheeks, then she looked

up.

"No, mother, not that way."

Mrs. Douglas sighed and said to herself, "Poor Bauer. He will have to outlive it somehow. I hope his studies will help him out."

That was what Bauer was saying to himself back in Burrton after that eventful Christmas vacation. He had parted with the family in a cheerful fashion, but all his self-possession and restraint and feeling of utter hopelessness regarding Helen could not prevent his giving her a look that told his story as plain as day when he said good-bye. Helen had gone upstairs and cried half the forenoon at the memory of Bauer's face. But Bauer did not know that. Neither did he know that the very fact of his silence had made Helen think favourably towards him. He had at least succeeded in securing a place in Helen's exclusive list of possible lovers, for she was obliged to confess as the days went on that she missed Felix Bauer, and that she could not say of him as she could of all her other admirers that she was superior to him.

It might have gone badly with Felix Bauer at this crisis in his life if an event had not occurred which compelled him to come to Walter's assistance. This event was as unexpected to Walter as anything could be. And the suddenness of it smote both the friends for a time into a condition of mutual dependence.

The President of Burrton followed the custom in other schools of inviting some well known speaker to have charge of the chapel services for special lectures or religious addresses. When the announcement was made that Dr. Powers, the eminent scholar and theologian, would preach at Burrton on a special date, Walter and Bauer both planned to go, and when the time came they found themselves in the audience with one of the largest crowds that had ever gathered at Burrton Chapel service.

The address was on the subject of "Modern Belief." As the speaker went on, Walter, who had at first not paid close attention, began to fasten his whole hearted and minded interest on the statements that were being made. As the talk went on, Walter felt as if all the ground of his religious faith was slipping out from under him. The speaker gradually unfolded a universe of religious thought from which all the miracles were excluded. There was no reason, he said, for believing in the superhuman or the wonderful. Everything in the Bible could be

explained on natural grounds and what could not be explained was either a mistake or a misapprehension on the part of the writers. God was defined as a power and all personality taken from him. Christ was only a superior man who said many things not agreeing with the facts of modern psychology. Much of his forecast of the future had been discredited. There was no such thing as a resurrection and a future existence was very problematical.

When the address was over, Walter sat like one dazed and did not rise to go out. Bauer whispered to him:

"Are you sick?"

"No," said Walter with an effort. He rose and went up to his room and Bauer, who did not know what was the matter, went in with him, as the two friends invariably spent their Sunday evenings together.

But on this occasion Walter almost stunned Bauer with a request made in a low voice.

"I want to be alone, Bauer, if you don't mind."

Bauer rose at once.

"I am on hand to serve you, Walter. Don't forget?"

"No," Walter said abruptly.

Bauer went out, and Walter went into his bedroom and got down on his knees.

That same evening at Milton, Mrs. Douglas had just gone up to her room, and as her custom had been for years, she had kneeled to pray for her children and especially for her absent boy.

Over both mother and son the darkness brooded. Only the stars shone through it.

CHAPTER IX

WALTER DOUGLAS was not what would be called ordinarily a religious young

man. That is, he was not pious, in the sense that he was a lover of prayer meetings and church gatherings. He was a member of the Congregational church at Milton and had joined it from the Sunday School when he was twelve years old, growing up in the church like any average boy whose father and mother were members. He had a tremendous respect for his father's and mother's religious life and example and would probably have been willing to die for their faith if not for his own. For the rest, he had grown up in the home atmosphere, which from his childhood had been deeply reverent towards the Bible and the superhuman element.

The effect on his mind, now, of the address he had just heard, was very much the same as if someone far above him in education and age had attacked his father and mother, bringing forward a great array of argument and proof to show that they were unworthy of his love and confidence. Walter's mind could not have been more disturbed by such an attempt than it actually was by what had been said that evening, undermining his lifelong confidence in Christ as a divine being, and the superhuman and miraculous as part of his own life.

He was stunned by it and at first his only desire was to be alone. As the night wore on, this desire gave way to a longing for counsel from someone who could answer his questions and relieve his mind of the terrible uncertainty which had invaded it. And it was at least a strange comment on the teaching force in the Burrton school that Walter at this crisis could not think of anyone to whom he cared to go with a religious doubt. There were plenty of men at Burrton occupying responsible places as professors or instructors who knew plenty of mathematics and physics and electricity and engineering and science. But not one that Walter could think of who knew or cared about a student's moral or religious character. The president was a keen, wide-awake, sharp man of affairs, but as Walter thought of him he shrank from the idea of going to him with a real heart trouble or with a genuine mental difficulty. He would as soon have thought of telling his personal griefs or sorrows into a phonograph. And yet President Davis of Burrton was a church member, a highly educated gentleman, a great money getter from rich men, and had the reputation in the educational world of being a success as such school presidents go. He could extract half a million for Burrton from some great pirate of industry, but he did not know how to extract a poisonous doubt from a tortured mind like Walter's, or, better yet, instill the balm of healing faith into a spirit that had for the time being lost its God and its heaven. Great thing, our boasted education is, isn't it! How many of our cultured, highly developed university men are all head and no heart! And yet in the history

of this old world who would dare say that in the long run it does not need more heart than head, or at least an equal division of each, for its comfort, its happiness and its real progress?

Walter, going over the list of possible men who might help him now, thought of the pastor of the Congregational church in Burrton. This man was a strong, earnest pastor, a tireless worker and an interesting preacher. But here again Walter had no one to blame but himself that he did not feel well enough acquainted with this man to go to him with his personal religious questions. He had been to the church several times and he always liked the Rev. James Harris, but like so many students who are attendants and workers in their own churches, Walter on coming to Burrton had found it easy to lapse into lazy Sunday morning habits. After he had a late breakfast and read the Sunday morning *Daily Megaphone*, it was generally too late to go to the Sunday School and it was easier on stormy Sundays to curl up on a lounge and read a novel, or on pleasant Sundays to stroll out to the lake two miles away and get an appetite for a big dinner. Then an afternoon of sleep or visiting or walking out used up the rest of the day for him. One of the topics he had avoided with his mother on his recent visit home had been his Sunday program, and he recalled even now the earnest wish she had expressed that he would get to work in the Sunday School when he went back to Burrton. No, he had been so indifferent to all church matters while a student that he could not bring himself to go to the minister, he was too much a stranger to him, and this was a matter that seemed to call for a friend.

"Oh, I wish mother was here!" he exclaimed out loud.

And then because he felt so hungry for comfort and so eager to relieve his mind of its burden, he went over to his writing desk, and wrote a long letter to his mother.

When he finished, it was after one o'clock and he went to bed and slept as if exhausted, but to his dismay when he awoke, his depression and fear were there to greet him and he found himself waiting for his mother's answer almost as if her letter were a reprieve from a sentence of death.

A part of this letter will reveal Walter's excited and even chaotic feeling.

"The bottom seems to be dropped right out of everything, mother. Of what use is it to try to do right when there isn't any likelihood of a future and no personal

God and no Redeemer, and no standard for conduct? The doctor said we could not depend upon Christ's own statements about his own resurrection. How then can we trust Him for any statement He made about Himself? The fellows here in Burrton who have money to spend and do about as they please, the fast set that drinks and carouses and gambles and gives the chorus girls wine suppers seems to be pretty happy. They don't worry over the matter of sin or moral responsibility or going to church or getting serious over the condition of the heathen or the wrongs of the world, or the 'high calling' you are so fond of calling my attention to. And why should I be any different from them? Mother, does it pay to be religious? It seems to me religious people are always sober, dull people, always talking reform and disagreeable things and never having much fun. But I want you to help me, mother, no one else can, if you can't. I don't seem to be able to pray any. Why should I pray, if there isn't any super-human, nothing but a force somewhere? I am just groping in the dark and it's awful dark. And I don't know a soul here to help me any. Bauer—well—I never said a word to him on religious matters. I don't know whether he is a Catholic or what he is. And I don't know any minister in Burrton well enough to go to him. And the teachers here don't care about the students' religious life, or if they do I never saw any signs of it, at least not enough to show where to go now.

"Mother, I can't tell you how I feel over all this. But I'm just about down and out. If what Dr. Powers said is true, it seems to me we are living in an awful world. It isn't the world you and father believe in or you taught me to believe in, and I can't understand it. Oh, mother, help me, won't you, if you can! WALTER."

Now his letter reached Mrs. Douglas on the anniversary of her marriage. She was planning as she always did to make the day bright for Paul, had invited her brothers, Walter and Louis, and was going to make it a great family gathering.

The boy's letter smote her heart as nothing in all his experience had ever troubled her. She managed to get through the evening without betraying her feeling, but when her brothers had gone home, and Helen and Louis had retired, she showed the letter to Paul.

He read it and then looked up at Esther.

"You are the one to help him through this," he said. "You are the only person who can do it right now. But you are tired with all the events of the day. Hadn't you better wait until to-morrow?"

"No," Esther said positively. "He is waiting. When a soul is drifting down like his, it is a case of rescue."

"Dear," said Paul, quietly, "I don't have any fears for him. He has too good a mother to make a wreck of his religion."

"He is my son," said Esther proudly. "I would not be worthy of the name mother if I did not have confidence in the eternal things of redemption. I will write him tonight. But you must add to my letter, Paul. He needs us both."

"I will," said Paul, gravely. He was more disturbed over the letter from Walter than he cared to acknowledge to Esther, but he managed to conceal his feelings for her sake. Esther went up to her little corner room, where she had a sewing table and a writing desk. When she had shut herself in there she spread Walter's letter out before the Lord.

That meant that her simple mother faith said to God, "Oh, my Father, I need wisdom now to write this letter. My boy, my first born son is in need of Thee. But he has turned to his mother for help. Show me how to say the right thing. For I can not do it without thy help."

And then without any hesitation or fear of the final result, Esther wrote to Walter. It was a sacred letter, but a part of it belongs to this narrative.

"You must not forget, boy," Esther went on after cheerfully reminding him that he was not the only person in the world to have such an experience; "you must not forget that religion is a universal thing, and that it is a cry of the heart for God. It is not a matter to figure out like mathematics, but it is an answer to the real longing of the soul for a divine life in the world.

"You must not forget, either, that your faith does not depend on what someone else says, but upon the actual needs of your own life. You know that you need God. You know that you are wretched now because you are afraid God has been taken away. Isn't that a sign to you that your simple faith as you have been taught it here at home is a real and necessary thing? What Dr. Powers said (and you must remember you may not have understood his full meaning), what he said has not changed the everlasting facts of sin and moral responsibility and the facts of the plain right and wrong of the world. And when it comes to the resurrection and a future life—all we can do is to take Christ's word for it. He knows more about it than Dr. Powers knows. Your mother is no theologian and no great

scholar, but when it comes to taking Dr. Powers's word as against Jesus's own statements about himself, I don't hesitate, and you ought not to. Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. Just trust him. It is what thousands of souls bigger than yours have done and they have found the light as you will. We are praying for you, father and I. Father can give you better reasons than I can, perhaps, because he knows more, but listen to me, boy, to your mother, whose heart goes out to you at this time. You don't have to answer all the hard questions of religion all at once. Some of them can bide for an answer. But, oh, plant your feet down on the rock, Christ Jesus! Abide with him and your soul will not be lost. He will not let you go wrong. He came to give you abundant life. The love of God is greater than all other things. Trust simply and don't be afraid. Get to work in the Sunday school and church. Doubt can not live in the atmosphere of doing God's will every moment. Perhaps one reason you have been so overthrown is because you have neglected your church and religious duties since you left home. Pray; trust; act; live for others; listen for God's voice; be true to the high calling. It is the only real and living way for you. And the prayers of your mother go out to God for you now and always. Walter, you are God's child before you are mine. Go to him at once and ask his help as you have asked mine. May He bless you as I can not. Lovingly and prayerfully,

"**MOTHER.**"

Mrs. Douglas was so eager to get her letter off that she did not wait for Paul's added word. But two days later Paul wrote quite at length, in much the same fashion, taking up one or two points Esther had not touched.

"You say in your letter to your mother that you feel the bottom has dropped out of everything. Why? Because a stranger to you who has some reputation as a public speaker has made some statements which destroy your faith in religion.

"Do you think that is a very sensible thing for you to do—to let a man you have never seen before come along and in one address take from you the faith of years? Would you let a man you didn't know destroy your faith in your mother so quickly? Would you simply take his word for it, because he said so?

"You must remember, Walter, that some of the finest theologians and scholars in the world believe in and teach the miracles and a personal God and a personal divine Christ and a personal resurrection. I don't mean old fashioned scholars, but men who are up to date, who rank with the best in the thinking world. If Dr.

Powers does not believe in the resurrection there are other men, better scholars than he is, who do. You have no right to let one man's statements be final for you.

"You say again that you don't see what is the use of being good, and you ask if it pays to be religious, citing the example of the fast set in Burrton, who, you say, seem to be pretty happy, and free from anxiety about others, etc. Walter, do you know that is the most terrible thing that can be said about a human creature? That he is satisfied like an animal with an animal's appetite and passions, and careless of any one else or of the world's moral needs? The flies that buzz over a battle field have the same indifference for the agony and struggle going on under them. And would you even now while under the depression you describe, really care to risk your life by becoming like the men in the fast set? Don't you know that they are sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind?

"The main facts of life always remain the same. We may learn more about the facts, but we can't change the real nature and needs of mankind by any belief or absence of belief. Even if there were no God and no future and no miracles and no Jesus of history, sin would be sin and its harvest the same; goodness and right and virtue would always be the same and their harvest the same. But men can not live without God without living in hopeless despair. Walter, what did Christ come into the world for, if not to do for us the very things we really needed and were dying to get? He revealed God to us. Made the future plain. Showed man his duty to his neighbour. Brought light and life and joy into the world. The Christmas season we have enjoyed together ought to show you (and it will when this cloud has gone from your heart) that the world owes more to Jesus Christ than to any other being. The best conditions in the world are found where Christ has been most honoured and his teachings best obeyed. The wrongs of the world are being righted in his name. And the kingdom of God is taking the place of the kingdoms of physical might.

"All this, your father and mother believe, could not be true if Jesus were a mere man. It is the presence of the divine and superhuman, not supernatural, but superhuman, which has made all this redemption of the world possible.

"Walter, trust in God. Believe in Christ. Pray. Seek the light. Keep doing right. Get to work for others. All the inventions in creation are not worth anything if your own soul has no motive power and no track to run on. Religion is as natural as eating and drinking. Prayer is as natural as sleep or work. And I believe with

all my might that my feelings are as trustworthy as my reason when both are exercised in a healthy, happy way.

"I haven't any fear for you. It is too bad you can not get help from some of the teachers in the school. There must be something wrong with the management of an educational institution when the teachers know everything except the moral needs of the students.

"Can't your friend, Bauer, help you? You say you have never talked with him. Try it. From one or two talks I had with him while he was with us I gained the impression that he was deeply religious. Affectionately, your father,

"PAUL DOUGLAS."

Both of these letters reached Walter about the same time and he read and reread them and received vast help from them, more than he himself knew at the time. But he could not throw off the feeling of depression and fear that seemed to haunt his spirit. He longed to talk the thing over with someone and the day after his father's letter came, he resolved to take Bauer into his confidence. He had never talked with him on any serious questions except when Bauer had confided in him about his home troubles, and the occasions were rare and only occurred at times when Bauer was so tortured with lonesomeness that he could not endure it any longer and fled to Walter as he did that night in the shop, when he first appealed to him for his friendship.

They had gone up to Walter's room together; and had just finished a discussion over Bauer's incubator and the arrangement for the thermostat when Walter said suddenly:

"Felix, I can't talk this stuff any longer. I want to take up something else, if you don't mind. Of course, you've noticed I've not been up to the mark lately, haven't you?"

"Yes." Bauer blushed as he said it. He had noted Walter's condition, but if truth be told his own state of hopeless feeling towards Helen had absorbed him to such an extent that he had not paid the attention to Walter's feelings that he otherwise might. No one quite so egotistic as your hopeless lover. The world of Bauer revolved around the star of Helen, and the rest of the universe, including Walter, was for the time being not counted as there. With Walter's trouble now

made more apparent to him, Bauer's mind at once waked up and stood ready alert to listen to him.

"I might as well confess that Dr. Powers's address two weeks ago knocked the props out from under me. What he said cut under me like a great engine that destroyed my faith."

"You mean your faith in God?" asked Bauer in a tone almost of horror.

"Well, no, not that exactly. I don't think anyone could reason me out of a belief in a God. But when Dr. Powers got through I felt as if all the God he believed in was a kind of electrical force, a little bigger unit of amperes. A sort of international ampere, so to speak, but not much more."

"Do you mean that you can't say 'Our Father' any more?"

Walter was silent half a minute. When he looked up at Bauer his face was haggard.

"I haven't prayed any since that address. What is the use of prayer if God is a machine?"

"But if God is a machine, who made the machine?"

Walter stared. Bauer went on.

"And if God is only high power electricity or force, who made the high power or force? One machine can't make another. And a machine that really thinks and plans, is not a machine but a Being."

Walter did not answer. He was brooding. Finally he said: "Do you really believe in miracles and the superhuman and the resurrection and future and—and a Personal Redeemer and all that?"

"Do I?" Bauer did a thing Walter had never seen him do before. He got up and began to walk the floor.

"If I didn't believe in a personal God who loves me and in a Personal Redeemer who saves me and in a future life which is going to develop me, I might as well be just an animal and be done with it. What advantage have we over the animals

if there is nothing to it but flesh and blood and eating and drinking and dying?

"But I simply take my stand on what Jesus did and said and was. I don't go back on that to try to philosophise much, though I can give answers all day long for my religious faith. I wouldn't give anything for it if I couldn't reason it out. I've been through all the books—Kant and Hegle and Straus and Feuerbach and Schopenhauer and Schleiermacher and no end. My father was steeped in all the old world philosophies. I don't think they ever helped him any. At least not to make a better man of him. Why, Walter, do you know your father and mother are the products of Christian faith, and there isn't anything finer in all the world. Where would you go to find a human being who was nearer the perfection of all noble, unselfish, beautiful traits of character than your mother, who is the product of a simple Christian faith?

"My father and mother have always sneered at simple faith. They are sceptics. What has their scepticism ever done for them? To-day they are both———" Bauer choked, and after a long pause, during which Walter looked at him sympathetically, he said quietly:

"I had to have something different from their Godless scheme of life or I believe I would have gone mad. And, thank the Father, I found it. If I hadn't I'd been worse than the fastest of the fast set here. I wouldn't have stopped short of the vilest. I would have been a crowned head of beastliness. And nothing saved me from it but Jesus Christ. Could a man have done that? Could anyone have done it who didn't believe in a future and a spiritual life?"

Bauer came back to his chair and sat down. Walter seemed much impressed by what he "said and the way he said it. At last he remarked thoughtfully:

"You never told me anything of this before. I never understood you felt so, or had such a faith."

"No, I've kept my light under a bushel. But man's religion is the most sacred thing about him. Why don't we talk more about it? I don't know unless with me it's been an excess of sensitiveness."

"I understand and thank you, Felix," said Walter after another long silence.

During the days that followed he had many more talks with Bauer, all of which did him vast good. Bauer, once he had opened the door of his soul, threw away

all reserve and invited Walter into the very holy of holies.

They also had plenty of argument. But Walter was no match for the German student, who in his long hours of solitary existence, had managed to do an astonishing quantity of reading and posted himself on all sorts of difficult subjects with the German habit of exactness and thoroughness in matters of detail, so that he soon had Walter hopelessly beaten when it came to debate over religion and its office.

Finally Walter began slowly to regain his buoyancy and before the spring vacation he had found a standing place for his faith and a reason for his religion, so much so that he said to Bauer one Sunday evening after they had come up to the room after hearing Mr. Harris at the church: "Felix, I almost believe I could be a preacher. I believe I almost have a message."

Bauer was immensely pleased.

"You are going to come out all right. You couldn't help it with such a mother."

And yet, strange as it may seem, at that very moment Walter's mother was passing through a crisis that was testing her Christian faith even more severely than Walter's had been tested. There could be no doubt at all but that Esther's pure and steadfast soul would win the victory; but oh, the heartache of sorrowing motherhood! Will it ever cease?

Louis Douglas had been for several months a source of anxiety to both Paul and Esther. As winter wore on he complained more and more of school. One evening he broke out in such a torrent of appeal to his father to let him give up his studies that Paul compelled himself to think of the boy as his first duty and reproaching himself that he had paid little heed to him on account of political matters, he listened to Louis that evening and in a pause of his flood of words asked the boy to come into the library and have it out seriously.

The legislature was in session and Douglas was overwhelmed with committee work, with shaping up bills, and winning converts to his ideas of reform. He had anticipated opposition and difficulties of various sorts, but the actual thing that confronted him was so much greater than he had supposed possible that he almost let go at one time, in disgust, and vowed he would never enter politics again. Next day he was back in the game to stay. But from the beginning to the end of the legislative session he was blocked in nearly every effort he made for

clean, honest reform of old, corrupt and selfish party devices. In his soul he knew, and those who knew him knew, that he was heart and soul for the good of the people. The measures he wanted put into law had no possible self-seeking in them. He was clean and upright in every detail of his private and public life, yet he faced every day facts like these:

The other paper in Milton contained columns of abuse, of misrepresentation and of downright charges of self-seeking against him. Man after man in the party that had asked him to run for Senator came to him to beg him to desist from his fight on corporations that broke the laws and charged the people prohibitive prices for the necessities of life. Party worshippers like the Hon. Mr. Maxwell besieged the committee room pleading for harmony, meaning by "harmony," a slavish compromise with the greed and influence of money and power that might help the party if they were let alone. Letters flooded him from all parts of the state begging him or threatening him to leave well alone. Some of the very men who had during the election campaign promised to stay with him and help push his bills, lied outright, broke their promises and called him a deserter and a party traitor. Old friends who had stood by him for years, left him and in some cases became his bitterest enemies. Bill after bill framed with only one great-hearted purpose to benefit all the people went through the grinding process of detraction, of vilification, of amendment and final defeat. A little handful of members rallied around him. But the greed forces of the entire state were on the other side. The selfish corporations, the highwaymen of commerce, the whiskey powers fighting for their lives to maintain the license system of the state, the gang of thugs that lived on the gambling house and the barter in human blood in the sale of virtue and the degradation of boys and girls, all fought him. The newspapers that print liquor and other questionable advertisements, the microscopic men who made a living by appointment to little political dirty jobs, the horde of hungry office seekers who didn't know "America" from the latest vaudeville rag-time, the plunderers of the treasury who live without any visible means of support except what they boldly stole from contracts on public works, the princely robbers who are the crowned heads of special privilege, whose wives and daughters figure in the society columns as leaders in those useful callings of bridge whist and select receptions, the great and ignorant mob of pygmies who never had the capacity for a political idea bigger than their own diminutive measurement, the newspaper and magazine hacks who live on abuse of everybody who has a high ideal, all joined in the whoop and chase after Douglas of the fourth district, branded him as a fakir, an idiot, a senseless dreamer, an egotist, a demagogue, a party traitor, a knocker, and every other objectionable

kind of disturber of the peace, meaning by "peace," the peace of those who are let alone by reformers to rob the state, degrade politics, enthrone injustice, keep the party in power and reelect themselves.

And this is the kind of thing the preacher urges his high-spirited young men to confront if they go into public careers. Do you think American politics could be made more attractive to the strong men of this nation if some of the abuse and personal sewer methods were eliminated? Do you think all this gutter spattering is necessary to reach conclusions and arrive at a final better condition for the nation's life? Do you think that even if discussion and defence of opinion are necessary in the settlement of great public affairs, it is also in order to question a man's purity of purpose, his patriotism and his personal devotion to a great ideal?

Paul's whole nature was stirred by what he was going through and his absorption in the matters nearest his heart was so complete that it was with no ordinary shock he came to realise that his own son was in a critical condition. As a father he reproached himself for neglecting the boy under the plea of trying to reform the state. And when he began to question Louis that night he rapidly noted the lad's physical condition and took account of his manner which, the more he studied it, was not at all reassuring.

"Tell me, now, Louis, what you want. Begin at the beginning and hide nothing."

Louis looked sullenly at his father.

"You haven't time to listen to me. You never have."

"Yes, I have. I'll take it." Paul felt more self-reproach every minute he eyed Louis. And as he looked at him he could not help thinking of how much the boy resembled in many ways Esther's brother Louis, who used to give him such concern.

"Well, father, I want to quit High School. I don't like it. I hate it."

"Why? Tell me honestly now. I can't help you unless you give me the real facts."

"I don't like the teachers. They nag me. I hate them."

"Hate them? You mean all of your teachers?"

"Well, most of them. They criticise me and make fun of me. Miss Barrows showed what I wrote about tuberculosis to every other teacher in the school."

"Go on," said Paul, after a pause.

"I can't get the English. I don't understand the long definitions. I am not cut out for a scholar."

"Have you tried?"

"Yes, I have. But the harder I try, the worse it is."

"What lessons are you carrying?"

"English, algebra, physics, manual training, German and chemistry."

"Tell me now," said Paul good-naturedly, "which one of all these studies you hate the least."

Louis laughed. "I don't like any studies."

"But which one would you choose first if you couldn't help yourself?"

"Manual training."

"What do you do in that?"

"Oh, I plane and saw and glue up boards and make things."

"What things?"

Louis hesitated. "You'll laugh."

"No, I won't." Paul felt more like crying than laughing as Louis eyed him doubtfully.

"Great God!" he felt like saying to himself. "Here I have been so busy with everybody else's affairs that my own son is afraid of me."

"Well, I finished a writing desk the other day. I was going to give it to mother for her birthday. I brought it home last night."

"A writing desk! Let me see it."

"It's in my room," Louis said with some hesitation.

"I want to see it," said Paul. He rose to go up stairs and had got as far as the hall when the telephone rang.

"Go on. I'll come as soon as I answer this," Paul said, and Louis hurried up stairs as if he wanted to get there some time before his father.

The man at the other end of the telephone wire was an angry committeeman at the State House.

"I say," he exclaimed in a strident voice that clanged into the receiver like a personal insult. "When are you coming down? We've been waiting here over an hour."

Paul made a lightning decision and answered. "I can't come down to-night. I have a very important engagement elsewhere."

"Elsewhere!" snorted the irate committeeman. "Why, you made this a personal meeting. You've got to come down. I can't hold Rogers to our plan if you don't come. And Alvard is on the fence. We lack just enough to make a majority. This is your pet measure. Are you going back on it?"

"I can't come down to-night. Put it through among you. If you really mean business you don't need me. Stand by the bill at all costs."

The committeeman broke in with an oath: "All costs! It's your bill. If you desert it now at this pinch, it is down and out. I can't look after your fences."

The receiver at the other end went up with a bang and Paul realised that another one of his cherished measures had received its *coup de grace*. Partly, he said to himself as he started up to Louis's room, on account of the half hearted action of those who called themselves friends. What friends! Rabbits! Cowards! Self seekers! Real friends could have managed that bill without his presence and there was a show for it owing to its popular character, if anyone would push matters with energy and intelligent enthusiasm. "But was it his duty always to neglect his own children even for service to the state?" He said "No" as he went along up and into Louis's room.

He had seldom been into the boy's sanctum, and as he came in now he was curious, and interested in what he saw. Louis had employed the interval of his father's presence to pick a number of things up off the floor and what he did not have time to throw on top of the bed he had kicked under it, so the room presented a fairly respectable outward appearance.

He had pulled the writing desk out into the middle of the room and as his father stopped in front of it he said suddenly: "There it is, now laugh."

Paul was simply astonished when he examined the article. To be sure, all the joints on it were not perfect by any means and one of the legs looked a little out of plumb. But as a whole the writing desk was so creditable a piece of work that he could not help saying, "I call that pretty fine. Mother will be tremendously pleased. You made it all yourself?"

"Yes, all but this little bit of carving. That Johnson started me on.
The rest of it is mine."

"It's mighty good," said Paul, walking around it. "Straighten that leg out by amputating it just below the knee and it will———"

"Yes, I knew you would laugh at me. All the teachers do," wailed Louis.

"No, I'm not laughing at you, Louis. You have done splendid work. But you mustn't feel badly to have your faults pointed out. That is the way to learn. If you hadn't been in quite such a hurry you would have made a better job, wouldn't you? Your fault, one of your faults, is lack of patience and thorough painstaking over details. Isn't that so?"

"It must be. All my teachers say so all the time."

"Well, if they say so all the time there must be some reason for it. But honest, now, the writing desk is not a bad piece of work viewed as a whole."

Louis felt somewhat mollified and after his father had made one or two more comments they started down stairs. When they reached the hall, the telephone rang again.

"Go into the library and wait for me," Paul said as he went to the instrument.

This time it was Rogers, the doubtful member of the committee. He wanted to ask one or two questions about the bill and Paul quickly and eagerly answered him.

"But we need you right here now. We can't do anything without you. Burke is mad and we can't depend on him. You've just got to come if you want to see the thing through."

"I can't come, Rogers. You can whip them into line." Paul rapidly shot directions at him. "Stand by the thing for my sake if not for the sake of the bill. Don't go back on your promise."

"Promise! What's become of yours? The thing is impossible without you. I can't do anything with Burke and the rest of the committee are hot over your absence. Don't blame anyone but yourself when you read the morning paper."

Paul started to answer, but the committeeman had finished, and after hesitating over the matter he went into the library and resumed his questions with Louis.

"After the manual training, which one of your studies do you take to most?"

"Oh, I don't like any of them. Chemistry, I guess."

"Do you like mathematics?"

"I don't mind, but I want to go into business, father. I want to quit school altogether and go into business."

"What business?"

"Any kind. I want to make money."

"What do you want to make money for?"

"What does any one want money for? I want to buy——"

"Go on. Tell me exactly."

"Well, clothes and—and—I want things, so I can go out and be with other fellows, and have something to spend—and———"

In his burst of unconcealed eagerness to get out of school Louis was really revealing to his father some of the actual reasons for wanting to give up his studies, and as Paul listened to him he felt that the boy's eagerness went even farther. He determined to be very frank with him and get at the bottom of the thing if possible.

"Do you want to make money so as to go with the girls and get popular with them and spend money on them?"

The question was almost brutal in its directness, and one that his father had never before suggested. Louis reddened with an angry but self-conscious manner that told Paul he had not guessed very wide of the real motive that was urging the boy.

He did not answer the question but sat sullenly tearing bits of paper from the

leaves of a magazine on the table. And his father sat silently staring at him, wondering how he was going to manage Louis and help him to make a possible manhood for himself. The problem across the library table in this boy of his was even a greater problem than the one down at the State House. He could afford politically to lose the bill. But could he afford parentally to lose the boy?

"You needn't answer my question, Louis, you have answered it. Now listen to me. I am your father and next to your mother I love you more than anyone else in all the world. Do you believe that?"

"I suppose so," Louis managed to say.

"You know it, Louis. There is no guess work. You are sixteen. You have fairly good health and more than average brains. The main business in your life for the next ten years ought to be study and education. The girls—society—all that—do you want to make a fool of yourself and miss the one thing of manhood that's worth getting? If you do, I don't for you. I am several years older than you are, Louis. And I am your father for the purpose, as I believe, of really being worth something to you in the matter of counsel and direction for your voyage over life's great ocean. If you are planning to start out without a compass or the right kind of equipment I would be worse than a fool if I didn't prevent such a voyage, wouldn't I? Well, I don't intend to let you do just as you please just because for the time being you choose to go your own gait. Mind, Louis, I am not going to ask you to do impossible things or be tyrannical with you. But neither do I intend that you should throw away a splendid chance for education just to gratify a present longing to make money for the purpose you want it for."

The telephone rang again at this point and Paul went over to it.

Burke had come to the instrument again.

"We can't agree on the bill in its present shape and it's simply impossible to put it through in your absence. You are being judged by all the committees and some of them don't hesitate to say you are being bought out. If you come down now you may be able to save it. But we are on the point of kicking the bill out or reporting adversely. Can't you come down within an hour?"

"I can't promise. I have a very important engagement here. I might be able to get down by midnight, but wouldn't promise."

"Midnight! The members are dead tired now. Rogers is asleep in his chair and Colfax is dozing on the lounge. If you don't come within an hour you needn't come at all."

"I can't come within an hour."

"What is it? A matter of life and death?"

"Yes, a matter of life and death," Paul answered slowly.

"Oh, very well. Then the old bill is dead, that's all. It's not a matter of question."

And Paul could picture Burke as with an incredulous sneer he hung up, and told the committee to clear out and go to bed.

He went back into the library and sat down by Louis and put his arm around his shoulder and reasoned with him as he had never in all the campaign reasoned with a political acquaintance for the purpose of winning his friendship. He showed the boy clearly what it meant to lose an education, what a handicap it would be to him all his life if he did not have the schooling and culture that history and language and science stood ready to give. He pictured to Louis the tremendous advantages that go with education in the social life of the world and cited numerous instances in the range of his own experience to show Louis what a prize he was throwing away at the age of sixteen if he deliberately threw away the riches of mental power for the dirt of lust and mammon. He got hold of Louis as he never had before, because he divined the really impure and foolish motive the boy had for going into business, and as the minutes ticked into hours Louis gradually became convinced of certain things which he had only vaguely entertained so far.

In the first place he began to have a feeling that his father did care for him tremendously after all. Paul's absorption in politics for the last year had been so deep that, as has been said, he had neglected the boy's interests and had not paid attention to his frequent complaints and appeals. But now that the matter was squarely met, Louis knew from what he caught of the telephone dialogue that his father was neglecting a very important political affair to spend the entire evening with him. The thought added to the feeling he began to have of his father's real character. Then Louis had all his life had the greatest respect for his father's intellectual life and regarded it with admiration. He was fond of quoting him and there was no one in Milton who read Douglas's editorials more regularly and

carefully than Louis.

And added to all the rest that influenced him that night was the shame he began to feel that his father knew his real motive for wanting to leave the school and make money. He had become fascinated and led away by a certain set in the High School and he wanted to go with them, wear expensive clothes, frequent society functions and spend freely and get the reputation of a generous and even lavish giver. This he could not do with the allowance his father gave him, and he chafed under it foolishly. He had not supposed his father would detect his underlying motive in his longing to quit school and go into business. Now that he realised his father did understand he felt ashamed to continue his plea as he had first made it. At the end of the evening together, a certain definite agreement was reached between father and son.

Louis agreed to continue his studies for another year and do his best with those branches he found most difficult where he was not allowed to choose electives. His father agreed to study with him in a regular course, helping him through hard places, practically being his tutor and agreeing to give him all the time he needed in the evening. "And why not?" Paul kept asking almost with a sob as he noted the glow that was creeping back into Louis's eye, the glow of a new interest in study. "Why not? What shall it profit the reformer if he reforms the whole state and loses his own children? I don't believe that even high-flown Patriotism requires such a sacrifice as that."

When Louis went up to bed tears were on his cheeks and a choking in his breast. His father had simply said, "My boy, I want you to be a man. Your mother and I have prayed for you all these years. We believe you will not disappoint us. Don't forget God, Louis. You need to pray to overcome this great temptation of impure thinking. The gates of Hell are close by that sort of life. Not even your father and mother can spare you from ruin that way. You have got to fight it out yourself. God helping you."

Paul looked up at the clock and saw it was after midnight, but on a venture he called up the committee room at the State House. A night janitor answered and informed him that the committee had been gone for over an hour.

He went upstairs and found Esther in her sewing room, her face pale and troubled, traces of tears on her cheeks and such a look of real fear on her face that Paul exclaimed, "Esther! What is it?"

She turned to her table and picked up a package of postcards and with a shudder of loathing held them out to Paul.

He took them and saw at a second's glance that they were the vulgar, coarse, suggestive and even indecent photographic postcards which this great civilised, supposedly Christian, government even yet allows to pass through the post office and be displayed and sold at every news stand and book store in the country.

"They dropped out of Louis's coat when I began to mend it this evening. And there was worse. He or some other boy had written this vile thing." Esther handed it to Paul what she had found. Paul read it and his face grew white and stern. Esther sat down and put her head on her arms and almost shrieked.

"Oh, I can't bear it! Louis! Louis! How could you! Oh, how can his soul ever be clean again! Oh, boy, your mother's heart is broken! After all my prayers for you! After all the days and nights of consecration! Oh, my son, my son! Would God I had died before I knew or saw this! Oh, my Master, the cup is too bitter! I can't drink it!"

Never in all his knowledge of Esther had Paul ever seen her like this. His own heart almost stopped at the sight. For years she had been so uniformly calm and strong even when her children had disappointed her. She had with high-spirited motherhood faced their sins and wrong-doing with a peaceful faith that they would do right in the end. But this discovery seemed to smite her soul down into a hopeless darkness, where there was no redemption. And as Paul looked at her there was in his soul more anguish for her than fear for Louis over what she had discovered. In a sense he was prepared for this, somewhat, because of the glimpses he had been getting that very evening of Louis's nature and its temptations.

He kneeled by his wife and put his arm about her.

"This is too great for you to bear alone. Besides, it may not be as hopeless or as terrible as you think. Let me see Louis. I have just been having an evening with him. If he hasn't gone to bed I believe now is the time for me to see him."

Esther had grown quiet. She seemed to be praying. Paul got up and went out of the room along the hallway to Louis's room and knocked. At Louis's answer he went in and found him at work on the writing desk.

Without any preliminary Paul held out the cards to Louis and said, "Louis, are these yours?"

Louis' face blanched on the instant. His hand trembled so he could not hold the cards still. He tried to answer but his tongue seemed paralysed. His father repeated the question more sternly. Louis broke down completely, flung himself on the bed in a spasm of fear and shame.

His father eyed him with conflicting feelings. Again he was strongly reminded of Louis Darcy and his many experiences with him. Louis still refused to answer, and Paul said:

"Look up here, Louis. Look up and answer me. Did you write that?"

His father thrust the paper his mother had found close up to the boy. Louis cried out. "No, no, father. That is not mine. One of the boys———"

Paul felt relieved as far as that went, for Louis had never lied to him.

"But these cards. Are these yours?"

"Yes."

"How long have you had them?"

"I got them yesterday."

"Give them to me." Louis handed them over and Paul tore them across again and again and flung the pieces into the waste paper basket. Louis had never seen his father angry like that before. He shrank and cowered back while his father said:

"Louis, I would almost rather see you in your coffin than with those vile things in your hands and their foul imaginings in your heart. Do you realise what this will lead to? Your manhood will be blasted! your soul blackened! your body tortured! all the angel in you turned into animal———"

Paul nearly broke down himself. He shuddered and for one instant Louis really caught a glimpse into the horror that sin causes.

But Paul Douglas was not a cowardly father nor one who is content to leave it to

boys to learn unaided bitter lessons from evil. He sat down by Louis and gave him the plainest talk on the subject of personal purity the boy had ever had. And the effect on him in all his after life was even more than either Paul or Esther had dared to hope. Paul never did a better hour's work. When he was through, Louis was completely broken. In the moment of his cry to his father for help, Paul kneeled by him, put his arm around him and prayed for him such a prayer of appeal and hope and good cheer that Louis Douglas will never forget. The whole thing was the beginning of a new manhood for the boy. And when the next day he plucked up courage to confess to his mother, one of the hardest things he ever did in all his life, the entire unfolding of his mother's love, her passionate appeal to his better nature, her cry to him to seek God's help in overcoming all, overwhelmed him. Again the boy caught a glimpse of the mightiness of father and mother affection and young as he was he came from that soul yearning of Esther with a manly determination in his boyish heart not to disappoint either father or mother in the struggle he would make to be true to the high calling. For as the time slipped away many and many a time he was reminded of the black pit on the edge of which he had almost slipped, to fall into its slimy and murky abyss, and perhaps never again come up into the pure sweet air of God under his blue sky and its silver stars. O Louis, you will never be able to measure the rescue your father and mother made for you at that crisis when your soul was wandering over the treeless moor of passion.

CHAPTER X

FELIX BAUER sat at his bench in the electrical machine shop at Burrton just about to open a letter which had been left there late in the afternoon. The shop men sometimes brought one another's mail up from the village and Bauer, who often worked at his task without going out to tea, was glad to get his occasional letters before he finished his bench work late into the night.

Bauer's mail was not very frequent nor very heavy. After that vacation at the Douglas home, he had come back to Burrton and plunged into the work in a vain endeavour to forget Helen Douglas. He did not forget her in the least and did not try to pretend that he ever could. He had never ventured to ask if he might write to her, but Mrs. Douglas had dropped a friendly note now and then for which he was grateful and Paul had sent him a copy of Heine, which Bauer had admired on the library shelves at Milton.

The only additional letters he received were those which belonged to his correspondence with the people in Washington who were interested in his electrical patent. The circular glass incubator was finally completed, and Bauer had experimented on it to such satisfaction that it was a common joke with the boy that Bauer's electrical chickens were so thick they ate up all the currents in the shop.

Bauer could afford to take all the criticism, even the caustic remarks of Anderson the foreman, because it began to look now very much as if the stubborn, dogged, plodding German were on the road to financial success. He had been through the regular struggles necessary to make his model and get his patent. But he had finally succeeded in all the preliminary stages, his model was in the patent office, and he had even begun to receive letters from two or three manufacturing firms about putting the incubator on the market.

He was totally inexperienced in this business and needed much counsel from older heads. Anderson the foreman finally saw that Bauer had really invented a very valuable article and he came to his assistance in the final correspondence over the patent, but Bauer had some reluctance about sharing with him the correspondence over the actual manufacture and sale of the incubators, because of Anderson's unfortunate habit of antagonising the shop men in various matters. He had never been able to overcome a general distrust on the part of the students, and Bauer shared that distrust so keenly that he did not feel willing to risk any great amount of confidence in him.

Since his return from Milton, Bauer had brooded over money matters. A small inheritance from his grandfather's estate in Lausbrachen had helped him through school, and his living wants were so few that he had not suffered any from privations which most of the rich men's sons at Burrton would have considered absolutely impossible.

But a new and unknown ambition had invaded Bauer's hitherto placid and somewhat passive soul since Helen Douglas had come into his circle of interest. What was it the girl had said during that talk in the library that day when she had made a vow not to speak first and had broken it? Bauer remembered every phase of that incident; the girl's real sparkle of interest in his invention; her eager questions; her coming up to the library table and bending over Bauer's plan; her head so close to his that a stray curl of her hair had almost touched his cheek; her startled drawing back at Bauer's solemn remark about the eggs having to be good

before they could hatch; her frank but entirely innocent questioning of him about his home life, and how she unknowingly hurt him; her swift realisation of something wrong and her tactful change of conversation; and then her remark about the power of money when she had asked Bauer about the possibility of his becoming rich. The girl's enthusiasm, her perfect physical animal health, her smile, her unquestioned interest in his work, her ingenuous and pure joy in life, —all affected poor Bauer so deeply that he felt as if he were walking through an apple orchard in full bloom, his feet pressing through fragrant red clover, and the apple blossom petals floating down gently, caressing his face and hands, the sky a robin egg blue and the air elixir of heaven—and then, he was suddenly recalled to the plain, dusty, weed-bordered road he was actually travelling, he, Felix Bauer, German, poor, homely, with a dishonoured family history, with no prospects worth considering and no future worth dreaming over. And the road became very dusty, and the weeds very coarse, and the sky very grey and the air very heavy for Bauer, as Helen went out of the library and left him there staring intently at the place where she had been and recalling what she had said about money.

After all, money was the great power of the world. It could buy anything, even a wife, even in these modern times. But could it buy love? Had it ever bought so divine a thing as that since the foundation of the world?

Bauer's question did not go much farther. Somehow he shrank from trying to answer it. But he brooded over the utter hopelessness of his thought of Helen as he stood, penniless and obscure, and dishonoured, as he believed, through the sin of his parents. And as his patent grew under his hands and the possibility of his really making money from it became more possible, he found himself growing possessed with the "auri fames" and nourishing it as if it were the one indispensable factor in his final possession of the one being in the whole world worth living for. He believed he could never win such a life without money. There might be some hope for him or any man with it.

The letter which he was about to open bore the Washington postmark and he took for granted it was from someone interested in the purchase of his patent rights. He opened it in his usual slow deliberate manner, but the moment he began to read his whole manner changed. It was as if one had opened a cage door to take a pet bird in his hand suddenly to find his fingers in contact with a snake.

He rose from his bench so abruptly that his chair fell over, and he threw the letter down, eyeing it as if it were alive and dangerous to the touch. Then after a few seconds he picked up the letter and yielding to a very unusual passion tore the paper clear across, and threw the two pieces down on the bench. Then he seemed to be aware of yielding to an unusual outburst and picking up his chair he sat down.

There were only a few students in the shop. Walter had gone out an hour before. It was almost seven o'clock and the foreman was just going out of his little office room at the other end of Bauer's section of benches.

Bauer sat there until the foreman had gone out and then he picked up the two pieces of the letter and with a flush of colour on his face as unusual as his recent outburst of feeling, he slowly read. The handwriting was very peculiar even for German script and the tearing of the letter in two made its intelligent perusal doubly difficult.

When he reached the end he hesitated and at last put the two pieces of the letter into its envelope and the envelope in his pocket and then he sat staring at the stuff on his bench with a hard look in which scorn and shame and perplexity were mingled. He sat there until he was all alone. Then he got up and tried to go on with his work. He was on the track of another invention,—a spring coil to prevent the jar to a tungsten lamp. But after picking up a tool and making one or two efforts to continue his task, he threw his material down on the bench and after a moment of indecision closed up the locker, put on his coat and went out.

He and Walter had rooms opposite each other in the same hall. As he went up to the landing he stopped at Walter's door and finding it open, went in. Walter was writing to his father. Bauer waited until he was through and then in his usual direct simple manner said:

"Walter, I want your advice. I'm in a hard place and I don't know just what I ought to do."

"All right. Fire away," said Walter frankly. The friendship of the two was now on a perfect basis and Bauer had lost all reserve although he had never up to this time taken Walter into complete confidence in his family matters, partly owing to an honest feeling of independence and a courageous reluctance to burden Walter with it.

"I want to read you a letter from my father," said Bauer, eyeing Walter wistfully.

Walter nodded, and Bauer took out the letter and read in his slow almost stammering fashion.

"Washington, D. C.,
"October 5, 1909.

"Son Felix.

"Undoubtedly this letter will cause you surprise. It is only after much painful contemplation of all the facts that I venture to send you this communication. It is not an easy matter for myself after the experiences through which I have passed to approach you with a proposition which may seem altogether impossible to you. Before you judge me, hear me. Whatever may have been the mistakes I have made you have never been involved in them in any way, and I am writing you now to assure you of my real affection for you and to hasten to dispel any ill will you may have for me on account of the deep shadow which has fallen on my life.

"I am living here in Washington and have opened a law office on H street. A few days ago I had occasion to go to the patent office and there I saw your model of the electric incubator. There were two men standing there looking at the model and I overheard one of them saying, 'That thing is good for a fortune to someone.' I learned by inquiry that the speaker was Halstead of the manufacturing firm of Halstead, Burns & Co. He does not know me, and I am sure he did not see me or notice me while he was in the patent office.

"Now what I am writing you for is simply this. If you will put the business of this patent into my hands, I am confident I can manage it for you to your satisfaction. I am confident you have made a very valuable invention and it ought to bring you a good sum of money. I am willing to do all the work of negotiating between you and the parties interested and charge you only a fair price for my services. As you know, I have had some experience in business affairs and I am not without ability. There will be two offers made you no doubt, one to buy your patent outright, and the other to contract for a share of the manufactured sales. In the first case a lump sum would be offered. In the other you would be obliged to wait a long time for any returns. I would be inclined to favour the sale of the patent rights and hold to a stiff price. But that is a matter

for deliberation. You may not agree with me. However, very much would depend on the amount the patent right could bring. If this man Halstead, who is one of the largest manufacturers in the east, is right in his judgment it is possible the sum he will offer you would decide the matter for you and give you a sum of ready money which I have no doubt you could well use in your education.

"I do not offer any apologies for this missive as I do not consider that it calls for any. My offer is purely a business one and I make it partly on my own account as well as yours. If the patent turns out a success we would both benefit by it. I am confident, as I say, that I can serve your interests better than any mere stranger. I am here on the ground, I am familiar with the patent laws and I believe I can make good terms with a man like Halstead. If you decide to accept my offer, write me at once, giving me authority to act for you. The sooner the better, for I believe Halstead is going to make you an offer if he has not already done so. But he does not know that anyone knows what he really thinks of the value of your work and he will do what they all do, try to get your patent for the lowest possible figure.

"My address is 427 H Street East.

"ADOLPH BAUER."

When Felix had finished reading, there was a moment of silence. Then Walter said, to give Bauer time to let him into his confidence if he chose:

"Has this man Halstead corresponded with you yet?"

"No, I have had no letters from him."

"You probably will hear from him soon, then?"

"Why, yes, if what he says is true?"

Bauer all through this talk with Walter never mentioned his father's name directly but spoke of him using the personal pronoun.

"What do you suppose the patent is worth?"

"I have no imagination about it. But say, Walter, what do you think I ought to do about this letter?"

"I don't know. You have never told me——" Walter began slowly.

"I know, of course you can't advise me unless I tell you more. He—well, he deserted mother. She was involved in some similar disgrace. From all I could learn while in Washington that time I went, he turned over all his property to her. That was the only redeeming thing abut the wretched business. But at any rate he has been obliged to go back to his old law business. He is very capable. Brilliant. My mother—I can't talk of her."

Poor Bauer put his face in his hands. Walter was silent. What could anyone say?

After a little, Walter said gently, "Why do you hesitate about accepting your father's offer?"

"I don't wish to be under any obligations to him."

"But he makes you a purely business proposition. Can't you trust him to handle it?"

"Oh, I suppose so, I never knew of his being dishonest. And you know the old proverb: 'Wer lugt, der stiehlt auch'; 'show me a liar and I'll show you a thief.' His faults were always of a different sort. But you can see how I would naturally hesitate to correspond with him or have any dealings with him."

"I think you are wrong about that," said Walter positively. "This is a purely business affair. You ought to treat it as such. He can handle the matter for you, being on the ground, far better than you can do it through correspondence at this distance."

"Do you think so?"

"I know it. If I were in your place I wouldn't hesitate a minute. You are totally at the mercy of the manufacturers unless you can make them understand your ability to take care of yourself. Isn't it true that the great majority of inventors die poor? The manufacturers make the money, not the inventors."

"That's true. But I don't want to die poor. I won't die poor. I have not the ambition of a Carnegie or a Rockefeller."

"You need a good friend at Washington to protect your interests. My! Won't it be

great if your incubator should make you rich! I don't know why it shouldn't. The way the chickens hatched out of it was wonderful. Just think, old man. Most everyone nowadays has electricity in his house. Thousands of people could just as well as not be raising chickens on the side. Ministers, doctors, college professors, newspaper men, lawyers, school teachers,—no end. The sun would never set on your incubator any more than hens have to. I tell you, old man, there's money in your electric birds if you manage the business end of this thing right. And I don't see why your father's offer isn't just—well, providential."

"I never knew anything about him to be 'providential,'" said Bauer in almost the only bitter tone Walter had ever known him to use. "But I don't want to take any chances on this. Perhaps he is sent along at this time to help me out."

Walter looked curiously at his friend.

"You seem to be awfully anxious to make money, Felix. Never knew you that way before. What you going to do? Get married? And start a chicken ranch?"

Over Bauer's face a great flood of colour swept. There was one confidence he had determined never to make to Walter, and that was his feelings towards Helen. He believed Walter had no hint of it. And as a matter of fact that was true. Walter had so far had no love experiences and Bauer had never by so much as a look or a word in Walter's presence betrayed his secret.

"I don't expect to get married. At least not very soon," Bauer managed to say. "But I want money. You can borrow of me," he added with one of his rare smiles, "if you need it for your own nuptials."

"No immediate need," said Walter, laughing. "I have never seen the girl my mother would like to welcome."

"Ah! Your mother. But she would be kind to the girl you would choose."

"Or the one that would choose me, you mean. I don't know. Mother would be pretty particular about the people that got into the Douglas family. Did I ever mention old man Damon who came around courting Helen last winter. He wears a wig and deals in rubber goods. Old enough to be Helen's father. I never saw mother so upset. And as for Helen—why—I would as soon think of her taking you for a suitor as Damon. But you never can tell what a girl will do. They generally do the opposite of what you expect."

Bauer managed to say—"That's fortunate for some of us perhaps. Else there might be no hope for unfortunate and homely people if there was any fixed rules by which girls acted."

Walter stared at Bauer as he sometimes had to when Bauer opened his philosophy unexpectedly.

"I wonder what will happen to you, old man, when you fall in love, really and deeply?"

"I wonder," said Bauer softly.

"It will be interesting to watch you," said Walter laughing.

"Same to you," said Bauer with some spirit.

"We can watch each other," Walter continued.

"I have no doubt you will bear watching," was Bauer's reply, wrung from him by the tense situation.

Walter roared, and did not venture to say any more on that subject. But he went on to urge Bauer to answer his father's letter at once and give him power of attorney to act for him and make the best possible terms for his invention. Bauer promised before he left the room to do so, and on reaching his own room he at once set to work on the difficult business of answering his father on purely business grounds. Without making any definite promises or giving his father any authority to act for him, with characteristic caution he asked several questions about the patent laws, and especially about the possibility of undertaking the manufacture of the incubators on shares. He enclosed the letters he already had received from companies interested, none of which however had made him any positive offer, only sounding him in general as to his disposition to sell the patent rights on certain terms which had no very promising prospects of ready money. And it was money Bauer wanted,—not dim future prospects of the all-powerful medium of happiness or unhappiness.

After his letter had been mailed, he felt a little uncertain about it all, but he was of a direct, straight-forward habit and once started in a course of action he seldom changed it. Once committed to the correspondence with his father he would hold to it, keeping it all on a cold business basis as if his father had no

other relation to him, and letting the heartache take care of itself. It is astonishing how many heartaches do take care of themselves in this old world. Only, like Bauer's, they are apt to take care of themselves so poorly that the ache starves the heart out of house and home.

Two days later, Walter, who was in his room going over some complicated formulae connected with Rausch's Dynamics, was interrupted by Bauer who came running in from his room across the hall waving a little slip of paper.

"What do you think of that," he exclaimed with unusual excitement.

Walter looked at the little yellow slip and read "One Thousand Dollars payable to Felix Bauer by Halstead, Burns & Co., of Washington."

"They offer me that for my patent right, with a small percentage of profit on certain sales."

Walter was excited in his turn and started to offer congratulations. But Bauer's next words broke in on him.

"I'm going to send the check back. It's not enough and they know it."

"I believe you're right," said Walter, after a stare at Bauer in this new light of money hunger. "The fact that they sent a check shows their eagerness to get into the business and their faith in its value. What will you hold them up to?"

"I don't know. But I am going to put the matter up to—to him."

"You mean your father?"

"Yes," said Bauer hastily. "The more I think of it the more I believe he can get more than I can. I'll mail him Halstead's correspondence."

That same afternoon Bauer returned the check to Halstead, Burns, & Co. with a brief business note saying that he was not prepared to sell out at such a small figure. He added that he had placed the business connected with the patent in the hands of his father, giving street number and office. In the same mail he sent his father Halstead's letter and told of his return of the check, at the same time authorising his father to have full power to act for him with Halstead or any other firm.

"I do not know just what I ought to receive for my patent." Bauer wrote. "But I am not going to act hastily nor sell at a sacrifice. I trust you to make terms that will at least be some measure of the real value of the article."

A week passed by during which time Bauer's father wrote acknowledging Bauer's letters, thanking him for accepting his offer, commending his action in returning the check to Halstead, Burns & Co., and assuring Felix that the business would receive prompt and careful attention.

A week later as Walter and Bauer were in the shop a telegraph messenger came in with an envelope for Felix Bauer.

Bauer opened and read and without a word passed the message over to Walter. It read, "Halstead offers $5,000 cash down and percentage on American sales. Shall I close with offer? Adolph Bauer."

Walter could hardly speak—he was so excited.

"Better close with it. You can't do better. That father of yours must be a———"

Bauer smiled faintly. "Perhaps I can't expect more. I believe I will wire accept."

"Better find out what the percentage is, and why European sales are not included."

"Yes," said Bauer briefly. He was strangely calm and not particularly overjoyed by his unexpected good fortune. Walter recalled that afterwards.

He answered the telegram with a letter, asking for details which his father furnished promptly. The European sales were subject to such expense and delay that the manufacturers explained the unusual risk and made a plausible showing why royalty terms were difficult to arrange. After two weeks correspondence, Bauer finally telegraphed his father— "You are authorised to close with Halstead on their terms. Take your commission out of the $5,000."

By the business arrangements made between them Bauer's father was to receive five per cent on any cash offer. Bauer felt kindly towards him for the way the affair had come out and in a letter written the same day he sent the telegram he authorised his father to take out ten per cent commission instead of the five agreed upon in their formal contract.

"I don't want to get too money mad," he said to himself with a grim smile as he posted the letter, and with a great feeling of weariness upon him went into the shop.

Felix Bauer was one of the few students at Burrton who never subscribed to a daily paper and seldom read one. He kept up with the news of the world by dropping into Walter's room and hearing him dribble out the events of the day from a New York daily which Walter took. The edition reached Burrton eight hours after the date line.

Three days after Bauer had authorised his father to close the contract on the patent for him Walter opened up his New York Daily for his usual skim over its contents. It was two o'clock. He had heard Bauer come up the stairs and go into his room and had not heard him go out.

He glanced down over the usual political and sporting news and then his eye caught a headline that made him start.

"LEAVES ON THE KAISER WILHELM UNDER SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES."

"Adolph Bauer, ex-attache of the Consular service, sailed yesterday on the Kaiser Wilhelm for Bremen. Bauer will be remembered as the brilliant but shady member of the Washington coterie of unsavory reputation in connection with the Jaynes-Buford scandal. Before sailing, Bauer cashed a check for $5,000 on Halstead, Burns & Co., payment it is said on a patent right owned by himself and son for a new invention in the incubator line. The son is a student at Burrton Electrical School. There is no charge of crookedness at the bank. The check had the regular endorsement of Halstead. But parties who are interested in Bauer's movements socially, have taken steps to track him to Europe. Interesting developments are promised by those who know Bauer's antecedents and especially his treatment of his wife from whom he is separated pending a divorce."

Walter was tremendously downcast by this bit of news.

"Poor Bauer! Poor old man!" he said over and over. "What an unmitigated rascal that father of his must be to steal that money. Bauer will never get a cent. And I advised him to take up with his precious father's offer! But how could I foresee a thing as black as this. Oh, I don't know what I ought to do! How can I tell him! I

can't do it! But he will find it out in a day or two! It can't be kept. Blame it! Why are there such things in the old world! And Bauer has been so eager to get money lately. Oh, I can't tell him! I just can't."

Walter paced his room in great agitation. He dreaded to see Bauer. How could he break this to him? He dreaded to see his friend come out of the room. And he waited. But after an hour, Bauer had made no move and Walter, recalling his strength of character and mindful that the news would have to come to him some time, finally shook himself together, went out, crossed the hall and knocked on Bauer's door.

The knock was a faint one and there was no reply. He knocked again a little louder, and getting no answer, he did what he often did, opened and went in.

Bauer was standing over by his washbowl, leaning over and as he raised his head and turned around, Walter was startled at the look that greeted him.

"What!" He took a stride over to his friend and put one hand on his shoulder. In the other hand he held the New York paper.

Bauer smiled back at him.

"I was going to tell you. It's too much bother to hide it. But this hemorrhage is worse than the others. I've been to see the doctor and he says I'll come out all right if I can get into the painted desert and stay there a year or two."

Walter stared at Bauer without a word.

The paper slipped out of his fingers, and he was hardly conscious of the fact that Bauer had stepped on it as he had walked over to his couch to lie down there.

"You see," he said, lying on his back, looking up at Walter and speaking in his usual slow fashion, "I've only had the flow three times. First time I never minded it. Next one took me three weeks ago while you were gone to the Harrisburg Exhibition. The doctor says I will come out all right if I go out there. My money will come in a day or two and I'll start for Canyon Diablo. I ought to have a pretty good time on $4,500. Living is cheap in the painted desert. And any way, 'Wir mussen alie einmal sterben?' 'We must all die sometime,' you know."

Walter's eyes travelled from Bauer's face to the newspaper on the floor and back

again. And Bauer mistaking his look said, "Don't take it so hard. It might be worse. Money salves the wound you know. Perhaps you can go out with me for a few weeks. Can you? Of course I'll foot all the bills if you'll go." And he smiled at Walter as he spoke.

CHAPTER XI

WALTER was trembling with sympathy and the sudden shock from the unexpected revelation of Bauer's physical condition. He was so overwhelmed with this that the loss of the money seemed comparatively trivial.

"Why did you not tell me the condition you were in? I ought to have known about it. It does not seem possible."

"It's not as serious as it seems. You remember Gardner, class of 1909? He's out in New Mexico with a U. S. surveying party and he's all right. A year or two out there will put me right."

Walter looked at him doubtfully.

"What a chump I must have been all this winter not to see. I wouldn't have believed it if I read it in a book."

Bauer smiled again.

"You couldn't do anything if you had known. Nobody could. The change of climate will fix me all right. Lucky that money is coming in just now. Lots of fellows don't have my good luck."

"Good luck?"

"Yes. I might be sick here without a cent, and be dependent like Franklin out at the day camp. I felt awfully sorry for him at the time, didn't you?"

"Yes, tell me! but no! it hurts you to talk?"

Bauer nodded. "I don't have any pain to-day. Just weakness. It's only one lung, the doc says. It might be my knee joints or my mucous or a dozen other places

worse than lungs. If you're going to have tuberculosis have it when it will raise the most sympathy. If I only had a heart-rending cough to go with the hemorrhages I could get some church or tuberculosis society to send me out to Arizona free of charge."

Walter was so upset by the whole thing and so disturbed by the inevitable revelation that was bound to come that he sat miserably silent, while Bauer rambled on in a disconnected manner to all outward appearances quite unterrified by his trouble, or at any rate making a brave and successful attempt at deceiving his friend. But at last he unexpectedly gave Walter an opportunity to lead up to the article in the paper.

"Seems a little queer I don't hear from him. I understood Halstead and Burns were going to pay at once. Would you mind going down after the three o'clock mail? I feel a little uneasy about it. Never had so much money before. Probably never will again."

"Did you have any reason to distrust your father?" asked Walter.

"No, I told you his faults were of another sort."

"What would you do if he should try to cheat you out of the money?"

"How could he do that?"

"Didn't you give him power of attorney to act for you?"

"Yes."

"Well, what would hinder his having the check from Halstead drawn in his name instead of yours?"

"Nothing, only———"

"Only what?"

"Why, just sheer humanity."

Bauer was sitting up on the couch, his hands doubled up and his eyes fixed on Walter.

"What is it?" he said at last quietly enough. "Are you keeping something from me? I would rather have it from you than from anyone else."

"Poor old man!" Walter could not hold back a groan as his eye travelled to the paper on the floor.

Bauer saw his glance. "What is it? Read it for me."

Walter put his hands over his face and muttered.

"Oh, I can't, Felix, it's too cruel."

"Nothing's too cruel if you're used to it." He started to get up from the couch, but Walter prevented him.

"Lie down there. I'll read it to you if I must, simply because someone will have to do it sometime. But I would rather be hanged than do it."

He hardly ventured to look at Bauer when he had finished the newspaper account. When he did look at him, he saw him sitting up on the couch, his hands clasped over his knees, a slight increase of colour on his face but no mark of any unusual anger or feeling.

"How could he do it! How could he!" Bauer whispered to himself, looking off into the distance as if Walter were not present. His whole attitude affected Walter more deeply than if he had given way to a violent passion.

"It's an outrage! There ought to be some way to get the money. You could have him arrested when he———"

"Arrest my father? On the charge of being a thief? Would you do that to your ———"

Walter choked. "Arrest my father? I should think not. But———"

"He may be all you think, but I will never lift a finger against him.
Let God punish him, as he has already."

"And meanwhile, if Halstead & Co. are informed how matters are, they might ———"

"It isn't likely. They have paid the money once. Certainly they won't do it again. I never heard of any such philanthropists doing business in Washington."

"But how will you be able to go out to Arizona?" Walter blurted before he thought, and then wanted to bite his tongue off as Bauer turned his face towards him, a faint smile lighting it.

"I won't go. 'Wir mussen alie einmal sterben?'"

"But you'll have to go. We'll have to find a way."

"Where there's a will there's a way? Also even more necessary, the money. Now I've will enough. But it won't pay for a ticket nor buy the necessary canned goods to go with the sand of the desert when I get there. I'll set up my incubators here at Burrton and raise chickens enough to bury me decently. 'Wir mussen alie einmal sterben.'"

"Yes, but we don't have to die before our time. There must be some way out."

"I don't know of any." said Bauer gravely but not with any bitterness.
"But don't let it worry you. I don't want to have you worried with it."

Nevertheless Walter did worry over it tremendously. He had never known anything in all his experience that affected him so profoundly. And in his next letter home, without hinting to Bauer of his intention, he sounded his father as to ways and means for helping Bauer at this crisis in his life.

"Isn't there some one in Milton who would be interested enough in Bauer to help send him out to Arizona? The doctor says it's his only chance. And he's pretty hard hit. Think of losing $4,500 at one fell swoop, and by his own father too. And I advised the business relation between them. Of course we had no idea that the matter would turn out as it has but that doesn't change the fact. As near as I can figure, it will cost at least three hundred dollars to get Bauer out to Arizona, pay for his board and room and keep him there a year. He isn't a member of any church and Dr. Howard of the Congregational Church here in Burrton said a few Sundays ago that his people must make a special effort to raise the money to care for several needed cases of their own, so I don't feel like going to him with Bauer's story right now. And besides, I don't believe Bauer would take church help. He's awfully proud and while he doesn't say much about his trouble and pretends to take it easy, I can see he is pretty hard hit. And who wouldn't be, to

lose $4,500 at one clip and at the same time realise that he's got consumption. I tell you it strikes me as pretty hard lines for poor Bauer. The worst of it is this mess about his father. That seems awful. And there isn't anyone more affectionate and dependent than Bauer. That's the reason he took up with me, because he had to have someone. He doesn't know I'm writing this sort of a letter about him, if he did he'd object, but I feel as if something ought to be done. Perhaps you and mother can think out some plan to help him. If I could see some way to cut down my expenses here I would do it and put in my little to help. But I'm living as close to the line as I can. The school is expensive and I don't know what I can do until I get out and begin to make instead of mar dollars."

Paul took this letter to Esther. And it happened that while he was reading it to her, Helen came in. Paul stopped reading and looked at Esther.

"It's all right. Let Helen hear it. I'm sure Walter meant it for a family letter."

They were all shocked at the news. And Helen seemed even more moved by the letter than her father and mother, though she made no remark of any kind until Esther began to look at her with some concern. Paul said, after a moment of sober thought:

"I believe Masters can do something for him out there at Tolchaco. There is the old Council Hogan out there in the cottonwoods past the 'dobe flats. Bauer could sleep there. It's about the same as outdoors. And he could do something perhaps at the trading post to help pay for his board. I'll write to Masters at once and see what he says. And—I have another idea that I think will do something. We can't let a fellow like Bauer go down without doing something and if he objects to being helped, why, we'll just box him up and ship him out there f. o. b."

After Paul had gone down to the office Mrs. Douglas and Helen continued the discussion over Walter's letter.

"What other idea does father have to help Mr. Bauer?" asked Helen.

"I don't know unless he is thinking of that precious book of his!" Mrs. Douglas laughed and Helen joined her.

It had come to be a good natured joke in the Douglas household that Paul's book was such a great failure that publishers had it listed among the "six worst sellers" if anyone ever had the courage to print it. He had put in a tremendous amount of

hard work on the volume which was a bold treatment in original form of the Race Question in America. The manuscript had been sent to eight different publishers and had been returned, in three instances with scathing comments.

Paul doggedly clung to his first estimate of the book. Each rejection by the last publisher only served to increase his faith in what he had written.

"I tell you, Esther, the publishers don't know a thing. Half the time their office readers can't spell. They don't know gold from mica schist. Half the books the publishers put out are dead failures. They don't know anything more about it than a native of Ponape knows about making an igloo."

Esther smiled.

"You are naturally a little prejudiced, don't you think? But I don't blame you. It's lucky for us though, that we don't depend on book sales for a living. Let's see, how much has the book cost you so far?"

"Well, in typewriting, and postage on returned manuscript it has cost me about one hundred and fifty dollars," said Paul good naturedly. "But I'll send it to every publisher in America before I'll give up. I've written a good book and I know it. And I've made up my mind to one thing, Esther. When it comes to making terms I'll sell the manuscript outright for cash and give the money away to the most needy cause I can find."

"Better have the stipulation with the publishers stereotyped, father," said Helen, who was present when this conversation was held. "It will save you time and money."

"Very well, Miss," replied her father. "But don't you dare ask for any of this extra when my ship does come in. Not a cent of it does this ungrateful, unappreciative family get. It is my book and the 'child of my heart' and if it brings me anything I will spend it in riotous living on the other fellow."

Esther and Helen laughed and Paul went down to the office and courageously expressed the manuscript to one of the eastern publishers who had not yet seen it.

All this had occurred several months before Walter's letter about Bauer and when Paul went down to the office after getting the news his heart and mind were

burdened with plans for Bauer's relief. He began to open his mail and a letter from the eastern publisher specially interested him. After reading it, he looked at the check accompanying the letter and chuckled in anticipation of meeting Esther and Helen at lunch when he came home.

The mother and daughter were continuing their talk about Walter's letter.

"Can Mr. Bauer get well out there? Walter did not say very clearly?"
Helen asked.

"Many cases like this do recover," said Esther. "But he ought to go at once. If he is having severe hemorrhages that will be his only hope."

Helen was silent for some moments.

"How much did Walter say it would cost to keep him out there a year?"

"He said three hundred dollars."

"It seems like a very small sum, doesn't it?"

"It certainly does. But you remember in some of Mr. Masters's letters to your father about the mission expenses at Tolchaco how ridiculous the amounts seemed to us? You remember one year the entire mission force including seven persons lived on less than fifteen dollars a month for each? I suppose Walter had something like that in mind. And you remember how often in his letters Walter has spoken of Bauer's horror of the luxurious habits of one of the students at Burrton as if it were a great wrong?"

"It was Van Shaw," said Helen with a short laugh. "Walter spoke last Christmas about the solid silver dog collars Mr. Van Shaw purchased for his kennel. Fancy Mr. Bauer buying solid silver dog collars! Fancy him even buying a dog!"

"Unless it was to prevent someone from abusing it. I never met a young man with such a kind heart as Bauer."

Helen did not answer. She sat with her hands clasped over her knees, looking off through the window. At last she rose and went into her room, and returned almost immediately.

"Mother," she said, with a note of hesitation that was new to her, "would it be all right for me to help Mr. Bauer out of my allowance? If the rest of the family is going to help I'd like to give twenty-five dollars."

She put the money into her mother's lap and sat down in front of her.

Mrs. Douglas was startled at the girl's perfectly transparent act. She thought she knew Helen, but for a moment she questioned her own insight. Then she did what she had always done in the intimacy she had encouraged between herself and her children.

"Why do you want to do this, Helen?"

"Because—because I can't help feeling———"

"Well?"

"I don't love him, mother,—no,—I am sure of myself. But it seems dreadful to think of him dying, just because of the need of a little money. I have never been sick. I wonder how I should feel to face such a fate. I believe it would drive me crazy."

"But how do you think Mr. Bauer will understand your gift? If he is so sensitive as Walter says———"

Over Helen's face the warm colour swept.

"Why does he need to know? We are all going to help, aren't we? But we don't need to tell him. I would not have him know for the world."

"Wait till father comes home. We will talk it over with him," said Esther after a pause. "I don't question your sincerity. It is a terrible loss to lose the physical strength and face death at a sure distance. Poor Bauer! And all that family trouble, too. He never hinted at that when he was here."

Helen recalled her innocent questioning of Bauer about his people and the silence he had maintained at the time. In the light of what she knew now, the figure of the German student assumed a tragic character, invested with deep pathos, and she had to confess that it was treading on dangerous ground to dwell too long on the picture. Still she asserted stoutly that her feeling was one of

simple friendship, and even went so far as to anticipate a possible question again on her mother's part.

"You must not think, Mommy, that I have any other feeling for him. That is not possible. The man I marry must have money. And poor Mr. Bauer has lost all of his. That is the reason I am willing to help him. Money seems so absolutely necessary in this world, mother, isn't it?"

"Not so necessary as a good many other things."

"But in this case, mother, what else can do any good? It is money that Mr. Bauer needs. Not sympathy nor—nor—even friendship, just money. Is there anything else that can save his life?"

"It seems not."

"Then money is the great thing," said Helen with a show of getting the better of her mother in an argument. "I don't pretend to hide my admiration for money. You know, mother, it is the most powerful thing in the world."

"There are other things," said Esther quietly. She did not try to argue with Helen over the subject. They had several times gone over the same ground and each time Esther had realised more deeply and with a growing feeling of pain that Helen had almost a morbid passion for money and the things that money could buy. She was not avaricious. On the contrary, she was remarkably generous and unselfish in the use of her allowance. But there was a deep and far reaching prejudice in the girl's mind for all the brilliant, soft, luxurious, elegant side of wealth and its allurements that made Esther tremble more and more for the girl's future, especially when her marriage was thought of.

All this had its bearing on Esther's thought of Bauer. He had never been to her a possible thought as Helen's lover. All his own and his people's history were against him. But no one had ever come into the Douglas family circle who had won such a feeling of esteem, and Esther had felt drawn towards the truly homeless lad with a compassion that might in time have yielded to him a place as a possible member of the family. Now anything like that relation seemed remote, and Helen's own frank declaration put the matter out of the question. Over all these things Esther Douglas pondered and in her simple straightforward fashion laid them at the feet of her God for the help she could not give herself.

When Paul came home to luncheon both Esther and Helen could see at once that something had happened greatly to please him. Paul was transparent and never made any pretence at any sort of concealment of his feelings.

"Yes, now you people laugh at that," he said as he handed the eastern publisher's letter over to Esther.

Esther read the letter out loud. It was an extended business statement acknowledging the receipt of the book manuscript and Paul's blunt announcement of the terms he was willing to make for it publication; cash down, waiving all royalty rights, the book to be published entirely at the publisher's risk and the plates to be the property of the publishing house, no rights reserved for the author.

The eastern publisher acknowledged the frankness of the author's note, which he said was unusual. Also the terms, which were not generally considered, few manuscripts being purchased outright by the firm. However, the book was more than favourably reported by two of the three principal readers and by the senior member of the house, and they were prepared to make an offer in the shape of the enclosed check which it was hoped would be satisfactory to Mr. Douglas.

"Five hundred," said Esther, reading the amount as she held up the check for Helen to see. "Why, isn't it worth more than that?"

"The way you people have been talking lately," said Paul, pretending great indignation, "it wasn't worth five cents. I'm satisfied. At ten per cent royalty they would have to sell five thousand copies and it would be two or three years before I got the money. No, I prefer the cash, and let them take the risk. Now we can help Bauer. That is, I can. This is all my philanthropy. I'll send one hundred dollars to Masters for the mission work and the balance for Bauer. Walter's estimate of three hundred dollars a year is too small. It won't give the fellow the things he needs. My! But won't it be fine to help him! There's nothing like money, is there, Esther?"

"Just what I keep telling her," said Helen, her eyes sparkling and her lips smiling at the sight of her mother's somewhat grave acceptance of Paul's statement.

"I'm glad he is going to get the benefit of it," said Esther heartily. "And I think we owe you an apology for the way we have treated your little book. I feel proud to think my husband can write a five hundred dollar book. I hope it will be one of the six best sellers."

"If it is, the publishers will make a lot," said Paul. "But I hardly think it. Trashy fiction makes best sellers. My book is written to make people think, not to lose their thoughts. So I've no false ambitions for it."

As a matter of fact, in course of time Paul's volume sold between seven and eight thousand copies and then the sale ceased. But the book had good notices from several thoughtful reviewers and gave him considerable advertising, encouraging him to go on with another volume on popular government.

"Now the problem will be to get Bauer to take the money," said Esther.
"It's going to be a delicate matter."

"Do you think so? I hadn't thought of that. Surely Walter can manage it.
He will have to take it."

"I think you will find it is not so easy. It seemed to me last winter that Mr. Bauer was about the most stubborn and independent young man I ever saw."

"But what can he do? He can't help himself. He will have to take it."

"Leave it to Walter to manage," said Esther. "He is better acquainted with him than we are."

So Paul wrote Walter, enclosing a check for $400, and asking him to manage the matter with Bauer the best he could, and at the same time he wrote to Masters telling him of Bauer and making inquiry about the climate and especially concerning the possibility of Bauer fitting into any work about the mission.

After Paul had gone away from the table to his office to attend to this matter, Esther took out Helen's money and quietly handed it to her.

"You won't need to offer this now."

"No, not now," said Helen, blushing.

"Nor any time, I hope. If Mr. Bauer gets well there at Tolchaco he will probably be able to secure permanent work and take care of himself."

"Yes," Helen said, after a pause in which she seemed to her mother about to make a confidence. But she did not seem quite certain of herself and finally without any more words went up to her room.

Two days later Walter received his father's letter which he read with a sense of great rejoicing.

"Why, it's just like a story book! Dear old pater! He's the best ever!"

Then he took up the check and began to consider how he would present the matter to Bauer. No one knew better than himself how sensitive Bauer could be on occasion. But he was helpless, and under the circumstances, what else could he do but let his friends come to his assistance? If there was no other way he could probably be prevailed on to take the money as a loan and pay back when his royalties came due on the incubator sales.

He was going over the matter when Bauer came in from his room across the hall.

"How goes it?" asked Walter cheerfully.

"All right," said Bauer gravely. "I don't believe anything ails me.
Haven't had another since the last one."

"No? Well, what you want to do is to get right out to the painted desert. Why don't you start?"

"The walking is poor, and I never did enjoy the hot, dusty cars."

"Letters!" said one of the boys who roomed on the next floor. He opened the door as he spoke and threw Walter two letters and seeing Bauer, he said, "One for you!" threw it at him and went on.

Walter opened his letters, which were from his mother and Louis. When he

looked up from his reading and glanced at Bauer he saw that something had happened.

"From him," said Bauer briefly.

He handed his letter over to Walter. It was dated and postmarked at Monte Carlo and contained a draft on New York for four hundred dollars.

"I don't ask you to do anything or forgive or anything like that. But as proof that hell is better than this place, I am sending you the last dollar I have after losing the rest of it at the table. Perhaps, even in hell where I am going, there will be some respite granted me for not being totally depraved."

That was all, not even an initial signed.

"It means———" Walter stammered.

"That he has committed suicide—yes—I suppose—"

"But there's been no newspaper account item in the New York journals."

Bauer shook his head. "The cases at Monte Carlo don't get into the newspapers." And then to Walter's embarrassment, Bauer broke down and sobbed as if he would never stop. But after all, his father, in spite of his sins, had really loved the boy, and Bauer was of a very affectionate nature which had never in all his lifetime been satisfied.

Before Walter could offer a word of sympathy Bauer got up and bolted for his room. Walter suspected what was coming and before Bauer could lock his door he had gone in after him. The hemorrhage was severe. When Bauer was through with it and on his couch, Walter rapidly outlined a plan for Bauer. He must get out to the painted desert at once.

"I wanted to wait until you could go, but it isn't fair to ask you before term closes and that won't be for six weeks. Oh, yes, I can make it alone all right. Don't worry over that. And now I've got this money, that settles it."

Walter wondered if he ought to tell him about the money from home. Finally he did tell him frankly and was pleased at the way Bauer took it. When Walter suggested that in case he had to stay out there any length of time, the money

would be held in trust for him, Bauer did not object, simply saying that by that time he would either be well or dead.

Two days after this, Paul wrote that Mr. Masters at Tolchaco had written cordially, saying Bauer would be welcome at the mission and could have the old Council Hogan. He thought if his case was like a number of others he had known, that it would be perfectly possible for him in a year or two to be of real service about the mission.

Walter gave out all this information as he helped Bauer pack up. He had misgivings about letting him start alone, but after consulting the doctor, concluded there was no special risk for Bauer and when the day came for him to leave, he was much pleased to note Bauer's good spirits in spite of the shock of his father's act and his own dubious future.

Masters had sent word that Bauer was to go to Canyon Diablo where a wagon would be waiting to drive him the twenty-four miles to Tolchaco. Walter went down and saw him comfortably started and then went back to his room, feeling relieved to know that matters were going so well, after promising Bauer that if possible he would come and see him during the summer. It would depend on the financial outlook.

At Chicago, Bauer changed to a tourist car and found as companions, two other young men, both going to Flagstaff to live in tents at the base of the San Francisco Mountains. Before reaching Albuquerque the three young men had become well acquainted and had good naturedly exchanged joking statements about their "cases," and Bauer, who had suffered from a slight flow just after leaving Kansas city, boasted that he was able to control his lungs by pressing his tongue hard against the roof of his mouth and resting his chest on the back of the car seat in front.

When the train reached Hardy, a few miles north of the Little Colorado, there was a long stop, explained by the conductor as caused by a cloudburst at Winslow. The train made several attempts to start on to Colfax, but finally backed slowly down into Hardy, where it was stalled for the night. In the morning the information slowly reached the passengers that there were fifteen miles of washouts east of Winslow and it would be an indefinite time before repairs could be made.

A few cowboys, Mexicans and Indians were evidently chronic and constant loafers about the little station. Among them was a teamster loading stuff on a wagon. Bauer noticed two boxes marked Tolchaco and asked the man about them.

"I'm taking them over by Mr. Masters's orders. Usually go to Canyon Diablo, but no telling how long it'll be to get there with number two. Mr. Masters wants the stuff bad. Truck for them Injuns at the mission."

"But aren't we on the north side of the river here? How will you get over to the mission? Isn't that on the other side?" asked Bauer.

"Sure. We can ford it there, if the water ain't too fierce."

Bauer thought awhile and then asked if he might go with the teamster. There was room in the wagon for his trunk and bag, and after securing his effects from the train he transferred to the wagon, and bidding a cheery farewell to his travelling companions, who he said might have to stay on the train two or three days, the teamster drove off with Bauer across the shimmering desert.

They reached the river the next day about noon, after a glorious night which Bauer will never forget, as he slept with his face upturned to the diamond stars of that desert expanse, breathing that pure air of God's all out of doors.

The river was high from the recent heavy rains in the mountains but the teamster said he could make the ford all right. This was at a point nearly a mile above the mission which was not visible owing to a bend in the stream.

Bauer, who was totally unfamiliar with the country, the river, the customs, the entire situation, calmly sat in his place as the driver started his team down the shelving bank into the chocolate coloured stream.

The water was a little over the hubs of the wheels at first and it seemed to be of that uniform depth as the horses slowly walked along. But suddenly without warning the off horse sank down clear over his back. The next minute the wagon wheels tipped down as if they had run over the edge of a precipice a mile high.

The driver yelled and swore in several languages, but the nigh horse plunged and then sank over his back. The current caught the entire outfit and turned it completely over, tumbling horses, wagon and stuff over and over like a roller. As

Bauer felt the water closing over him he had a momentary glimpse of two figures on the south bank of the river running and gesticulating, one a man, the other a woman. He felt himself struggling in a confused tangle of wagon wheels, floundering horses, yelling driver, boxes and muddy water. Then something struck him on the head. He struggled to help himself, throwing his arms out blindly, was aware that someone had hold of his hair and was striking him in the face, of a great roaring and rushing sound, and then he lost all consciousness as the river bore him and his would-be rescuers down the stream together.

CHAPTER XII

THE penetrating light of the desert came into the east opening of the Council Hogan at Tolchaco, and bathed in its enveloping flood the strip of sand that lay in the opening, up to a white and black Navajo rug on which was lying a quiet figure over which had been thrown a bright coloured Mexican serape.

An old Indian was sitting outside the hogan close by the entrance, and within an arm's length just inside sat a white man gravely watching the recumbent figure on the rug.

Across the figure on the rug, opposite the white man, sat a young woman, also quietly and gravely watching.

Outside, the 'dobe flats stretched brown and bare until they melted into the confused and fantastic rock piles of twisted and pictured desert stone. In the other direction an irregular streak of light green trailed along, marking the winding of the river bound by twisted cottonwoods and vivid patches of corn fields. Through the shimmer of the heat far off, fifty miles distant, were flung up against a turquoise sky the peaks of the San Francisco mountains, across the front of which a trailing cloud had begun to form. On a slightly rising ledge of rock stood the mission buildings, and through the clear still air, children's voices came floating down to the hogan, where the white man and the young woman were silently watching. A group of Navajos was gathered at the trader's store, some little distance away, their faces turned in the direction of the hogan, their ponies standing near by or tethered to the cottonwood, by the river.

Suddenly the figure on the rug stirred, its right arm rose slowly and the hand

made an effort to touch the fringe of the serape.

The white man stooped forward, gently took the hand and held it a moment in his own. As he laid it down, he smiled at the other watcher and said:

"I believe he's coming on all right. The Father is good to him."

The young woman put her hands over her face and her fingers were trembling. A tear was on her cheek when she took her hands away and clasped them over her knees. Then she rose and went out of the eastern doorway, when she stood a moment, her clear gaze resting on the old Indian sitting there with his back against the hogan. He raised his head and asked her a question.

"Yes, the Father is good. He will live, Mr. Clifford says."

She went back into the hogan and to her surprise the figure on the rug was sitting up. It was Bauer, and he was saying in his slow, deliberate fashion:

"I'm not certain, I seem to be confused, but this is Tolchaco, isn't it?
When did I arrive? I don't seem to remember well."

"You arrived rather unexpectedly yesterday," said Clifford, with a smile that had a good day's nursing in it. "In fact, you arrived in a hurry. Don't talk. You don't have to."

"My head," said Bauer, and he laid down again.

"That's right, son. We prescribe perfect quiet for you. You don't need even to ask a question. There will be time enough."

And so Bauer found out as the desert days slipped by and he slowly and surely drank in health and strength. He would lie there in perfect contentment, each day noting a little more of life. The nights were splendid with God's own peace. The friends would place his cot near the opening of the hogan and from where he lay he could see the stars come out and blaze all up the half dome of the visible sky, Peshlekietsetti, the old silver smith, who had been near the door the first morning after the accident on the river, would come and sit down inside the hogan to relieve the other watchers. And even after there was no particular need of special nursing, the old man would come and gravely, without attempt to speak, sit there by him, occasionally working at some bit of silver ornament.

Groups of the children from the mission would come and stand at the hogan opening, and often come by twos or threes sent by Mr. Clifford with some token which they left on the sand and then shyly ran back to the mission. The doctor at Flagstaff had been over and he had pronounced Bauer's case to be entirely susceptible to climate, diet and time. And Bauer, who had heard him talking with Clifford, from that moment made wonderful progress, and to Clifford's delight was soon able to walk about, and even go as far as the river, where he would sit down on the fallen trunk of an old cottonwood and watch the Navajos on the other side cultivate their corn and melon patches.

He was sitting there one afternoon watching the thick waters trickling by and wondering how such an insignificant and shallow stream could overturn a heavy wagon and two horses, when the man called Clifford, who had been mending a harness at a bench under a tree near by, came and sat down by him, bringing a part of his work from the bench.

"I have a lot of questions I want to ask," said Bauer, watching the Mission worker as he sewed on a buckle.

"All right. But before you begin might as well say to you I was born in Vermont."

"Born in Vermont?"

"Yes, ever hear of it?"

"Yes," said Bauer slowly. "But what has that to do with my asking questions?"

"You'll see when you begin."

Bauer smiled at the other's irresistible grin. He had already made up his mind to like Clifford tremendously.

"Well, then, I want to know, first, who saved my life when I was drowning?"

"Why don't you ask Miss Gray?"

"I will, if you can't tell me."

Clifford chuckled softly.

"I don't know why I shouldn't tell you. But do you feel strong enough to stand a good sized shock?"

"It takes a good deal to shock me," said Bauer gravely, his mind recurring to his father.

"Of course we haven't encouraged your talking much up to this time, and you don't strike me as a very rapid fire speaker, not exactly what is called garrulous, you know. We've been wondering whether you would care to hear about your little upset in there."

Bauer coloured a little. "I feel somewhat ashamed to think I haven't asked before —But———"

"Yes, we know. Perfectly. You don't need to say anything. But you feel pretty strong now, don't you?"

"Yes," said Bauer patiently. "I feel strong enough to know a good many things about this wonderful place."

'"Tis wonderful, isn't it?" said Clifford, laying his work down on the log and pointing at the river. "That old stream is one of the queerest productions God ever made. I'm not criticising it, or saying I could have done any better. But one day it rares up big enough to drown a pair of hippopotamuses and the next day a child can dam it up with a piece of mud, and the dust blows out of the channel so bad that it needs a sprinkler to settle it. That's the Little Colorado. It will bear watching."

Clifford picked up his work and seemed to be waiting for Bauer to repeat his question, but that was not Bauer's way, and Clifford, after glancing at him sharply, laughed and said:

"You can thank Miss Gray for pulling you out of the river."

"Miss Gray?"

"Yes. We sort of suspicioned that Tracker, that's the teamster you came up with from Hardy, would try the ford and we went up there that day to tell him not to go in because a part of the ford ledge had broken off and we feared he hadn't heard of it. Well, we were too late. You had driven down the bank and were half

way across before we sighted you. Miss Gray was in the water before you upset. She knew it was bound to come. I got tangled up with the horses and Tracker _____"

"Wait!" said Bauer with more emotion than he could control, "do you mean to say that Miss Gray and you swam out to us while we were being rolled over _____"

"Well, what would you do? I was occupied, as I said, with Tracker and the horses, and half the time I couldn't tell 'em apart. But I saw Miss Gray grab you by the hair and then she—you'll forgive her for it, I hope—she struck you with her fist right in the face."

Bauer looked bewildered. "What did she do that for?"

"I thought maybe you would want to know. I would. Well, how could she save you when your arms were thrashing around like a windmill and you were liable to grab her arms and drown her and you, too. So she had to strike you. I know she is waiting till you get a little stronger so she can apologise."

"Apologise," murmured Bauer.

"Yes. It wasn't a ladylike thing to do in polite society. But there wasn't time to ask your permission or tell you why it was necessary. Well, after that little incident, Tracker and the horses and I got so mixed up with each other that we haven't hardly got untangled since. There was one time there when I wasn't quite certain whether I was a horse or a wagon wheel. We drifted down here and it just seemed providential and saved a lot of carrying when we finally got out right here."

Clifford pointed to a spot down the stream a short ways from where they were sitting.

"We saved the horses, cut the harness to bits off of 'em, but the wagon went down and got sucked into the Black Bear quicksands and you can see one of the wheels. See! over there."

Clifford stood up and Bauer in his excitement got up on the log to see better. Far down the channel near the opposite bank, one wheel of the teamster's wagon showed a little, the rest of the vehicle buried in the treacherous sands.

"You and Miss Gray came ashore up above. Right there." Clifford pointed to a great root of a tree that swayed out from an old stump six feet above the channel. It protruded from the bank like some fantastic sprawling arm.

"She grabbed that old root as you went whirling down and I guess it was about time. We had quite a time pumping the water out of her and for one while,—but it's lucky you have a good head of hair and that you hadn't been to a barber lately. Miss Gray got a regular grip on it. We had quite a time separating her fingers from your locks. You see, I'm telling you because I thought maybe she might be a little timid about the details. If she has to apologise for hitting you in the face, it would be too bad to have to go on and ask to be excused for pulling your hair."

"Pulling my hair," murmured Bauer, in astonishment.

"Yes," said Clifford, winking one eye. "Pulling it as if she wanted a lock to remember you by. But that's nothing. You ought to see Miss Gray pull two Hopis out of the river one day last winter. That was just above the Black Falls. A Hopi can't swim any more than a sailor. But they never cut their hair, so it's just made for rescue work. You're the fifth person Miss Gray has pulled out of this so-called stream. She's entitled to that many Carnegie medals, but no one knows about it down east and our daily papers here at Tolchaco never mention such common events as rescue from drowning. That isn't news."

Bauer was silent for several minutes as Clifford resumed his work. He had been obliged to thread a needle and in the process had put the end of the thread in his mouth.

"You don't mind if I ask more questions? It's all so remarkable here and all that's happened. I would like———"

"Don't hesitate. It is one of the rules of the Mission here never to get offended, no matter what anyone says. You couldn't hurt our feelings if you tried."

"And I don't want to try. I don't know how I'm going to express my thanks for all you have done, and especially to Miss Gray."

"That is a kind of difficult place, isn't it? Now I was never rescued by anyone; and I don't know just what I would say. 'Thank you' sounds kind of tame. Perhaps you could throw it into German and make it sound better."

Bauer looked embarrassed and Clifford at once hastened to say.

"Don't worry over a little matter like that. You don't need to say anything about it. Miss Gray will say she was only too glad to do it, no trouble at all, don't think of such a thing, etc. You know how the ladies talk. If you go to say anything about it that's what she will say, ten to one. You needn't be afraid she'll ask you to marry her or anything like that."

Bauer blushed furiously and Clifford laughed so heartily that Bauer could not help joining him, although he had never met anyone like Clifford and did not exactly understand him.

"Tell me about yourself, Mr. Clifford. I'm not a native of Vermont but I am curious and I've been wondering as I lay in the hogan what your position here was, if you will pardon me?"

"Pardon you?" said Clifford cheerfully, as he proceeded to punch holes in a tug. "There's nothing I like to talk about so much as myself. You couldn't hit on a more interesting topic of conversation for me. Well, I'm a general all around missionary at large and handy man. One day I shoe the horses and next day I help Mr. Masters translate the Bible into Navajo. Next day I dig a well and day after that I help old Touchiniteel build a house. Then I send word to the President of the U. S. to let him know that the cattle men at Flagstaff are trespassing on our rights at Canyon Diablo and next day I'm medicine man for some poor devil that has tumbled over the twisted falls at Neota. I teach school while Mr. and Mrs. Masters are gone right now over to Tuba at the convention. And when there isn't anything else to do, I help Miss Gray rescue people from that old mud hole. Being a missionary is no end of fun. It's a wonder to me how most people get any fun out of life unless they are missionaries."

"And the elderly woman who wears glasses is your sister. She has been so kind to me. I can never repay her."

"Don't try. Yes, Hannah and I have been here at Tolchaco a long time. We have had the fun of our lives here. She does about everything in the house from washing the dishes to converting the heathen. She works for nothing and throws in her time."

"And—and Miss Gray?"

"I thought maybe you might enquire about her, after awhile. Well, Miss Gray is one of the salt of the earth. She's a whole salt mine. She's not been here long, but she's got 'em all going,—Indians, cowboys, traders, gamblers, missionaries, teamsters, everybody. Everybody is in love with her. I've asked her to marry me several times, that is, I've only asked her to marry me once, several times, and I get the same answer every time. She's a graduate of Mt. Holyoke and used to be physical director of the girl's school at Peekskill. That's where she learned to swim and rescue people. She knows several languages and can talk Navajo better than Peshlekietsetti. And she is the friend of every Indian, Navajo or Hopi, between Sunshine and Castle Butte. And she is not proud a little bit. And cheerful? Well, she is just as cheerful every time she says no to me as if it was the first time. And she can sing—you've heard her Sunday nights. She can sing a rattlesnake out of its skin. Well, there is a lot more, but I consider that much a pretty good introduction. If I had one like it, I'd feel as if the press notices had the performance distanced a mile."

Bauer stared at Clifford, hardly knowing how to take all he said. The German mind was not acclimated to this special kind of humour. But Clifford was so absolutely frank, and happy, so free from any hint of heartbreak or trouble, that the more Bauer listened to him the more he liked him and the more fascinated he became with his peculiar surroundings. He had never known any real Christian people except the Douglas family, and the spectacle of the genuine self sacrifice, the bearing of daily discomfort and pain and wrong, with such cheerfulness and even hilarity, moved him with a feeling of astonishment.

Clifford's description of Miss Gray filled Bauer with wonder that a young woman of such character and attainments was willing to go to such a place and give her life to the seemingly impossible task of Christianising a lot of dirty, superstitious, lazy Indians. That was his definition of her task and of the people whom she had come to serve. But he had not yet learned even the first short lesson of the attractiveness of the missionary call. And he had not even a glimmer of the great fact that the history of missions in every age reveals the beautiful fact that some of earth's choicest spirits have considered missionary work as the most honourable and honouring work in the world, and that no grace or strength of mind or body is too great to pour it all out unstintedly on just such dirty, unattractive beings as Indians. Bauer was destined to begin by pitying a mistake which such a young woman as Miss Gray was making, and end by envying her the place which she had made for herself in the hearts of these neglected people.

He was silent during a period while Clifford was busy with some part of his harness demanding his attention, then Clifford said, after whistling a bar of "Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go":

"Any more of our folks you want ante mortem epitaphs of?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Masters. Of course I've not seen them. I've heard Mr. and Mrs. Douglas speak of them. It was through Mr. Douglas, you know, that I came out here."

"Yes, the Douglases are good friends of the mission. Mr. Douglas sends us two hundred dollars a year and sometimes as high as four hundred and twenty. Wish he'd come out here and bring his family. Hasn't he got a daughter by the name of Helen?"

"Yes," said Bauer. And try as hard as he would he could not conceal his embarrassment.

"Do you know her? Is she a nice girl?"

"Yes," said Bauer, again blushing deeply. And then he hastened to say, quickly for him:

"You were going to tell me about Mr. and Mrs. Masters?"

"Oh, was I? Well, they're the salt of the earth, too. They don't count any cost and the harder the work, the better it seems to suit. Mr. Masters can live on eighteen dollars a month and board himself. There isn't anything he can't do, from making a windmill out of a bushel of old tin cans to preaching seven times on Sunday. And Mrs. Masters is a prize winner for making trouble feel ashamed of itself. She never complains about anything. One week last summer we had eight days of continuous wind. You never saw a desert wind, did you? Or taste one? Well, you have one of the times of your life coming to you. The sand cavorts around like spring lamb and peas. You can't shut it out of a hardboiled egg. It drifts into the house and covers the dishes and the beds and the books and the chairs and the floors and does the work of blotting paper while you're writing letters to the Agricultural Department in Washington asking them to irrigate the Little Colorado so we can raise garden truck in the channel between the rainy seasons. At the dinner table the custard pie looks as if it was dusted with pulverised sugar and you eat so much sand that you begin to feel the need of a gizzard like a hen.

It fills your pockets, and at night you can shake a pint out of each ear, if your ears are big enough. It drifts up on the porch like snow and sifts through a pane of glass like a sieve.

"Well, all through that eight-day week, Mrs. Masters was so cheerful it was actually depressing. She couldn't have looked more cheerful if she had been going over to Flagstaff to sit for her photograph on her birthday. The rest of us just groaned and bore it. We lost our temper with one another and never found it again till the wind quit. We were ornery and fractious. We just couldn't help it. But Mrs. Masters went around the house nursing the baby and a toothache and singing so loud you could hear her way out to the graveyard:

> "'The sands of Time are sinking,
> The dawn of heaven breaks,
> The summer morn I've sighed for,
> The fair sweet morn awakes.'

"My! I used to think to myself if the man that wrote that hymn knew how the sands of Tolchaco were sinking into our hair and spirits, he'd a written another verse, to cheer us on our sandy way. But any woman that can keep up her spirits during a desert sand storm is more than a half sister to a cherubim. I don't want to know anyone better than that. It would scare me to be in the same room alone with him."

"I'm sure I shall like them both," said Bauer. "It seems to me that all the people here at this mission are pretty near the angels."

"Well, some of us are a little lower, I guess. But we do have some jolly times and no mistake. Barring the heat and the sand and the floods and the drinking water and the wind and the canned goods and the absence of pasture and the high price of hay and the lack of shade and a few other little things, Tolchaco is a great resort all the year around for people that aren't too particular about trifles.

"But you've pumped me dry about us; mind if I ask a few questions about you?"

"No," said Bauer with a smile. "There isn't much for me to tell."

"I take it you're a German to start with?" said Clifford gravely, but he managed in some remarkable manner to work and whistle at the same time he spoke.

"Yes."

"You won't have much use for the language out here, except Miss Gray uses it if she wants to. She's reading a book right now in German, written by a Mr. Goethe. If I had a name like that, I'd have it broken up and set again in a new frame. Mr. Douglas in his letter about you said you were an inventor by trade. But he didn't go into particulars. What can you invent?"

Bauer started to tell Clifford about his incubator. Clifford grew so interested that he dropped his work and came over on the log by Bauer to listen. He was just eagerly beginning to ask a number of questions when he looked up and exclaimed,

"There's that old white face broke his hobbles again and he's heading for the corn patch. I'll have to head him off."

He started towards the unshackled offender, and Bauer was amused to see the animal, the moment it caught sight of its keeper kick up its heels and make a dash for the 'dobe flats into which it madly galloped, Clifford disappearing in its wake, enveloped in a cloud of dust.

The afternoon sun was pleasantly flecked as it sifted down through the cottonwoods on Bauer, and he sat there going over his talk with Clifford and smiling once in awhile in his own fashion as he recalled a sentence here and there. It was pleasant to be with friends, to feel the strength coming back, to note the response of his lungs to the full drawn breath. He had not had a hemorrhage since reaching Tolchaco. And in spite of his submersion in the river he had suffered almost no pain. He began to construct some kind of a future, and wonder what he could do while at the mission to help in any way. He was paying for his board, and by the plan arranged between Douglas and Masters they were to provide medical help or nursing if necessary. But Bauer had surprised everyone by his wonderful response to nature's help and it looked now very much as if in less than six months he would be on the road to full recovery. It was now the last of June and the desert heat was pulsing over all the strange land, but Bauer was drinking in health and beginning to yield to the glamour of the place.

"Guide me, Oh, Thou Great Jehovah, Pilgrim through this desert land"—a voice soared up close by, ringing down past Bauer, and he looked up towards the

Mission.

Down the slight elevation came a young woman with a group of children following. As they came down near where he sat, Bauer saw it was Miss Gray and half a dozen of her charges who had been left in her care while Miss Clifford and one of the housemaids had driven over to the Canyon to see a sick woman.

She came and sat down on the sand at the side of the old log and said in a perfectly simple and friendly manner, free from all hint of embarrassment:

"I saw you were all alone here, Mr. Bauer, and came down to see if there was anything you needed. If you want to be alone, I'll go away."

"Why, no, I don't need anything, and I don't want you to go away, at least not until I have tried to tell you what is not easy to say, what a wonderful thing that you—that you actually saved my life from that treacherous stream!"

"Oh, I was only too glad to do it, it wasn't any trouble at all, don't think of such a thing," the young woman tried to speak lightly, thinking she detected a note of unnecessary shyness in the German youth.

To her surprise Bauer burst out laughing.

"I beg pardon, Miss Gray, but that is just what Mr. Clifford said you would say if I tried to thank you, and I couldn't help laughing, it sounded so strange."

"What else did Mr. Clifford say?" asked the lifesaver, looking up quickly at Bauer.

Bauer was so taken back he couldn't reply. Miss Gray laughed, the most jolly, contagious laugh Bauer had ever heard.

"Never mind. But isn't Mr. Clifford a character? He's one of the rarest fellows you ever saw. The most self sacrificing and self forgetful man I ever knew. And the bravest. I wish you could have seen him in that tangle with Tracker and the horses. I never expected he would get out alive. Did he tell you about it?"

"He told me about you. How you———"

"Had to strike you in the face? It seems dreadful, doesn't it? But I had to or you

would have drowned both of us. You'll forgive that, won't you?"

"Forgive?" murmured Bauer.

"Because you see the Little Colorado is one of the most treacherous streams in the world. It's full of sink holes and they make eddies and whirlpools and when it's in flood as that day, it's carrying down all sorts of drift stuff and you are liable to get hit and pulled down. Well, Mr. Clifford went clear under twice, carried down by getting caught between the fork branch of an old water log. All the time he was pulling at Tracker and cutting away with his knife at the harness. If he hadn't cut the harness just in time, I couldn't have got you out, for you were caught around the feet with the lines. I suppose you got tangled in them when you fell over. We had a serious time getting Mr. Clifford back to consciousness. So if you are going to thank anyone it is Mr. Clifford who deserves most of it. I simply towed you to the bank after he had cut you loose."

"Then I owe my life to both of you. That makes you doubly my friends. You do not know how much it means to me."

"Consider everything said," interrupted Miss Gray with a cheery tone, "and of course you will excuse me for pulling your hair?"

"Pulling my hair," murmured Bauer.

"It couldn't be helped. Say no more. Oh, I want to tell you how lucky you are a German. I run across some hard places in Goethe's Hermann und Dorothea. Will you help me out with the translation?"

"Indeed I will, Miss Gray."

"You will have to do it in payment for saving you," she said lightly. And then with a change of manner—"How little we know the real value of life. Of any life. Now, that little girl Ansa. Come, Ansa, come here a minute."

Ansa, a six year old, came at once and stood by Miss Gray, looking up at her out of the blackest eyes. The American turned the little Indian face towards Bauer. "Look!" she said passionately. "Look at one of my beloved ones! Is she not entitled to a full womanhood redeemed and developed by Christ? Has any living being a right to deny her that boon? Can America call itself Christian and go on refusing the water of life to these lost lambs of the desert?"

She seemed to forget Bauer's presence as she swept her arms about the child and enveloped it in a comprehensive enfolding of salvation as if by that act she would compel life abundantly for a soul that otherwise would never know it. Bauer had never seen anything like it and he was almost bewildered by it. He could not accustom himself to the sight of this talented, educated, cultured young woman giving her life to the hard, uncouth, repulsive surroundings. There were whole volumes of life that Felix Bauer had never opened, to say nothing of whole volumes he had never known to be in existence.

After a short silence, Miss Gray said softly, "You know the Douglas family? They are great friends of us here at the mission. We want them to come out here some time. Do you know Helen Douglas? She and I were together one year at Manitou. She is a lovely girl."

"Yes," said Bauer. At that moment a call came from the mission house for Miss Gray and she rose to go.

"Don't forget the Goethe when you're strong enough. Isn't it fine you're getting well so fast?"

She nodded a good-bye to him and left him to dwell over their little talk, but most of all he recurred again and again to the sight of her with her arms about the child, kneeling on the sand and looking off to the east, to that far east that might, if it would, with its opulence, save life, instead of waste it.

Mr. and Mrs. Masters came back from Tuba two days after and Bauer found them all that Clifford had said. Never in all his life had the lonely student been so petted and surrounded by friendship. He grew strong with amazing rapidity. Clifford joked him about his appetite and Masters threatened to raise his board bill.

One evening as Clifford and Peshlekietsetti were sitting by the hogan and Bauer was between them, Masters came down from the Mission waving a letter.

"Listen to this! Douglas and his wife, daughter and oldest son are coming to pay us a visit first of August. Isn't that jolly! We'll plan a trip to Oraibi. It's their turn for the snake dance. I haven't seen Douglas since we graduated from Phillips Andover. It's fine!"

Bauer was excited over the prospect.

"When will they be here?"

"First of August. In about three weeks now. We'll all go together. You'll be strong enough by that time. Mrs. Masters needs a little vacation. We'll leave someone in charge here and go and play a little."

Masters was as pleased as a child. Later on, after the papers had come in from Flagstaff, he announced that there were two parties from New York and one from Pittsburgh, going to cross up to Oraibi to see the snake dance from Canyon Diablo. "The Van Shaws are listed. You remember, Miss Gray. Old friends of yours, aren't they?"

Miss Gray looked annoyed. The first time Bauer had ever seen such a look on her face. She answered, however, cheerfully enough, "The Van Shaws are relatives of mother's." Masters did not ask anything more and Bauer did not dwell on the incident. That night he lay watching the stars through the hogan door. Life was meaning so much to him now. But could he bear to see too much of Helen Douglas in this desert land? He was troubled over the question and its unsettled answer.

CHAPTER XIII

IT was an hour before sunrise at Tolchaco and Bauer had awakened from a restful sleep and from the place where he lay in the Council Hogan he noted with pure enjoyment the splendid colour of the sky framed in the opening, the exquisite blending from the pearly grey into the unpaintable, soft moving colours that he had looked at with growing awe during many wonderful mornings in July. He could not remove the impression that it was God's hand that moved over the sky, painting with an art that man's cheap imitation could never approach even in the faintest degree.

It was the morning of the day they were all to start for Oraibi to see the snake dance which was to be given in three or four days according to announcements sent out by the runners. The Douglases had come as they had planned and had been visiting at the mission now for two weeks. Mr. and Mrs. Douglas were delighted with what they saw and heard of the mission work. Walter had made a horseback trip to the Grand Canyon through the solemn dry pine forest from

Flagstaff and had returned to Tolchaco in time to join the party for Oraibi. Helen had been received at once as a favourite by all the mission people, had renewed her acquaintance with Miss Gray, and had shown herself friendly, yet not too friendly, with Bauer, who had steadily gained in strength and was looking forward with great anticipation, as they all were, to the Oraibi trip.

He lay there contentedly musing in his deliberate way, for he mused as slowly as he spoke, when he was roused by a voice that came with clear accents across the 'dobe flats. He had heard it often in the early morning, but the sound of it never ceased to create in him a wondering awe and more or less bewilderment to reconcile his first thought of Elijah Clifford with other impressions that came on later. For it was Clifford's voice quietly speaking, yet in such distinct fashion that, although he was kneeling out on the edge of the 'dobe flats, what he said was plainly heard by Bauer where he lay and unless he had covered his ears he could not avoid catching the words.

"O Thou Dayspring from on high, what a glorious world we live in! Forgive us that we shut our eyes to its beauty and close our ears to its music. I thank you, God, for a good night's sleep and a good morning's wakening. Help all of us to make it a good day for one another. We think so much of ourselves, of our body's comfort, and what we shall eat and drink and be clothed withal that sometimes a whole day has gone and we no nearer the Kingdom. We've lost our way in the desert and the water all gone. We are going to start out to-day to see these poor creatures of yours go through their ancient prayer for rain. Forgive them, good God. How should they know any better. No one ever told them of a better way. And there's old Touchiniteel, poor old savage. I would give anything, most anything, to see him brought into the fold. Is he too old to be saved, Lord Jesus? Can't you save him? It's not easy, I know, but we aren't asking you to do easy things out here. Most of them are hard, but don't you like to do hard things? Isn't that what being God means? And Peshlekietsetti—he's another, I want to see him saved. And old Begwoettin. You know how the old man never told a lie in his life. And he loves his grandchildren. Why, he would die in a minute for Ansa and Riba. He can't be so very bad. Somehow I can't think of his being lost. He isn't half so bad as Jake Rambeau, the trader. And Jake's had a high school education and calls himself civilised.

"We are all in need of the Spirit's presence to-day. I want more of the presence. My heart longs to walk with the Master to-day. If the Master will be gentle with me as he was with Peter two or three times when he didn't deserve it, I would be

glad. O Master, tell me your will. I need you so much, so much———"

And then the sound of the voice trailed off into a murmur indistinguishable to Bauer from where he lay. But he knew that Elijah Clifford had thrown himself full length on the ground and was pleading in his own way for the Divine presence, for victory over himself and triumph for the Kingdom in that desert, for once in the dawn when he had heard his voice, Bauer had poked a hole through the dirt over the wall of the hogan and for one moment, during which he felt almost ashamed for looking, he had seen Clifford prostrate himself thus and lie there outstretched for how long, he did not know. It did not seem right to him to look for more than a minute.

After a silence of about half an hour, during which Bauer had risen, Clifford appeared in the doorway of the hogan with his usual cheerful "Good-morning; Sehr gut?"

"Ja, sehr gut," replied Bauer. "When do we start?"

"Right after breakfast."

"How long will it take us to make the trip to Oraibi?"

"Oh, it depends on how often we lose the way. May take two days, may take three."

"Have you been there before?"

"Seen the snake dance five times."

"Is it as wonderful as they say?"

"Is it? I am just as much interested in it now as I was the first time. But the poor devils! Half of 'em don't know what their rigamarole means. And Mr. Masters thinks the government ought to put an end to it. Last time there were over a hundred tourists came up from all over the country and turned Oraibi into a sort of bargain day. The dance confirms 'em in their superstitions. But no mistake it's a wonderful sight to be going on in the U. S."

"Mr. Masters said several parties were going to come this year from Pittsburgh and New York."

"Yes. The Van Shaws are among them. I understood Miss Douglas to tell Miss Gray that one of these Van Shaws was in the same school with her brother and you. Do you know him?"

"Yes—I know who he is," said Bauer, slower than usual. He could not forget the incident that occurred in Walter's room when Van Shaw had started to relate an objectionable story and Walter had prevented him from telling it. Van Shaw's general reputation for fast and questionable habits corresponded with this incident and Bauer felt annoyed at the possibility of a chance meeting with his party.

But in the bustle of preparation for the journey, everything else was soon forgotten except the immediate interest. Bauer was not expected to do anything except get his own few travelling necessities together. But he quietly helped Mrs. Masters in a number of ways and she afterwards told Clifford that the laconic German student was the most remarkable young man she ever knew to anticipate a want and do a thing right the first time.

"Just the opposite of me," said Clifford. "I have to do a thing twice anyway to make sure, like the doctor in our old town in Vermont, who used to say that if he didn't kill with the first operation he was dead sure to cure with the next."

When the chuck wagons were all ready Bauer found to his pleasure that he was assigned to the light platform spring wagon in which Esther and Helen, together with Clifford and Mrs. Masters, were going. Mr. Masters, Miss Gray, Walter and Miss Clifford were assigned to one of the chuck wagons and Peshlekietsetti with two of the older pupils in the school and one of the younger Indians had charge of a third wagon containing the tents and the water.

The party was on the way shortly after sunrise and reached the place of the ford in about an hour. The river was very low and as the wagons went over on the rock ledge, only a few inches of water were trickling through the wheels.

"You wouldn't believe, would you, Miss Douglas, that Mr. Bauer and I had a good swim right about here a few weeks ago?"

"Oh, tell me about that," cried Helen, who with all the rest of the visitors had of course heard of Bauer's rescue, and in her heart was envious of Miss Gray for her physical prowess. But she had never been able to prevail on her to give any but the most unsatisfactory account of the rescue.

So Clifford launched into a glowing account of the affair, obliterating himself entirely and making it seem that Miss Gray was the only person present, so that Bauer had to give Helen the full account as near as he could of Clifford's part in the rescue.

"It's a wonderful land! I wish such things would happen in Milton! And, oh, look at those colours! Was anything ever like them!" Helen exclaimed as the wagons came up out of the river bed and in full view of the painted desert as it stretched out in its weird, fascinating beauty. "Oh, I just can't contain it all!"

"You remind me," said Clifford who was driving, and now gave the horses a free rein on a hard 'dobe stretch, "of a young lady who was writing letters home from her first trip abroad for the use of the county paper. She said, when she was in Venice, 'Last night I lay in a gondola in the Grand Canal, drinking it all in, and life never seemed so full before.'" Clifford winked at Bauer who was on the front seat with him, and Helen, who was not yet used to Elijah Clifford's ways, at first turned red and looked vexed, but afterwards laughed with the rest.

"Well, if your young lady was here she would have to say the same thing about all this. I never had any thought that a desert was like this. I supposed it was just nothing but sand spread out on a flat surface. But look at those flowers! Did you ever see anything more delicate for colour and form?"

"Most people think that way about the desert," said Clifford. "There are more than sixty distinct varieties of vegetation this side of the river between here and Red Stone Tank. Mr. Bauer can tell you the names of some of 'em. He has begun to make a collection."

Bauer modestly replied in answer to a question from Helen that he had classified only a few distinct species that he had found in his short strolls from the Mission. He had the book with his things at Tolchaco and would show it to her when they came back.

"I didn't know you cared for Botany," said Helen a little flippantly. "I supposed you were all absorbed in your inventions."

Bauer's face changed colour slightly.

"I have always enjoyed God's earth," he said. "Anything that grows is always more wonderful than anything that has to be made."

"I should think this would be a good place to try your incubator, it's so hot," said Helen, feeling that she had made a foolish remark, but letting it go rather than try to apologise to Bauer for her poor judgment of him.

"Oh, say, tell us about that incubator," said Clifford. "Must be a lot of money in a thing like that. I believe we could use some of 'em out here to good advantage and make something for the Mission. There's a great demand for broilers at Flagstaff, and the Harvey eating houses would give us big money for any quantity of either eggs or young chickens. If we could only educate 'em to live on sand and cactus. Trouble is, feed is so high and we're so used to eating up everything, that there ain't anything left over from meals, to give to chickens. I suppose there ain't any way to fatten chickens without feeding 'em."

When Clifford spoke of Bauer's invention as a money maker, Helen was reminded again of what she had almost forgotten, that Bauer had lost the largest part of his profits from the sale of the patent rights.

Walter had written home about Bauer's father returning a part of what he had stolen, and of Bauer's quiet acceptance of the event. Helen, as she caught the look on his face whenever he partly turned about to speak to those on the seat behind, could not help feeling a real interest in him——if only he were not so plain looking, and so serious and above all, so poor, and so destined to remain poor. No; she shut her eyes, opened them again, looked at Bauer pensively, shook her head as if in answer to a question, and then with a feeling of determination turned her attention to the remarkable land through which the party was travelling.

The sky was cloudless. The heat was dry and penetrating, and as the forenoon wore away everyone grew thirsty. The cloth covered canteens were called for often. At noon the wagons drew together and camped for dinner. Two of the wagons were driven up side by side about ten feet apart and the horses unhitched and hobbled. A spare canvas was drawn over the tops of the two wagons to make shade for the dinner party. Clifford, who acted as cook on camping out occasions, dug a hole in the sand, filled it with dowegie roots and started his fire and in what seemed an incredibly short time to the visitors from Milton a hearty meal was ready. The Indians and their helpers squatted around on rugs within the circle, Mr. Masters asked grace in a delightful tone of genuine thanksgiving and added a few words in Navajo in which Peshlekietsetti and the young Indians joined.

"This what I call the real thing," said Paul, as he helped himself to his fourth sandwich and passed his cup for the third time for coffee.

"Yes, these are real sandwiches all right," said Clifford as he turned over some pancakes which were cooking on a flat stone. "Anyone else want a hot one made by the slab artist?"

Walter expressed a desire for one and politely handed it over to Miss Gray. Clifford looked at him a moment and then at Miss Gray, who was smiling her thanks.

"How's the batter?" he said to Walter.

"Good," said Walter who seemed in unusual spirits. "It's equal to a home run with the bases all full."

"Do you think it needs to be any thicker?"

"No. It's thick enough," said Walter with his eyes on Miss Gray.

"Yes, what did I tell you," muttered Clifford to Bauer when an hour later he and the German student were alone and out of ear shot from the rest of the campers. Bauer had offered to help Clifford wash the dishes at a water hole some hundred yards from the camp. "What did I tell you? It's just as I said. Miss Gray has 'em all going. Cowboys, Indian traders, missionaries, visitors, everybody. Now it's your friend Douglas. He's a goner so soon. You watch when the wagons load up if he don't manage to sit with Miss Gray. He's lost and there's no use sending out an expedition to find him. He doesn't want to be found. And the mystery of it is Miss Gray never tries. She just simply looks at you and it's all over."

Bauer was amused and perplexed at Clifford's absolutely frank confidence. There was nothing flippant about it either. It was the simple expression of a nature that had nothing to conceal. There was not even a hint of gossip about it, nor of ill nature. In a land where there were no newspapers, telegraphs, telephones, railroads, or neighbours, it seemed like the expression of a confidence which had in it neither malice nor impertinent coarseness. And yet Bauer was puzzled to know what Clifford's real feeling was towards Miss Gray even after Clifford's own open statement made to him that day while they were sitting on the old cottonwood by the river.

When the party started on again after a two hours' rest, Clifford nudged Bauer to call attention to the fact that Walter and Miss Gray were in the back seat of the chuck wagon in front of them. But he never mentioned the matter again during the day, and until they reached the night camping place he was alive with stories and information about the desert, the Indians, the habits of the horses, the work of the Mission and the coming snake dance.

The place chosen for the first night's camp was the Red Stone Tanks. This consisted of a pool of tepid water and a few rocks, from the crevices of which a straggling fringe of desert cedars was trying to grow.

Camp was made here by pitching one of the big tents for the women. A big fire of roots was started after the supper had been eaten, and when they were all seated in the circle about the fire, Mr. Masters began a story.

Gradually as he went on with the old, old story of the lost sheep, figures stole up around the fire. Paul, who with Esther and all the rest was simply fascinated with the entire surroundings, although he did not understand a word Masters was speaking, was startled as he looked around and saw a dozen dark faces of young men and boys. They had risen out of the desert barrenness and gloom, the sudden twilight, and silently appeared. When the camp was chosen there was not a hogan or a living creature anywhere in sight. But all of these quiet visitors knew that the mission party was on the way to Oraibi and some of them had been riding all day to meet Mr. and Mrs. Masters at this point.

When the story was finished, Miss Gray started a hymn, "The Ninety and Nine." She sang with a low soft voice, almost talking the words, but old Peshlekietsetti sitting by Mr. Clifford bent over his knees gravely watching the singer's face and listening intently for every word, and when she was through, he asked a question of Mr. Masters.

"The old man wants to know," said Masters after one or two more questions had been asked, "how it happened that the sheep got lost and if it was its own fault or the fault of someone who should have been looking after it. That isn't a bad question to come from the old fellow. His theology isn't half so much at fault as that of some theological seminary professors I know, who teach that sin is nothing but a disease and that nobody in particular is to blame for it. If he had to live out here awhile instead of in his little upholstered study at the seminary, he would change his definition."

The evening was spent about the fire with songs and conversation, largely between Paul and Mr. Masters concerning the Navajo characteristics. The last thing Bauer could remember as he lay under his rug looking up at the stars, was the sight of old Peshlekietsetti throwing a handful of dry roots on the fire as he sat bowed over his knees, the fire flame gleaming red on his grave and dignified face.

He wakened early, as he had of late been doing, and sat up, noting the sleeping figures in a circle about the ashes of the fire, and as his look travelled on past them he noted out by the edge of the Black Gorge through which they were to travel that day, a solitary figure sitting on one of the curious rocks that framed a sort of gateway to the diminutive canyon. Even at that distance he could distinguish the form of Elijah Clifford, although he had already noticed that Clifford's rug and rubber blanket, which had been spread out by his own, had been folded up and tied ready for the day's trip.

Before the rest of the sleepers had stirred, Clifford came back to the spot and began with the noiseless rapidity of an Indian to build the fire in the sand preparatory to the breakfast, talking in a soft voice to Bauer, as if Bauer had asked him a question, although Bauer had not said a word except "Good-morning," when Clifford cheerfully greeted him.

"You see, I used to work on a daily paper in Kansas City before I was converted and it seems to me now that I spend most of my time trying to catch up with the day after to-morrow. I never had any leisure, never went to church, never opened a Bible and never talked with myself. Since I came out here I've had the time of my life in not only talking with myself but———" He glanced at Bauer wistfully as he put some stones around the hole and set his coffee pot down on the sand, "but I never saw such a place as a desert to find God. It seems as if this was the place to find him. You know Moses and Elijah and David and Paul and John and lots of men found God in the wilderness. I suppose you could find him while working for a daily paper, but He didn't seem to have much to do with the one I was on. At any rate I never found Him there. That's the reason I like to get up early. There's a time in the morning between four and five out here, when it appears to me God has more time to tend to individuals. Most everybody is asleep soundest about that time and He can pay attention better to the comparatively few folks that don't need so much rest."—Elijah said it as if to apologise for the habits of the rest of the party and Bauer could not help smiling at his note of evident haste not to take too much credit to himself for early rising.

"I thought maybe you might kind of wonder at my ways, and think maybe I got up to write poetry or some such stuff. I believe you understand, eh?"

"I believe I do," said Bauer gravely. "And I appreciate your confidence. I know what it means to try to find God in a crowd. I think that is one reason Jesus had to leave the multitude and go out into the desert places."

"Yes," said Clifford, sitting down on the sand and putting his coffee pot on a stone. "I didn't mention Him. I thought you would remember that yourself."

This little glimpse into Elijah Clifford's personality did Bauer a world of good and strengthened a growing liking for him which led in the process of time, as this story goes on, to some very important results in Bauer's life.

The day promised to be unusually hot and it was Masters's plan to get through the Black Gorge canyon early, as it was famous for its stifling heat and dust storms later in the day. So camp was broken immediately after breakfast and the wagons were soon loaded with the bedding and dishes and the journey resumed in the same order, so far as the travellers were concerned, as before. Mr. Masters, who knew the trail at the other end of the gorge better than anyone else, went first with Mrs. Masters, Miss Clifford, Miss Gray and Walter and Clifford with Mr. Douglas, Mrs. Douglas, Helen, and Bauer followed, Peshlekietsetti and the heavy wagon trailing along in the rear.

Just as they were entering the Gorge, Clifford turned and looked back towards the camp. Out across the Red Rock elevation he pointed out three black specks. Looking at them through the mission field glass, a former gift from Mr. Douglas, he announced them to be probably three wagons with tourists from Canyon Diablo bound for the snake dance.

"May be your friend from Pittsburgh, Van Shaw, is in that outfit," he said to Bauer.

Bauer did not reply. He hoped Van Shaw would not meet Walter or any of their party. There was no reason why he should, but every time he thought of Van Shaw he felt uncomfortable, something in him rose up nearest to a feeling of hate and disgust he had ever known.

Clifford faced around and resumed the driving. He noted as he turned into the opening that Peshlekietsetti had stopped just outside to strap on one of the water

barrels more securely, but seeing that he did not ask for any help he drove on into the Gorge.

The Gorge was weirdly irregular and the windings of the road were so many that very soon the wagons were all separated from view of one another.

In this volcanic land one could not account for the fantastic and even monstrous shapes of cliff and ledge and overhanging rock masses without calling up some gigantic upheaval of all nature's vast play of forces; earthquakes, fire, volcano, flood, wind, sand spouts of enormous height and velocity, one after the other all these elemental storms must have rocked and heaved and rent and tortured the earth and after all had passed by, the hurricane of volcanic fire and missiles must have scattered the debris of high mountains twisted into lumps of matter, varying in size from a sky scraper to a comma.

It began and ended abruptly, as if in a freak of the upheaval a tornado had picked up the end of a canyon somewhere, turned it over several times in transit and finally dropped it bottom side up on the desert, breaking it open when it fell and letting the fragments bump around like the pounded rock in a concrete mixer.

In among these boulders Elijah Clifford guided the team, exercising all his skill, for one of the horses was partly mustang, full of unused energy, and Mr. Masters had chosen the trip to Oraibi to give the animal some necessary training, trusting in Clifford's love of horses and his special characteristic of carefulness to avoid any accidents. And all would have gone well if the unforeseen and unavoidable had not occurred.

They were almost out of the gorge and Clifford had started to reply to a question of Paul's concerning the nature of the rocks which were different in colour on one side of the canyon from the other, when the mustang shied in a perfectly excusable manner at a cedar stump which hung out from a ledge so close that it almost scraped the frightened animal. Before Clifford could get the team back into the narrow road the front wheel struck a big stone. The jolt flung the pole with a jerk against the mustang. He reared up and slewed around, unhitching one of his tugs. Even then Clifford might have saved the situation if one of the reins had not broken. But when that snapped it was a hopeless task. Before any of the party knew what to do the now maddened team was thrashing up the gorge. The result was only a question of the law, if there is any, of accidents. Nobody ever knew just what did happen in detail. Paul and Esther said afterwards that they

jumped, although they had always said they never would jump out of a runaway wagon. Helen clung terrified to her seat until the hind wheel on her side of the wagon was splintered and the wagon box fell down and she found herself flung up against the bank. Clifford jumped for one of the horse's backs, hoping to stop them by reaching their bridles, but his foot caught on the dashboard and he fell, just missing the wheels as he rolled down the trail. Bauer was the only one to remain in the wagon. Just as Clifford made his unsuccessful leap the tongue snapped. The horses tore themselves loose from the wrecked wagon and swept in a frenzy of fear through the gorge, banging the fragments of tongue, whiffletrees and harness about them, and what was left of the wagon came to a stop between two big boulders, with Bauer clinging to the front seat with white strained face wondering if the rest of them were all killed.

Clifford picked himself up and came limping along to where Paul and Esther were sitting. He was all right himself excepting a few minor bruises and was overjoyed to find that Mr. and Mrs. Douglas had escaped serious injury. But when the three of them came to Helen they found her almost in a swoon.

"I think I sprained my ankle," she said with a faint attempt at a smile.

"Thank God we are not all killed!" exclaimed Esther, but before she could say another word Helen had fainted. Her father and mother were busy over her, Bauer had run up with a water canteen and Clifford was ruefully regarding the wreck of the wagon when the sound of wheels was heard.

"There's Peshlekietsetti," he said. "We'll have to put Miss Helen in the chuck wagon. But how on earth are we going to get to Oraibi now?"

A large wagon turned the bend and the driver pulled up sharply. It was not Peshlekietsetti, but the tourist party from Canyon Diablo. Bauer, as he anxiously stood by Mrs. Douglas trying to restore Helen, was conscious that a group of astonished and interested tourists had climbed down from the wagon and had come up to the scene of the accident. As he looked up he saw Van Shaw and heard him say, "Why, hello, Bauer! Didn't expect to see you here. Had bad accident, haven't you? Anything we can do to help?"

CHAPTER XIV

"IT'S very kind of you, and———" Mr. Douglas began. It is astonishing how commonplace most people are in moments of accident. Paul had never seen Van Shaw, did not know him in the least and simply saw a good-looking young man dressed in a serviceable camping suit, who had appeared at a moment when help of some kind was imperatively needed. "You seem to be acquainted, Felix. One of your classmates at Burrton? Oh, you're the Pittsburgh party?"

Felix hesitated and Van Shaw saved him the trouble of an introduction.

"Yes, I'm Van Shaw, you know. Our outfit can take care of everything without any trouble. Mr. Douglas of Milton? You're with the Tolchaco party, aren't you? Yes, we'll be glad to be of service."

Van Shaw's glance travelled to Helen, who after a brave effort to keep from fainting again, had finally succumbed and lay back against the bank. Her mother was calm, and although this was the first time in all Helen's life that she had ever

shown any such physical yielding to pain, Esther accepted the situation, and with Paul's help did the only thing obvious and soon had the girl resting, after the fainting spell, in one of the chuck wagons belonging to Van Shaw's party.

After that, events seemed to follow in a natural sequence, that could not reasonably have occurred in any other way. The frightened horses soon overtook and ran into the wagon in front. Masters and Walter caught them and as soon as possible came running back up the gorge, panting and fearful. Their surprise and relief when they learned that no one was seriously injured were great. The broken wagon was, however, such a wreck, that not even Elijah Clifford's ingenuity could repair it sufficiently for use, and with the exception of a few serviceable pieces, it was left behind. The two parties brought together by the quick process of accident, at last continued the journey in company, but for Felix Bauer a cloud had come up over the clear sky of his pleasure. He had never been able to endure Van Shaw, and it was exasperating to him and annoying to Walter to be under any obligations to one who, back in the old school, had moved in another circle and lived according to other moral codes.

Van Shaw on meeting Walter had simply said, "Hello, Douglas! Great place this old desert, hey?" He did not wait for Walter to say anything but rattled on. "This snake dance we're going to is said to be a corker. It's a beastly old distance to come to see it. I don't mind. But the camp grub gets the mater pretty bad."

The other members in the Pittsburgh party were Van Shaw's mother, just referred to as "mater," his aunt, a Mrs. Waldron, two young men, friends of Van Shaw, Mrs. Waldron's two nieces, and a cook and three drivers. They had fitted out at Canyon Diablo and crossed the Little Colorado at the upper ford, several hours after the Tolchaco party had passed, but owing to better equipment in the matter of horses and wagons they had overtaken the latter just as Touchiniteel and his two Indians had entered the gorge.

By noon the wagons were all out of the gorge and in full view of the Crested Buttes. Helen was resting as well as could be expected but was evidently in great pain. Masters, who was something of a doctor and surgeon, did the best he could with the simple remedies he carried, but declared the sprain to be a very serious one, and at a little consultation held at lunch time, the feasibility of abandoning the trip and turning back to Tolchaco on account of Helen's condition was discussed.

When Helen heard of it she emphatically objected.

"I won't listen to such a thing. I'm very comfortable. I don't want the rest of you to lose the enjoyment of the trip on my account. The only thing that worries me is the fear I am causing trouble to these other people."

The "other people," represented by Van Shaw and the young men friends, were near the chuck wagon when Helen made this last remark. Van Shaw hastened to assure her that no one was put out in the least by her presence there.

"I don't feel sure of that. It seems to me that more than one person must have been 'put out' of here when I was put in. I take up a great deal of room and I am sure there were some seats in this wagon."

Van Shaw protested that his party had two extra saddle horses and that as for himself he preferred to walk. He needed the exercise.

The other young men joined in gallantly. Miss Douglas was free to ride in any or all of the wagons as long as she chose.

Helen smiled at all of them impartially and expressed her thanks to Van Shaw in particular. Felix Bauer who with Walter was standing in the group with the rest during this little conversation, wondered for the first time in his life if Helen Douglas was a coquette. If she knew Van Shaw as well as he and Walter knew him would she smile so sweetly at him, and on such brief acquaintance? To Felix Bauer the whole thing was incomprehensible. Even allowing something for the swiftness with which acquaintances can be made in the desert during a camping experience, especially under circumstances favoured by such an accident as had occurred, it still was not seemly that a girl like Helen Douglas should even in the slightest degree encourage the attention of fellows like Van Shaw.

Felix was so disturbed by his own feelings over the affair that during the whole of the afternoon he avoided the wagon where Helen was. Once, however, as he looked back, to his indignant surprise he noted Van Shaw driving the team and turning about from time to time as if to converse with Helen, who was lying on a camp bed under the canopy cover which had been pulled back, on account of the heat, so as to allow Helen a glance now and then of some passing point of interest. Once Felix was sure he heard her laugh at some remark made by Van Shaw in comment perhaps on Touchiniteel's curious sailor made costume.

As soon as he could get a chance to speak to Walter, Felix gave voice to his feelings, for the time being entirely forgetful of the very important fact that up to this time he had never by word or look betrayed to Walter his feeling for his sister.

"Do you see that?" he spoke to Walter as they walked along together a little distance from the wagons. The men had nearly all got down to walk over a piece of particularly hard going for the teams.

Walter looked over in the direction of Helen where Bauer was looking as he spoke, and shrugged his shoulders.

"Yes, but what of it?"

"You know Van Shaw?"

"Well, I don't like it, of course, but Helen is old enough to look out for herself."

"Do you mean that you are willing to have her become friendly with him?" said Felix, his simple clean mind horrified at the apparent indifference of Walter to Van Shaw's general looseness of moral habits as they knew him in Burrton.

"Well, what can I do?" said Walter with some show of irritation. "Do you want me to go back there, politely ask Van Shaw to stop the team, and say to Helen in his hearing: 'Dear sister, the young man who is amusing you so finely this afternoon is the son of the greatest and most notorious railroad wrecker in America. He himself is known in the school at Burrton as the fastest and most vulgar youth in the institution. He drinks, he gambles, he is famous for the number of indecent stories he can tell, he has his rooms adorned with pictures of variety actresses, he has no high aims in life and never earned a cent since he was born, although he spends several thousands of dollars every year which his father makes for him by ruining other people. In short, sister, he is the last young man in all the universe with whom I, your brother, would desire you to become acquainted. Therefore, I am going to ask Mr. Van Shaw to wait until with the help of Mr. Bauer who knows all these facts about Mr. Van Shaw as well as I do, we transfer you from this wagon to one of ours, although owing to our comparative poverty as measured by this Pittsburgh outfit our wagons are not at all fitted to carry beautiful young ladies who have sustained severe ankle sprains.' Do you want me to go over to Van Shaw and get off a speech like that in order to save Helen?"

Bauer stared at Walter in solemn surprise. Then to Walter's surprise he said curtly:

"Every word of it is true."

"Yes, but you can't always say everything that's true. I wish for the life of me that Van Shaw had never put in an appearance. It has spoiled the trip for me. Besides, you never can tell what a girl will do. They're all romantic and above all, unreasonable. Van Shaw is good looking and he's got money coming to him like the sand of this desert. And I don't forget a story Clifford was telling us this morning. It was about some American girl very much like Helen, in a book, who said to another girl that all she wanted of a husband in New York was a man to go down town in the morning to earn enough money for her to spend up town in the afternoon."

"You don't mean to say that your sister has any such ambition as that, do you?" asked Felix even slower than usual.

Walter looked at him curiously.

"You don't know Helen very well. She is very ambitious, and she has great respect for wealth. She thinks money can do most anything in this old world. There's no telling what Helen will do when it comes to marrying. I can't imagine her marrying a poor man."

"I would rather see her married to Touchiniteel than to Van Shaw!" said Bauer with a savage outburst that accelerated his speech and changed his entire countenance.

Walter looked at Felix again, with the same curious regard.

"You seem to be a good deal disturbed over the matter, old man. What difference does it make to you whether Helen marries Van Shaw or Touchiniteel?"

Bauer turned his face toward Walter with a look Walter never forgot.
They were walking near one of the old ruins of an abandoned village.
Pieces of broken pottery and grinders were littered over the ground.
Felix motioned to Walter to go farther up into the mound where these
ruins were scattered.

"We can catch up with the teams. The folks will think we are looking for specimens," he said. Walter anticipated Bauer's story as he sat down by him and in the midst of an ancient cliff dwellers century old debris of a home, heard his chum's simple story. After it was told in Bauer's slow but in this case intense manner, Walter said:

"I'm awfully sorry, old man; but I don't believe you stand a ghost of a chance with Helen."

"I don't suppose I do," assented Bauer humbly. "But you can see now why I feel as I do and what it means to me to see a fellow like Van Shaw with her. It is not only torture to me. I think some one ought to tell her."

"Tell her what?"

"About Van Shaw. Such men have no business to make love to pure girls like Helen."

Walter remonstrated.

"It's absurd, Felix. He isn't making love to her. Nonsense."

"He is!" said Bauer with a passionate burst that astonished Walter. "You do not know him as well as I do. I am acquainted with Van Shaw's history through the Raines-Bracken affair. You were not at Burrton when that happened. Nothing but the fear of losing some of old Van Shaw's legacies to the school prevented young Van Shaw's expulsion at the time. I can't go into the affair, Walter, but it gave me a loathing for Van Shaw that I never can overcome. It isn't because I feel holier than thou or anything like that; God knows I am in need of his great forgiveness; but it seems as wrong for us to leave your sister unacquainted with the real character of Van Shaw as it would to let her play with one of these rattlesnakes we are going to see in Oraibi the day after to-morrow, not knowing how deadly they were."

"Who'll tell her? Will you?"

"I? How can I do it. No. But it would seem quite the thing for you or your mother———"

"Mother doesn't know him," Walter interrupted somewhat curtly. "I don't see

how I can say anything," Walter went on, with the caution many school boys feel about telling on others. "I really believe Helen is capable of protecting herself. And one of the quickest ways to get a girl interested in a man is to hint that he is not as good as he might be."

"That's your philosophy imbibed from your six best sellers," retorted Felix. Walter was a constant novel reader. "I am going to have a talk with your mother about the whole affair. She will know what to do."

"Will you tell her how you feel about Helen?"

Felix winced.

"She knows already."

"Oh, you have told her."

"No, she knows without my telling."

"Have you spoken to Helen?"

The colour swept up over Bauer's face.

"No, and I never will."

"Does she know?" Walter persisted.

"I looked at her once," faltered Bauer, and for the soul of him Walter could not help roaring out at him.

As they rose to make their way to the wagons which had halted in a group to wait for them and others who had fallen behind, Walter smote Bauer on the back.

"Courage, old man. The case is not all hopeless. If you have got as far as a look, that's progress. What did Helen do?"

But Bauer drew into his reserve at this point and gravely refused to talk any more, and Walter did not venture to insist. Only, as they were going to their wagons Bauer simply said, "I shall tell your mother. It would not be right not to let her know."

"I don't know what mother can do about it," Walter replied dubiously.

"Mrs. Douglas is very wise." said Bauer. To that Walter made no answer, and they joined the rest of the party without further words.

That night the two camps were pitched close together, and two fires burned like red specks in the holes dug for the sagebrush and cedar roots. The chuck wagon in which Helen had been riding was left standing close by the tent pitched for her mother and Mrs. Masters. She seemed unusually cheerful and in answer to many inquiries assured all that she was resting easily and was nearly free from pain.

After the camp meal was over and the desert grey of the soft night had begun to wrap itself like an enveloping cloak about the two camps, as quietly and without warning of their presence natives of that weird tract of earth began to appear. When the camp was made there was not a hogan or any form of human habitation to be seen. But as Paul came back to the fire circle after helping Masters pitch the last of the tents he was astonished to see a dozen Indians, mostly young men, sitting on the sand close by. Masters spoke a word to them when he came up to the fire and one of the men answered briefly.

"They have come all the way from Leupp," he said to Paul. "Walked the entire distance of sixty-seven miles since sunrise."

"Do you know any of them?" Paul asked curiously.

"Yes, I have met one of the young men at Shungapavi. They are all going up to see the snake dance. It's the only feature about the Hopi that appeals to them."

Miss Gray began to sing; it seemed to Walter who was sitting on the Navajo blanket near her that he had never heard a voice of just that particular quality. It fitted into the surroundings wonderfully. The dusky faces with the inevitable head-cloth of red or white were intent on hers, and when the song ceased and Walter looked up and around he saw the members of the other camp had come over and were standing or sitting about. Among the faces that were most noticeable to Walter was Van Shaw's. He was standing almost directly opposite Miss Gray staring at her with a strange look as if he were in doubt of the reality of Miss Gray's presence in this group. It seemed to Walter that he was about to ask a question, but Masters, who at campfire was always intent on bringing his Gospel message to the miscellaneous audience he might not see again in many

months, began to speak softly and affectionately.

The visitors from the outside world, including the party from Pittsburgh, could not understand one word. It was not that that moved them. But Masters was gifted with a splendid voice in full control. After he had been speaking ten minutes the figures about the little fire crept closer up and narrowed the circle. Masters's face was eloquent. Tears rolled down his cheeks. His gestures were wide and conveyed tender invitation. He spoke only a few moments more and ended abruptly. Old Peshlekietsetti gently dropped a root of dowegie bush on the almost extinct fire. The coals burst into a new flame and the light flared up again, showing to Felix, Helen's wondering face framed in the opening fold of the wagon cover, while Mrs. Douglas close by her was listening with sympathetic attention deepened into reverent surprise when Elijah Clifford with his hands over his knees, his head bowed, prayed the evening prayer in a spirit that seemed to proclaim another man from the one they had known during the day. And then another hymn in which all were asked by Miss Gray to join. It all smote Felix with a feeling of wonder, it was so new and unusual to his experience. But to Masters and Miss Gray and Clifford it was the regular daily habit of their lives, as common and necessary to them as it was for the tourist crowd looking on to close the day's life with a heavy dinner of seven courses and bridge whist into the next morning. The last glimpse Walter had of Van Shaw as he moved off towards his own wagons was the look he cast at Miss Gray again and then transferred to the canvas that covered the chuck wagon where Helen and her mother sat talking over the strange events of the day and its strange ending.

The next day was a severe experience for old desert travellers. The wind blew almost a gale. The sand drifted like snow and the mid day meal was taken standing, everyone eating as best he could, standing up, and making no attempt at the setting of a table or the formality of a regular meal.

Late in the afternoon the grey rock of Oraibi showed through the whistling sand storm. The wagons halted a little while by the Oraibi Wash before making the last miles through the difficult sand hillocks at the foot of the cliff. And it was during this resting period that word came to Masters from one of the Hopis who had a corn field on the Wash that recent rains at Oraibi had so damaged the wagon trial leading to the top that it would be impossible to drive up. All visitors and tourists must walk up the foot trail.

"That means that Helen can't get to the village. It will be a great disappointment," said Mrs. Douglas.

It was on the tongue of Felix Bauer to suggest a plan for carrying Helen up the trail on one of the camp cots when Van Shaw struck in.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Douglas, but it will be an easy thing to carry Miss Douglas up the trail on a camp cot. Four of us can do it easily. Just put some tent poles under the sides and let the two behind rest the poles on their shoulders and the two in front carry lower. In that way I'm sure we can get Miss Douglas to the top without any inconvenience to her. It would be a shame to come all this distance and eat all this dirt and miss the real thing after all."

"I don't want to miss it, of course," Helen faltered, looking at the group of young men, Walter, Felix, Van Shaw and his two friends. "But I'm giving a lot of trouble and I'm afraid I'm a nuisance."

"Then we will abate it by carrying you up there," said Van Shaw smiling, and Helen smiled back at him, to Felix Bauer's rage. The whole thing was getting to be torture to him. And it all intensified his determination to have a plain talk with Mrs. Douglas. The opportunity for it was not easy. Mrs. Douglas was close by Helen nearly every moment. The camp duties were many and the little company was of necessity grouped close together during the march. But Bauer with his regular stock of dogged patience bided his time, sure it would come.

Camp was pitched that night at the foot of the Oraibi trail. Almost as soon as the wagons were located Van Shaw came over to Mrs. Douglas carrying a cot.

"We've got an extra cot, Mrs. Douglas, and it won't take any time to fix that litter. We can use some of our tent poles. I'll be glad to fix the thing up in the morning."

Mrs. Douglas thanked him quietly, and Helen expressed her gratitude.

"Oh, I wouldn't miss seeing the sight to-morrow for anything. Isn't it wonderful. That rock? How weird it all is. Why, you can hardly tell where the rock begins and the houses leave off. Just to think of seven or eight hundred people living up there all these centuries keeping up these queer customs. And oh, look! What is that?"

A line of Indian women filed past up the trail about twenty-five feet apart, each one carrying on her back a large clay water jar. They did not walk, they trotted along in a tireless steady stride that spoke of centuries of training before them. The weight of the jars was not far from thirty pounds.

Masters was passing Helen's wagon.

"That's woman's rights," he said gravely. "The water supply at Oraibi for centuries has been jars on the backs of women. You must get used to thinking of seven hundred people dependent on the daily trips of these women for all the water used on top of that rock for washing, cooking, drinking. The women of Oraibi also have the right of building the houses the men live in. They are the masons, while the men are the dressmakers. And there are people who would like to keep these women perpetually at these tasks, they say it so 'picturesque.'"

"I was just going to say that myself," said Helen.

Masters smiled sadly. "Look at the mothers in Oraibi to-morrow. See what heathenism has done for them." He passed on and Van Shaw who had stared at Masters as he spoke said to Helen—"They're queer beggars, ain't they. But I don't believe in trying to change them. They belong here. Might as well let 'em go on the way they've been going the last thousand years."

Helen looked at him with the first feeling she had had of possible distrust or dislike. Van Shaw had spoken just as he really felt, and Helen saw a brief ways into his real character. But as she looked again at the winding figures steadily trotting up the steep path, she had a momentary doubt in her own mind as to the ultimate wisdom of Masters and Clifford in trying to change the century old customs and habits of these desert people.

The day of the snake dance at Oraibi dawned strangely with a heavy shower.

"They're getting their answer to their prayer before they offer it," said Mr. Douglas to Clifford as they sat up on their rugs and listened to the downpour on the tent.

"It has no effect on them," replied Clifford. "The snake dance means a prayer for rain for the whole season. This rain the poor devils believe is an answer to their prayer made two years ago. It's a little late in getting here but every drop of water between the two dances is so accounted for."

By the middle of the forenoon it had cleared up and the two parties, increased by other tourist crowds that had come in during the night, proceeded to climb the trail into Oraibi.

Van Shaw and his two friends in spite of the rain had got up early and finished making the litter. When the moment came for Helen to be transferred to it there was an embarrassing halt and the young men eyed one another. Felix was determined to be one of the carriers and Walter was bound to be another. Van Shaw seemed to take for granted that as he was the one who had suggested the affair he should be another. The two friends from Pittsburgh protested that they would be desolate if not allowed to help.

Felix and Walter had gone to the head of the cot and seized the ends of the tent poles and Van Shaw had stepped up to one of the poles at the other end when Esther, who perhaps sensed some electricity in the air not caused by the recent thunder storm, said to Paul:

"You take hold with Mr. Van Shaw, Paul, and let Mr. Coleman and Mr. Calder take their turn later. The trail looks very steep. I'm sure you will need to be relieved occasionally."

They started accordingly and Helen laughingly complimented her cavaliers as they picked up the cot and after several trials discovered the most effective way of handling it.

The trail was bounded on one side by the Oraibi cemetery. The recent rains had washed some of the bodies out of their graves made in the loose gravel of the steep hill. The trail wound up sharply, disclosing at every turn some new marvel of the limitless expanse below. A Hopi came out on a ledge far above them and chanted his song to the sun. Every step brought the party nearer the queer built houses and the kivas with their projecting ladders. Other visitors and tourists were on the trail in front and the progress was slow. Several stops were made and changes occurred in the order of carriers, but when the top of the rock was reached, Masters, who with Mrs. Masters and Miss Gray were close behind the litter, suddenly exclaimed, "There is Talavenka!" pointing to the roof of the first house fronting the trail. A Hopi maiden, distinguished by her whorl of hair as unmarried, stood up by the ladder, smiling down at the party.

Mrs. Douglas, who was walking with Mrs. Masters and who had during the trip

heard of this one Christian Hopi, went over to the foot of the ladder with her. Paul, who was tremendously interested in all sorts of Indian lore, went into the house to examine some wedding baskets. The two Pittsburgh young men suddenly found themselves surrounded with an Indian group selling curios, Walter sauntered over in the direction of Miss Gray to ask her about the kivas. Felix stayed jealously for a while by Helen who was simply carried away with the wonderful sights all about her, but looking over in Mrs. Douglas's direction and seeing her for a moment alone, thought his opportunity to speak to her ought to be seized at once, and went over towards her. And so it happened naturally enough that for a moment Helen and Van Shaw were left together. The crowd of tourists, curious, chattering, laughing, careless, flowed up the trail past them and began scattering over the village seeking curios and poking their heads into the doors of the little houses. The sun flamed out in a clear blue sky, the grey rock turned red under its hot stroke, and Helen, who lay restfully on her litter which had been placed on top of one of the kivas, indulged her romance loving spirit to the full as she lay there almost forgetful of Van Shaw's presence until she was startled out of her day dream by his voice as he moved from where he had been standing and came and sat down on the edge of the kiva near her.

CHAPTER XV

"MISS DOUGLAS, I haven't had half a chance to talk to you and you'll forgive me, won't you, if I take advantage of this moment."

Helen was not in the slightest degree prepared for what Van Shaw was going to say. She was conscious, as every beautiful young woman must be, of her charms and of the effect of them on the young men she met, but she would have been a most remarkably vain and shallow person if she had ever imagined for herself such a scene as the one now being acted out on the top of the rock at Oraibi. The wildest stretch of her romantic temperament had never carried her so far, and when she first began to really grasp the sense of what Van Shaw was saying she was frightened and angry. At the same time there was a certain feeling of pride and exultation of which she was vaguely ashamed.

Helen quietly began to say some simple thing in reply to Van Shaw's first remark when he hurriedly went on, interrupting her:

"I won't have much time to speak now, but I'm going to risk everything, and tell you. I just can't keep it to myself. It may sound awfully absurd to you,—I suppose it does, but I can't help it. I'm just simply dead in love with you and I want you to know that I———"

"What!" said Helen sharply. She was so disturbed, so confused in her mind that Van Shaw's words seemed unreal, as unreal as the kiva on which she was sitting or the changing groups of vivid colour moving about on the tops of the houses.

"I can't help it," Van Shaw began again hurriedly, "You do not know how fascinating you are. It has just swept me off my feet."

This time Helen understood what Van Shaw was saying and her face was flooded with a swift wave of colour. And she said coldly:

"You have no right to talk to me like that. I will not listen." She turned her head and saw her mother just coming out of Talavenka's house, standing at the foot of the ladder as if preparing to go up with Mrs. Masters to the house roof.

"Mother!" she called, in a dim way thinking of nothing except her desire somehow to escape a very embarrassing scene with Van Shaw. But there was so much noise made by the clattering groups of tourists and the sudden arrival of new comers that Mrs. Douglas did not hear. Besides at that moment Helen saw Bauer speaking to her and the next moment he and her mother had walked slowly off together up the tortuous village street and were lost to sight in the crowd.

Van Shaw sat down on the kiva, and smiled a little. But his face was pale, and evidently for one of the rare occasions in his life he was truly and desperately in earnest.

"You can't blame me, can you?"

"It's—it's simply impossible. It's out of the question. I have not known you two days."

"It doesn't take lighting two days to hit," said Van Shaw doggedly.

"I won't listen. I forbid your talking to me," said Helen haughtily.

"All right. But you can't forbid my thinking of you."

"But I can and I will refuse to be in your company!" said Helen. She was angry now at something undefined in Van Shaw's manner. "If you do not leave me at once, I will try to leave you." She actually made a movement to rise and put her foot on the ground at the edge of the kiva. Van Shaw instantly got up and said quickly, "Of course I'll go. But I can't change my feelings and never shall. Promise me one thing. Don't believe all the stories you may hear about me."

He had turned and walked up the street and Helen sank back with a strange feeling of relief mingled with shame and again that other feeling—what was it, pride? The sense of power over men? The feeling that her beauty was a gift or something else? She was frightened at it all put together and felt irritated to be left alone by the rest of the party as she looked around at the medley of old and new jumbled together in that Hopi village. And then the next reaction left her nervous and somewhat hysterical as she tried to imagine such a thing in a book. She actually laughed and the next moment Miss Gray and Walter appeared, at the edge of the kiva. Miss Gray came running up to her.

"It's a shame to leave you here alone. How did that happen?"

"Oh, I don't know. I haven't been alone long. How strange everything is."

"Yes. And it gets stranger the more you see of it. Talavenka and her mother have asked us to eat with them. They will have something ready in about an hour. You had better go in and rest there a while. It's too hot out here. Where are your jinrikisha men?"

"Van Shaw just went up the street," said Walter looking closely at Helen.

"We don't need him," said Miss Gray. "Mr. Douglas, will you get Mr. Coleman and Mr. Calder? There they are, over there. I'll help, and we'll take Helen over to Talavenka's."

Walter went over to call the Pittsburgh young men and Miss Gray and Helen were together a moment. Helen suddenly asked:

"Do you know Mr. Van Shaw, Lucy? Didn't I hear you say to mother yesterday that he was related distantly to your mother?"

"Yes," said Miss Gray slowly. "He is. What do you want to know?"

"Anything you can tell me."

Miss Gray looked troubled.

"Are you willing to tell me why you want to know?"

Helen hesitated. Walter and the young men were approaching.

"Give me your full confidence," Miss Gray smiled at Helen. "And I will know better what to tell."

"I will when there is time for it," Helen said and that was all she could say, before she was carried into Talavenka's house.

Once inside the little square room with its corn grinding boxes taking up one whole side of it there was so much of interest that Helen let everything else wait, as she watched the preparations for the meal soon to be served. It would be several hours before the snake dance and in that time there was no likelihood that Van Shaw would try to speak to her again. She was not afraid of that, but she felt uneasy at the thought of some future scene, just what she was not clear about, but it vexed and allured her until finally the surroundings compelled all her attention and drove everything else out of her imagination.

Her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Masters and Miss Gray were invited with her to the mid day meal in the house. The rest of the Tolchaco party ate out of doors on the platform by the door. There was boiled mutton, red, white and blue wafer bread made of corn meal that made one think he was eating wall paper, Elijah Clifford said, melons, green peas taken from a can that had a Ft. Wayne, Ind., label on it, and to Mr. and Mrs. Douglas's astonishment some delicious peaches brought by Talavenka's brother all the way from their little garden down by the Oraibi Wash. In reply to questions from Mr. Masters, who used Talavenka as interpreter, Schewingoiashchi said, as if it were an ordinary every day occurrence, that her oldest boy nineteen years old had run twenty-five miles that forenoon to get the peaches from the orchard for their anticipated guests.

About an hour before sunset they all went out to the village plaza to witness the great event of the year in Oraibi. And as long as they live they will need no photographs or pictures to make the weird scene vivid to them.

Picture a grey mass of rock rising up abruptly above the desert, bare of tree or shrub; scattered over its irregular top, blocks of two and three story stone and dried brick houses, for the most part square in outward shape, with steps on the outside built into the wall, or heavy ladders with long projecting ends resting upon platforms built in front of small square topped doorways, the roofs flat and covered with dried grasses. No stairways within these houses permitting passage from lower to upper rooms, and all built after century old architectural plans, by the hands of women. Between the blocks of irregular houses picture rectangular slabs of stone rising two feet above the ground, containing an opening in the middle out of which project high in the air the two ends of a hard-wood ladder, the rungs of which have been worn almost through by the passage of naked feet that have pressed up and down on these bits of wood for scores of years. It is not easy to imagine the real fact that down in those upstairs cellars the men of Oraibi lead their club life, weaving down there in the dim light that filters past the ladder, the rugs and belts and other material mysteriously used for religious ceremonial. And down in the snake priests' kiva, just over yonder, the venomous reptiles have been kept for weeks past in the sacrificial clay jars, out of which they have crawled during the rites of their purification and hung in twisted hissing knots out of the crevices between the sides of the kiva walls, from which places the brown hands of old Thisdoa, Talavenka's father, have only this morning taken them to put in the cottonwood booth out on the village plaza, where they are now awaiting their part in the coming ceremony. For old Thisdoa is the head priest and knows more of the mysteries of the snake nature than any being in Oraibi.

The sun is just on the edge of the desert. All traces of the morning storm are vanished. Out on the tops of the houses all about the open plaza, groups of men and women begin to appear, the unmarried girls distinguished from the married by the graceful whorls of black hair standing out in marked contrast with the two rolls that hang down past the ears of the matrons. Cowboys, Navajo horsemen, traders, all the non-acting part of Oraibi's population, tourists, photographers, visitors, crowd up in a rainbow coloured fringe about the sandy depression which now contains only one conspicuous object, the cottonwood booth or kisi, the size of a boy's wigwam, having a canvas flap on the side opening close by the broad board over which the feet of the priests will thump as they file past. A moving picture machine is installed on top of a near-by house. The Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Chicago tourists and newspaper men are grouped about in what they believe are advantageous positions. The costumes vary from smart tailor made dresses worn by the tourist girls from Cincinnati to

a Hopi child's dress made of a piece of a gunny sack bearing the name of a Minnesota flouring mill. Over all the jumble of old and new, modern and ancient, the setting sun floods the medley of colour and language and dress and Christian and pagan. And in the stillness that waits the coming of the twenty-four priests out of the kivas, the town crier walks out on the corner of a house top and cries aloud an announcement of a service to be held that night in the little mission chapel out there on the edge of the rock.

"What's that?" asked one of the tourists near Clifford.

"That's the town crier of Oraibi," said Clifford. "There are no newspapers up here and the official village news purveyor is telling the crowd to come over to the Gospel meeting to-night. He says Mr. Masters is going to preach in three languages. Better come and hear him in one of 'em."

The tourist stares at Clifford. "Well of all the places on earth for preaching, this beats me. Do you mean to say a preacher will actually hold a service up here after this snake dance and expect to get an audience?"

"Will he?" says Clifford cheerfully. "You had better come early or you won't get a seat. And as for preaching you'll hear a better sermon than you ever heard in Cincinnati, Ohio."

"I guess that may be so," says the tourist. "For I haven't been to church since I don't know when."

"You need preaching then, like the rest of these heathen," said Clifford so simply that the Cincinnati man takes no offence but promises to go over to the service if he isn't too tired.

The rim of the sun is an hour above the horizon and the crowd has ceased its chatter. It is very quiet on the grey rock of Oraibi, although a thousand people are looking intently at the openings of the two kivas. Suddenly from the one nearest the Tolchaco party up the ladder the chief of the Antelope priests appears. He holds the rattle box in his hand and is followed by the eleven priests, the last one a lad twelve years old. The line twists through the fringe of visitors, as oblivious of any onlookers as if they were going through this ceremony five hundred years ago when not a white face was dreamed of and when the Hopi was doing exactly what old Thisdoa and his grandson are doing to-day.

Then from out the other kiva the stately snake priests emerge, a group of twelve old men each bearing the rattle which contains the grains of corn. The incessant pattering of the rattles is the only sound heard in the plaza until the soft moccasined feet reach the board over the hole in front of the kisi. The thump, thump, thump of the feet pound over the board to call the attention of the underworld gods to the needs of their children up here. The sandy plaza is traversed and the two lines of priests circle about, finally stopping in front of the kisi, facing one another; then rises the "wo, wo, wo, wo," the guttural chant. The Hopis have been for many years a peaceful people, but this monotonous chant, rising occasionally into a swelling crescendo howl sends delightful cold shivers down the backs of the visitors, and even Elijah Clifford says he wouldn't want to meet that howl unexpectedly around the corner. Then the priests file past the kisi one by one, stoop by the opening and receive from the old warrior priest sitting within, a snake. Each one raises his snake to his mouth and holds it there between his teeth as he walks about the plaza accompanied by his hugger or companion. Suddenly the snakes are released and thrown down upon the sand. They make swift and desperate efforts to escape but are caught up again with such rapidity of movement that the closest attention paid by the tourists can not discover how it is done. Round and round the procession of twenty-four moves. Out from the houses near the snake kiva a group of girls and women suddenly run. They stop at the edge of the plaza near the Tolchaco party and scatter the sacred corn meal on the ground. Navajo horsemen dismount and pick up pinches of this sacred meal to put in their pouches for good luck. The twenty-four priests with their snakes twisting in their sinewy brown hands turn together and with a common movement all dart up to the place where the meal lies. They circle about the spot. Paul raises Helen up a little higher so that she can throw a horrified gaze into that astonishing scene. For a moment the only thing she and the rest can see is a squirming, hissing heap of snakes, apparently tangled together in an angry mass. And then the twenty-four priests shoulder one another as they stoop and with both hands grab up as many snakes as they can hold in their fingers, and suddenly separating, turn and face towards the edge of the rock, running with all their might, thrusting the snakes into the faces of any unlucky tourist or visitor who may be in the way.

There is a rush for the edge of the rock. Those who line up there see the lean figures of the priests leaping down the wild trail. Their forms can hardly be distinguished as they reach the desert and are dimly seen to be kneeling in prayer over the snakes as they let them go, down to the great plumed snake to beseech him to send rain, rain, rain, on the corn and melons of his children up here.

The rest of the ceremony is purification. The priests come panting and sweating up the rock. On the edge of the snake priests' kiva the women bring out huge jars of mysterious brown liquid. The panting figures kneel there in the now desert twilight and drink great draughts of this liquor. Kneeling about over the rock they disgorge from their mouths what they have been drinking. The merciful darkness is closing in swiftly over this disgusting scene, participated in, however, in all reverence by the priests and gazed upon in astonishing seriousness by the spectators, for is it not all a part of the painful crucifying of the flesh that these poor creatures have been subjecting themselves to for centuries in their blind but constant desire to find God, the God of the rain, the rain, the rain.

Gradually the priests disappear down into the kiva where a feast has been prepared for them by the women. The great festival, which will not occur again at Oraibi for two years, is over.

Paul sees Masters standing by him. In the dim light he realises with a start as he looks up, that the tears are rolling down over Masters's face.

"Oh, the people! How long will they seek after God in these ways! Oh, for the power to open their eyes to see him as He is!"

Through the growing darkness groups of tourists and visitors pass, choking the narrow paths between the houses, crowding into the trail down to the wagons at the foot of the rock. Among the confusion of chattering voices and exclamations one shrill voice of a girl penetrates through to the hearing of Masters and Paul.

"Wasn't it the greatest thing you ever saw? and oh, how picturesque! Those people, those girls on the houses! What a pity it would be to spoil it by trying to civilise these nature children!"

Masters looked at Paul grimly.

"Yes, it would be a great pity, wouldn't it? I wish that girl could stay here one winter and enjoy the picturesqueness of a Hopi Indian girl's life. I wonder if she has any little thought of the real life of these 'nature children'? Of its misery, its impurity, its dreadful sin and superstition and darkness; its infant mortality; its pain and disease due to the absence of any sanitary or medical skill. But most of all its ignorance of Jesus Christ and his love. 'Picturesque!' I grant you it is. But Christianity would not destroy anything worth keeping. For centuries these

'nature children' have walked in darkness. Are they not entitled, like that white girl, to the light of life? And did you see Talavenka when her father reached into the kisi for the snake?"

"No," said Paul, "I must confess my eyes were on the priests, not the spectators."

"Talavenka was crying all through the ceremony. Her father can not understand her new life. The girl stands alone in the midst of this superstition. What will become of her? The estrangement in the family is one of the most painful things I ever knew. Her mother Schewingoiashchi is the only one who seems kind to her. At times I think Schewingoiashchi is not far from the Kingdom herself. She does not object to Talavenka's baptism. We have talked of that. It will be a part of our service to-night. I must go and get ready."

Paul and Esther and the rest of the party went to Talavenka's house for the evening meal. Masters, who was of the old school of preachers, they learned afterwards had spent the hour before the service out on the edge of the rock a little past the mission chapel, praying in the darkness for the people of Oraibi.

Helen was very eager to go to see Talavenka baptised. During the afternoon she had noticed the girl's grief and had been deeply touched by it. They were of the same age, she had learned from Mrs. Masters. The few words she spoke in English during the midday meal had revealed a quiet dignity and a genuine Christian faith. Already Helen's romantic temperament was constructing a plan to have Talavenka leave Oraibi and finish her education in Milton academy.

"We can carry you over to the chapel all right," her father said. "Where are those young men? I haven't seen Van Shaw or his friends all the afternoon."

"They were there, I saw them," said Walter.

"I saw them on the other side of the plaza," said Bauer who had not lost sight of Van Shaw during the afternoon and had wondered more than once why he was avoiding Helen. He had had his talk with Mrs. Douglas and had been tormented all through that ancient prayer for rain with questions as to his wisdom in telling some things to Helen's mother. But he was not given to doubt concerning his motives and in this particular instance he had no hesitation over his own absolutely clean and disinterested motive. He wanted Helen to escape the horror of a union with a degenerate mind and heart as he knew they existed in Van Shaw's character and his own feeling for her did not occupy a prominent place in

his motive. Of that much he was sure and it helped him somewhat to get through one of the most trying experiences of his life.

Bauer went on to say to Mr. Douglas that he had seen Van Shaw and his two friends go down the trail to their wagons and had not seen them come back up the rock. So Paul and Walter, Clifford and Felix took Helen over to the mission chapel towards which various groups could be seen moving through the unlighted spaces of Oraibi's crooked and narrow windings.

The chapel had been built by a small missionary society ambitious to signalise its existence by doing something desperately hard in a corner of the world where no missionary work had ever been done. The missionary in charge had laboured several years with that marvelous patience and persistence which nothing but the history of missions in this old world has ever recorded. And as a result of his work Talavenka had come into the light. She had spent two winters at the mission in Tolchaco and Masters had shaped and enlarged the faith that first had begun to glow on the grey rock of Oraibi. And the missionary had been planning to have Masters hold this special service and baptise Talavenka from the time he heard of his coming up to the snake dance.

Masters found a place on one end of the little platform for Helen's cot where she lay propped up in comfortable fashion. The room was very small and it filled up rapidly. When it would hold no more it is doubtful if any man with a message ever faced a more mixed or astonishing audience.

There were native Hopis, old men and women who did not understand a word of English. Navajo visitors, men who never appeared at Oraibi except once in two years. Paul recognised one man whom Masters had pointed out one day at Tolchaco as a notorious gambler and horse trader, known all over the painted desert as "Iadaka" the gambler; there were traders from the different government posts; a few teachers from the government schools; a bunch of cowboys from Flagstaff; half a dozen Apaches who had come up to Oraibi from an encampment near the Bottomless Pits; a dozen tourists from a half dozen different cities in the east attracted from tourist curiosity; three interpreters, one of whom happened to be in government employ and had been caught at Oraibi and detained there by an accident to his team on the way to Shungapavi. Masters knew him and asked him to come in and help at the service.

Besides this miscellaneous and polyglot audience inside the room, Helen soon

became aware of nearly as many more spectators and listeners outside the building crowded about the open windows. The night was warm and still. The chapel had three windows on each side, and two at the rear behind the platform, and at each opening dark faces of various nationalities grouped and peered in with stoical or wondering interest. After the service had begun Helen suddenly became aware of the presence of Van Shaw and his two friends. They had evidently finished their supper and camp work and come back up the rock to be present at the chapel service but had been too late to get inside. Helen felt Van Shaw's gaze directed constantly at herself. He had secured a position close up to the second window from the platform. Helen again had that curious blending of anger and exultation, of shame and gratified vanity as if there were forces at work in her at war with one another tempting and antagonistic, attractive and repellant. But after one look had been exchanged between her and Van Shaw she changed her position on the cot so that she was partly hidden from him by a lamp which stood on one corner of the little parlour organ of the platform.

Do you know of any greater heroes than the heroes of the cross? These are the undaunted, unterrified, passion-filled souls of the earth. Masters personified the very spirit of aggressive, human, loving Christianity. That strange room full of humanity would have appalled anyone but a real soul-hungry man. What could anyone do with it? Century old vices and superstitions, brutal contempt for anything but coarse pleasures, stolid indifference to God, measureless egotism and age-long selfishness looked at him from the faces in the room and at the windows, from "Iadaka" and the wrinkled Hopis, from the sentimental tourist girl and Van Shaw and his two friends, from the dull visaged Apaches and the smirking traders, one of whom, to Master's own knowledge, had for years been cheating the rug weavers all the way from Black Bear Canyon to the Spanish Peaks.

And yet for some reason or a number of reasons, these humans were all here in front of him and as he looked at them, Masters had soul hunger for them. He loved the multitude. And it never entered his simple thought that anything else was possible but that in the long run they would all have to go down before the conquering Carpenter's Son. Yes, even old "Iadaka." He would some day see the light and he would walk and run all the way from Crested Buttes to the Bottomless Pit and throw his da'aka in there and kneel at Jesus feet and call him Lord. Have not the peoples of the earth been doing that all through the ages? Is not the miracle of regeneration greatest of all miracles since Jesus lived? Is anything too hard for God?

So Masters's simple unswerving faith spoke that night. He told in the simplest possible way the story of the cross. The old, old story that is changing the history of the world every day. The old story that is not afraid of modern philosophy, nor antique prejudice nor even the scoffing and sneering of Athens and the jeers of Vanity Fair and the complacent self satisfaction of the modern pharisee.

Then he told Talavenka's story as he knew she would be willing to have it told. The Hopi girl had sat on the front seat close to the platform. She was dressed in white and Helen wondered with herself more than once if Talavenka was like other girls and really knew or understood how marvellous was her black hair and her perfect coloured skin. And then almost as if someone had asked her, Helen asked herself if Talavenka had ever known a lover and if the great romance of life could come to her now that she had cut herself off from her people, and the swift runner in the corn dance might no longer look for her to come out in the grey morning and with the other maidens snatch from his arms the cool dew washed corn leaves and from his glowing eye the message which is the same between youths and maidens the world over.

But Talavenka was conscious herself of no other thought here to-night in the mission chapel at Oraibi. Masters spoke to her of her faith and asked her a few questions. The girl's face shone with intelligent affection for her Redeemer and then the missionary rose and held the baptismal bowl. Talavenka kneeled between him and Masters, Elijah Clifford with the tear in his eye standing by Miss Gray as if naturally their common interest in Talavenka and knowledge of her history made their mutual nearness a natural thing. Masters touched Talavenka's forehead with the water and said in a voice that trembled for the first time that night, "Talavenka, I baptise thee because of thy faith in the Lord Jesus, into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

All through the service Masters had spoken through one or the other of the interpreters. In turn the Hopis, the Navajos, and the Apaches had heard of Jesus and what he had said had been listened to in some instances with evident eagerness. But the baptism of Talavenka impressed all alike. Even the stolid imagination of the trader from Red Stone Tanks could understand a little of the significance of what was going on there that night when the first Hopi maiden was being baptised into a religion which her ancestors for centuries had known nothing about.

They sang "My Faith looks up to Thee," and after a prayer by Miss Gray, which

was so tender it made Helen cry, the meeting was over.

The people went out slowly. Those who knew Talavenka came up to see her. Her mother had sat still as if graven there all through the evening. Suddenly she drew her shawl over her head and rose and went out. Talavenka trembled as she watched her. "My mother!" was all she said. It was a whole volume of longing for her redemption. Helen heard her and held out her hand to her as she stood there near the little platform. And the two girls, one born in Christian civilisation, nurtured in soft and comfortable ways, and the other who first drew breath in a dark and filthy corner of a stone hut on this treeless rock, drew near together and the Christian faith of each swiftly bridged over all the centuries of difference in matters of language, customs and ceremonies. For is it not beautifully true that when Jesus enters a life it becomes a part of all life everywhere, and there is no longer any Greek nor Jew, neither Barbarian, Scythian, bondman or freeman, but all are one.

At that instant Van Shaw and his friends came down the aisle of the little room. They had crowded in as soon as enough people had gone out. They came up now, greeting the other tourists, some of whom they had met for the first time that afternoon.

Van Shaw, however, seemed especially anxious to reach the spot where Mrs. Douglas was standing talking with one of the government teachers from Kean's Canyon. In passing one of the tourists who was in the middle of the aisle, Van Shaw came face to face with Bauer, and to Bauer's tremendous astonishment Van Shaw said at once in a threatening tone—which, however, he guarded so as not to be heard by anyone else:

"I understand you have been meddling in my affairs. I consider it a mighty sneaking thing for you to do and I want you to understand I won't———"

Bauer recovered his composure quickly as he interrupted Van Shaw.

"We can't very well discuss this matter in here."

"I want a word with Mrs. Douglas first," said Van Shaw.

But Bauer stepped in front of him and said:

"I think you had better have a word with me first."

Van Shaw looked at him uncertainly and then turned and walked out of the chapel. Bauer followed him immediately.

The only light out on the rock was starlight. Darkness covered the blurred outline of Oraibi's houses, with only an occasional point of light here and there, or the sudden glow from some kiva as the opening reflected the fire at the bottom.

Van Shaw walked slowly as if by appointment out to the edge of the rock. When he stopped, Bauer was close by him. In the mist far below a red glow marked the camp by the Oraibi Wash. The night was very still and they were almost near enough to the chapel to distinguish the sound of voices within.

CHAPTER XVI

"NOW that we are here," said Van Shaw, "I simply want to repeat what I said. You don't butt into my affairs. Keep out. Coleman overheard a part of what you told Mrs. Douglas to-day while you were near the cemetery rock. He was on the other side of it. What you said may be true, but I consider it a sneaking thing and I won't stand for it."

Bauer was still. In the first place he had never faced such a situation and in the darkness there he swiftly recurred to his talk with Mrs. Douglas. He had found her already prepared for a part of what he had to say. Esther, sensitively intelligent in anything relating to Helen's welfare, had not seen Van Shaw a moment before she felt a repulsion for him amounting to horror. What Bauer told her from his own knowledge of Van Shaw's immoral life in Burrton roused all her mother instincts to protect her child from a fate worse than death if she should marry a man who had already fallen. She shared in the fullest degree with Bauer's deep fear that Helen might, in her desire for the soft and beautiful things of wealth, risk her very life itself, not because she knew she was doing it, but partly through ignorance of the real character of the man who had the unblushing selfishness to ask a pure girl like Helen to accept him as a husband, knowing himself to be what he was.

And Bauer, measuring in his slow but not stupid fashion all the consequences of his action in warning Mrs. Douglas, knowing clearly the code of morals

governing men like Van Shaw and the wicked and unchristian standard of even so-called Christian society in condemning what it called "telling on others," nevertheless went forward to do what seemed to him to be only necessary in the name of common honour and decency.

The fact that Van Shaw had found out what he had done did not disturb him greatly. The only thing that troubled him now was to hold himself sufficiently in hand. He had never hated anyone in his life except this rich man's son and he had been slow to entertain that feeling for him. But it had grown like a tropical plant within the last three days. And all the old Teutonic rage latent in him was at the boiling point whenever he thought of Van Shaw and Helen together. He said to himself there in the darkness that if there had been light enough to see Van Shaw's sneering face he would have struck it. He remembered hearing his own father say once that one of his ancestors at Lausbrachen had choked the life out of a family enemy, using only one hand around the man's throat. He was so afraid of himself now that he involuntarily stepped back away from Van Shaw and Van Shaw noted it and put the action down to cowardice or fear.

"Well, are you going to keep out of my affairs? Is it any business of yours whether I try to make friends with the Douglases? Or perhaps———" he suddenly changed his tone as if a new thought had broken in on his mind. "Look here, Bauer. Perhaps—well, maybe you don't understand———I am going to marry Miss Douglas!"

"What!" Bauer cried out. He stepped nearer Van Shaw and Van Shaw stepped back, nearer the edge of the rock.

"Well," Van Shaw laughed. "That is, as soon as she says yes, I am. My intentions are all right. But—" and his accustomed mood quickly reasserted itself, "I warn you to keep out. Leave my affairs alone. A fellow whose father and mother have done what yours have, isn't in the best position to throw stones at other people."

Felix Bauer long years afterwards confessed to the dearest friend he had, that in that moment he had the nearest approach to the thought of murder and hate he ever knew. But before he could reply to Van Shaw's brutality he saw him stagger and reel and throw up his arms on the edge of the rock. He heard him cry out, "For God's sake, Bauer!" and then he fell backward and disappeared over the cliff.

For a second Bauer stood in his place smitten with horror. He was totally ignorant of the character of the ground where Van Shaw had been standing and of what lay below. Evidently a shelving piece of the rotten sandstone had broken off. How much of the edge was dangerous it was impossible to tell there in the dark. He uttered one loud cry of "Help!" and then flung himself down full length and dragged himself up to the place where Van Shaw had disappeared.

Just as he reached the edge, he heard fragments of the rock go rattling down and a sound as of a heavy body falling somewhere. He peered over fearfully. He shouted again. He looked, straining down, and it seemed to him that about twenty feet below he could see a huddled-up body lying on a projecting ledge.

And then Felix Bauer did as brave or as foolhardy a thing as anyone ever did. It was partly to punish himself for the murderous feeling he had entertained a moment before that he now said, "Good God! I must save him now. Help me, God! Help me!"

He swung about on the edge of the ragged rock and let his feet down. He felt a projecting knob of something, and then for a sickening second he paused and shouted again and then he let go, hugging the face of the cliff. As he went down, he began to realise thankfully that the cliff was rough and irregular. His hands were running blood, but he did not know it. As he felt resting places for his feet, or anything for his hands to clutch, he sobbed, "God help me! God help me!"

He was down at last near enough to see that Van Shaw had fallen in a bent-over position on a shelf of rock, a little more than wide enough to hold his body. He called to him but received no answer. At last he was near enough to drop down on the ledge but as he was about to do so, Van Shaw, with a groan of pain, turned over, and began to roll towards the edge.

Bauer desperately let go of everything, fell in a lump and snatched at Van Shaw. He caught one arm and, panting, held onto it. The rest of Van Shaw's body was hanging over the side of the ledge, and even in that critical moment Bauer recalled his first view of Oraibi rock as the wagons had come up from the Oraibi Wash and the Tolchaco party had scanned through the field glass the inaccessible sides. But he was on the opposite side now and how far it was below the place where he now was he could not tell. Only he knew it must be a killing distance down there in the dark that seemed to be reaching up black, heavy hands pulling at Van Shaw's unconscious body, pulling at it harder and harder every second.

He could feel himself slipping down across the smooth ledge which offered no place for his sliding feet. He was using his last strength, but every second it seemed impossible. His lungs were bursting. The red taste of hot blood was in his mouth; he had a confused thought that he could let go of Van Shaw's arm any time, but he did not let go. He was slipping, slipping down, pulled inch by inch by those strong black hands of the dark down there, but still he clung and sobbed "God, save us!"

And then Elijah Clifford's voice called to him.

"I'm coming, Bauer, I'm coming."

The voice gave Felix one more ounce of strength. He exerted it, was conscious that someone was down there with him farther off at the side of the ledge, then his hold loosened, everything turned black and he did not know any more.

When he came to himself he was lying on one of the seats of the little chapel. Anxious white, frightened faces were all about him. He was dimly aware of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas and Mr. and Mrs. Masters and Elijah Clifford and Miss Gray and Helen and a group of tourists, one of whom he heard Mr. Douglas call "doctor." He seemed to feel conscious of another body that was lying on a bench near him, the body of Van Shaw, and as it stirred and groaned, he had an undefined feeling of thankfulness that he was still alive and that no murder had been committed. And then the hot taste of blood came into his mouth and he knew his hemorrhage had come on again.

He was too weak to talk and felt irritated at the hubbub about him. But cots were soon provided and he and Van Shaw and Helen were carried down the trail to their tents, where a curious and interested group soon gathered. Van Shaw had broken his shoulder and one leg. The doctor was not certain about other and internal injuries. But Van Shaw was conscious and unless something unforeseen took place, he was in a fair way to recover.

Everyone was excited and sleep was out of the question. So when everything possible had been done for Bauer and Van Shaw, Elijah Clifford told what he knew of the accident and in his own way related his share in the evening's adventures.

"You see, I had just lighted our lantern and had stepped out of the chapel to light our folks down the trail when I heard Bauer's cry for help. I hadn't seen him go

out and I didn't know what he was doing out there, but it's always been a rule of the Mission when anyone yells 'help,' to run in that direction. I fell over an old standard oil can and broke my lantern and my shins. And I guess while I was down, Bauer was just getting over the edge of the rock.

"Say! Talk about recklessness, I take it Herr Felix Bauer has us all beat to a-run-down-the-trail-and-back. You strangers from New York, how would you like to back off the top of the Flat Iron Building, hang onto the coping with your fingers for a second and then let go, trusting to strike a window ledge or something between the soles of your shoes and Madison Square? Well, that's just what this tuberculosis son of Germany did, and if it doesn't knock all the snake traditions of this old rock into piki bread crumbs then I have lost my way and forgotten where I started from."

"How about yourself?" asked one of the New York tourists. "Didn't you go down the same place?"

In the light of the camp fire it was not easy to see that Elijah Clifford actually blushed. But he did, and Miss Gray sat near enough to note it. If Elijah Clifford had not been so embarrassed by the New York man's question he might possibly, if he had been looking in Miss Gray's direction, have seen a new look on her face. A look of shy Admiration that belongs to the border land of another county called Affection, which is a near by state to another called Love. But Clifford hastened to say:

"Oh, I had a light to go down with. When I fell, I broke the glass, but lucky the light did not go out, so I could see where I was going. And when I got down, there was Bauer hanging on to Van Shaw's arm in the most affectionate manner, as if he didn't want to have him leave before his visit was over. I hadn't more than time to get my foot braced on the lantern or something, when Bauer turned his friend over to me and for a minute or two he was on my hands, but by that time the folks up on top had let down some ropes and we soon got everybody up all right."

"Elijah," said Mr. Masters reproachfully, "why don't you go into the details? You know that when Mr. Douglas and I climbed down on the ropes, you were almost over the edge with Van Shaw's body."

"Well, that's the most slippery piece of rock I ever felt," said Clifford, and again he failed to note a movement on the part of Miss Gray. When Masters had said that Clifford had almost gone over the edge of the ledge with Van Shaw's body, she had put out the hand nearest Clifford, as if to hold him back.

"Yes," said Clifford, "that ledge is smooth and no mistake. If any more folks are going to fall over onto it, I think the Commissioners in Oraibi ought to drive some nails into it, or else build a neat little concrete wall around it. There were times while I was down there thinking it over, that I would have given considerable for a good, high English garden wall on the other side of Van Shaw's body and me. A lantern is a poor thing to brace your feet on. It lacks staying powers."

"Gentlemen," said Masters, turning to the group around the fire, "we have had a most wonderful deliverance from a tragedy and it is due to the heroism of two of the bravest men that ever lived. Elijah, don't interrupt me. The only way we can express our thanks is to go to the Heavenly Father with them," and without a moment's pause as if it were the most natural thing in the world, as it was with him, Masters broke into a prayer of thanksgiving so tender and eloquent that Helen, whose cot had been placed in one of the tents with its front opening near the fire where she could hear everything, bent her head over on her arms and cried.

She had been under a great nervous tension all day. And this last scene, coming as a most astonishing climax to it all, affected her quick imagination. Another thing had added to all the rest, at the memory of which she blushed as she hid her face in her hands during the quiet that followed that prayer by Masters.

When the three cots, her own, Bauer's and Van Shaw's, had been brought down the trail, at one place in a turn of the passage, while the bearers had to set the cots down to make some changes in the way of carrying them, her cot had stood a moment by the side of Van Shaw's. And in that moment, in the pale darkness, softened by the light of two or three lanterns, she had felt her hand seized. She almost screamed. It was Van Shaw's hand that had reached out from his blanket and for a moment he had almost crushed her fingers. She was not certain even now that he had known what he was doing, or that it was more than a convulsive movement in his semi-conscious condition. But the memory of it burned her

cheeks like fire, and long after the last embers of the camp fire had died into grey ashes, she lay there in the tent wide awake and sleepless.

After awhile she grew aware that her mother was sitting close by her. Esther had determined, after what she had heard from Bauer, to have a talk with Helen at the first opportunity. The accident to Van Shaw had changed her purpose somewhat, but she said to herself it had not changed the facts in the case of Van Shaw's character, and the matter was still in the same condition as before the accident happened. With that in mind, mother and daughter began to talk together almost in a whisper, mindful of the thin tent walls and the nearness of the other members of the party. Their precaution was, however, almost needless, for everyone in both camps was sound asleep, and Van Shaw's own wagon and tent were at the farthest bounds of the camp, removed from the rest so he would not be disturbed.

"I can't sleep, mother, it has been such an exciting day. Was there ever such a day; in my life? And I think this last thing has shaken me. I never knew before what it meant to have nerves. But I can't shut out the picture of that snake dance and that terrible cliff and———"

She hesitated and then feeling her mother's hand enfolding hers, she said, with the frankness that had always been true of her confidences with her mother.

"There is another thing that has made the day different from any other day for me. I ought to tell you, mother."

"Don't tell anything that belongs to you as your own."

"No. But this belongs to you. I cannot rest without telling."

Helen was glad the darkness hid her face. She told her mother plainly what Van Shaw had said to her up there on the rock during the brief time they had been alone.

When Helen had apparently told all, Esther was silent. Helen began to feel frightened.

"Well, mother, you don't blame me, do you? Did I, have I—at any time given him any—any—encouragement to think———"

"No, no, dear, I am sure you have not been unmaidenly. But you do not know all —as I do, as others do, of this young man. I think you ought to know before you let your feeling, whatever it is, go farther."

And in a direct, plain way, as she had always talked with her children, Esther told Helen what Bauer had told her.

When she finished, the girl was silent so long, that her mother began to fear again, that deadening fear she had experienced of late whenever she had come to realise the girl's infatuation for the luxurious life. But Esther was not prepared for the question Helen asked when she broke her long silence.

"How did you come to know all this, mother? How do you know it is true?"

It was Esther's turn to be silent. If she told Helen that her source of information was Bauer, the girl might reasonably put it down as due to the jealousy of a rival, and so question its reliability. As a matter of fact, at that very moment, Van Shaw's parting words were in Helen's memory, "Don't believe all the stories you may hear about me."

"Mr. Bauer told me," said Esther slowly. "He knew the facts. They are known to others at Burrton. His only motive was to save you the———"

"He might spare himself the trouble," said Helen, sharply. "I can't help thinking he is interfering in my affairs and especially in Mr. Van Shaw's."

"He certainly interfered in his affairs when he saved his life to-night," said Esther quietly, and the words smote Helen almost like a blow. For she realised for the first time that night that her sympathy and imagination had been exercised almost wholly for Van Shaw, broken and bruised in that awful fall over the cliff. "Saved his life!" Bauer had done that! After telling her mother the story she had just heard! It was a most wonderful thing to do, as Elijah Clifford had said in his narrative out there a little while ago. And yet, and yet, she heard herself saying to her mother the next moment:

"It seems strange that Mr. Bauer should tell you this. It doesn't seem possible. I can't believe it!"

At that, Esther could not suppress a heart cry so full of agony that Helen was terrified.

"Mother! mother!" was all she could say. But Esther quickly calmed herself.

"Helen, if this young man should be unworthy of you, could you give yourself to him simply because he had money to offer?"

"No, no, mother, I am not wicked like that. You must not think so. I could not help questioning Mr. Bauer's statements. He is not altogether———" she could not say the word "disinterested," and her mother said it for her.

"But he knows how hopeless his case is. He is not expecting to gain any favour by telling me what he knows. Can you not see it is simply to save you from making the most awful mistake a girl can make in all her life when she unknowingly marries such a man? Bauer never expects to be a successful suitor. I do not believe you have any true measure of his feeling for you. But he is willing to risk anything to spare you misery. Cannot you see that? What other motive could he have? He is not a rival. The poor fellow told me frankly that he had given up all hope for himself. It is pure friendship, and it is so rare and so beautiful a thing that you cannot afford to trample it down or disbelieve the story he told me. Helen, if you should let your admiration for money and its power take such a step as to encourage a man like Van Shaw, it would break your mother's heart. But worse than that, it would break your own. Oh, you cannot, you will not do such a thing."

What could Helen say to that? And what less could Esther say to her? Let the careless mothers in America answer—the mothers who never talk frankly with their daughters about these things, and the careless daughters who never take their mothers into their confidence. How many unhappy marriages would never occur if mothers did their duty and daughters listened to and heeded the best friend they have on earth.

When Mrs. Douglas had finally fallen asleep, Helen still remained broad awake. Things had been said in the heart talk that made it impossible for her to compose herself to sleep. She could no longer doubt the truthfulness of Bauer or his clear motive, and strange tumult arose in her thought over the statement her mother had made about his abandonment of any thought of her as her suitor. The fact that he had expressed such a sentiment to her mother made Helen a little angry. Why should he give up all hope so easily—why—what was she thinking? She said to herself she did not want men to be cowards, but surely Felix Bauer was not a coward. A man who would go over a cliff like that did not deserve to have

a timid girl like her call him a coward. Only———

And in the midst of all her other feelings she could not altogether shut out the sight of Van Shaw, broken and bruised as he had lain in agony there on the seat in the little chapel and she could not, even after all her mother had said, quite dismiss him from her thought. Her cheek glowed, as she raised the question in her imagination, of money and its fascinating power. Were all young men of wealth like Van Shaw? Would it never be possible for her to marry wealth and virtue together? And again there was that strange commingling of shame and exultation as she realised what a power she possessed to attract even such an one as Van Shaw, and try as hard as she would she did not drive out the scene of his declaration that morning. At any rate, it was genuine. Let him be what he had been, might she not awaken all the latent good in his nature and save him—her mother's ideas were very strict and serious. They were perhaps puritanical. But after all———

So she restlessly went back and forth in her argument and only fell asleep towards morning, her heart and mind wearied with the whole thing. Before she fell asleep she resolved to have a talk with Miss Gray and make her tell what she knew. She said to herself she would at least not dismiss Van Shaw entirely until she knew even more than her mother had been able to tell her about him.

But before the opportunity came for Miss Gray's confidence, several unexpected events occurred that made Helen wonder if she were in a land of enchantment. After what had already become a part of her history in this strange land, she might be pardoned, if, with her highly romantic temperament, she felt excited to an unusual degree.

In the first place, Mr. Masters had word, that next morning after the snake dance, that he was needed imperatively at Tolchaco on account of the illness of Ansa, old Begwoettins' grandchild. This was Miss Gray's favourite, and she was eager to return to the mission with Mr. and Mrs. Masters as soon as possible. Accordingly the fastest team and the lightest outfit were pressed into service and a short time after breakfast Mr. and Mrs. Masters and Miss Gray were ready to take the road by the Oraibi Wash, hoping to make Tolchaco by the next afternoon. Elijah Clifford wanted to go but it seemed necessary for him to remain with Mr. and Mrs. Douglas and help pack up for the return trip. Besides, two of the chuck wagon teams had broken their hobbles in the night and wandered off into the "indefinite nowhere," as Clifford said, and until they were

found and brought back, it was impossible for the rest of the party to hitch in and leave Oraibi.

As if Providence had come to the special help of Walter, just before Masters had finished his preparations to leave, the Navajo runner who had brought word of Ansa's illness went silently to Walter and handed him a letter that had reached Tolchaco post office the day the runner started. It had a special delivery stamp on it to indicate the desire of the sender for haste, and after reading, Walter rushed over to his father who was helping Masters hitch up the traces.

"Listen to this, father!" he said in great excitement, while Mrs. Masters and Miss Gray were getting into the wagon and saying good-bye to Mrs. Douglas and Helen. "Anderson writes that Blake, the assistant foreman, is sick, and if I can come on and help him work over the installation of those new Reimark dynamos before term opens, he can promise me a good place as second assistant in the coil room this winter. I know more about the Reimark than Anderson himself and it will be a fine chance for me. He says I can have full pay for summer term work. I shall have to start back to Burrton by the first, anyway, and if Mr. Masters can take me along now, I can get over to Canyon Diablo or Winslow in time to make the California express and get into Burrton next week."

Masters gave a quick consent.

"We can take four as well as three. Come on."

Walter rushed his few camp things into his suit case, stowed it under the seat, kissed his mother and Helen, shook hands with Bauer, who was able to sit up on his cot in the near by tent, and climbed into the wagon by the side of Mr. Masters.

Elijah Clifford was not present when all this occurred, and when he came into camp two hours later trailing the fugitive horses after him, Masters's wagon was a black speck down by the Oraibi Wash.

Bauer told him of Walter's unexpected return to Tolchaco with Mr. Masters and Miss Gray.

"Yes, I told you," said Clifford. And for a moment Bauer thought he could detect a note of pensive regret in his words. "I told you Walter was lost. It's wonderful what providences there are for some people. That professor in that school

couldn't have figured on getting that letter here at a more real serviceable opportunity for Walter, if he had been a real first class magician. And did you say there was a special delivery stamp on the letter? That beats everything worse than nothing. That's the first time, I reckon, in five hundred years that a special delivery stamp was ever used on a Tolchaco letter. And just think of the way things cogged into the right openings to get that letter there by special messenger. Well, well, I wouldn't mind being in Walter's place myself if I didn't feel so necessary here. But Mr. Douglas can't drive these mustangs back to Tolchaco."

He winked at Bauer good naturedly and hastened to inquire into his condition.

"I'm black and blue," said Bauer, "but otherwise, sehr gut. This is a miraculous climate. My hemorrhage is slight, and I don't believe it will recur. I have no symptoms. I don't want you to delay the return on my account." Then he added after a pause, "How is Van Shaw?"

"That fellow," said Elijah, "has missed breaking his neck by a miracle. His collar bone was fractured clear up to the last bone in his spinal column. Both of his legs were broken below the knee. He must have struck right on his toes when he fell, and doubled up on himself. He can't move out of here for some while. But I understand his mother has sent a wire from Winslow for Mr. Van Shaw to come on from Pittsburgh. She is pretty well upset by the whole business. She tried to thank me for saving her son's life and I think she was too hysterical and excited to understand me when I told her you were the party. She hinted that her husband would probably deed a railroad or two to me for saving her precious son's life. If they send the railroad out here I'll turn it over to you. I don't want it."

"But you did save him," said Bauer with some feeling.

"Well, no, I reckon I just preserved him. You had him saved, and I just took what you handed over and passed it up. But, what were you doing out there on the edge of that rock last night, anyhow? I forgot to ask when I was down there on the ledge and never thought of it again until just now."

Bauer was spared the embarrassment of trying to satisfy Clifford's good natured curiosity by the arrival into the tent of Mrs. Douglas, accompanied by the tourist doctor who had offered his services to both Bauer and Van Shaw and had fortunately had enough of his repair kit with him to do all that could be done

outside of a well appointed hospital.

He pronounced Bauer to be in good condition and anticipated no recurrence of the flow for him if he were careful. Van Shaw was in a more serious case. He was suffering from a nervous shock and would have to stay where he was for some time. A room had been hired in a small stone house belonging to the government farmer, and Van Shaw was as comfortable as he could be under the circumstances. But he was delirious a part of the time and the doctor evidently believed his condition to be serious, if not critical.

Helen received the news of all this from her mother when she came back from Bauer's tent. She was much shocked at the account Mrs. Douglas gave. And again, as during the night, she found herself dwelling more over Van Shaw's suffering than Bauer's heroism.

The doctor advised two days' rest for Bauer before starting back to Tolchaco, so Clifford delayed the preparations for their start and during that time Talavenka came to see Helen, and Helen, with her accustomed enthusiasm, suggested to her in Esther's presence, a plan for going east and completing her education.

Talavenka listened with perfect equanimity to Helen's glowing account of the opportunities for education in the girls' school at Milton. Then she said with more than a quiet manner,—it was a poise of all the faculties, that a white person seldom possesses:

"You are kind, but I ought to stay here with my mother for awhile. She needs me."

"But would she not be willing to have you go away for a little while just to gain more power for your people? Mother, would you be willing to have Talavenka stay with us this winter?"

"I have already talked with your father and Mr. and Mrs. Masters about Talavenka and we are ready to take her into our home and treat her like one of our own circle," said Esther, who was chairman of the missionary committee in her church and a great enthusiast in all forms of missionary work.

Talavenka turned her black eyes to Mrs. Douglas. Her face shone. The light of her Christian faith illuminated her countenance like a gleam of sunshine. It was so marked that both Mrs. Douglas and Helen were startled by it.

"I do not know how to thank you. But my mother needs me this winter. I must stay with her."

She said it so gently, with such a complete sense of joyousness and an absence of all thought of renunciation, that Helen was profoundly moved. There was no possibility of changing her mind or insisting. There was something about Talavenka's simple statement that was distinctly final.

When the girl rose to go, Helen noticed the reddish brown water jar that Talavenka had dropped by the tent opening when she had entered.

"Yes," she said, as she put the jar on her back after passing the cord through the ears of it, "I am going down to the spring. How glad I am to be so well. Jesus helps me to bear all things."

She went out and half an hour later, Helen, lying on her cot outside the tent, saw her again coming up the trail with the swinging trot peculiar to the Hopi women, the full jar on her back, and she was singing, not the old song that her mother still sung, but a Christian hymn, "A little talk with Jesus makes it right, all right."

Helen watched her until she vanished behind the first cluster of grey houses. Talavenka had gone back to her people for awhile. But her torch was aflame, the torch of that faith that is destined in time to kindle the grey rock of Oraibi into a beacon of illumination that shall give healing and salvation to all those darkened minds and make the desert to blossom like the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley.

The second day Elijah Clifford and Paul began to pack up, ready to break camp the following morning and start back to Oraibi. Van Shaw's condition was not much changed except that he was more rational. This was a hopeful symptom and the doctor made the most of it, encouraging Mrs. Van Shaw all he could.

Mr. Van Shaw was expected the next day, coming from Winslow. Van Shaw's friends, after learning that there was nothing special for them to do, had already made their plans to leave when the Tolchaco party went, going in company with Clifford.

Helen was nervous and unhappy. She had begun to brood over matters. Her mother had not said any more after that night's talk, but she could easily see that Helen was still going over the same ground, and that the chapter had not yet

been closed for her. The thought gave Esther much uneasiness and yet she thought it unwise to open the subject again and so maintained a discreet silence, trusting to absence from the scene and the return to Milton to do what only time could effect in the girl's mind.

It lacked an hour or two of the time for departure the next morning when Mrs. Van Shaw came over to the camp with marks of trouble in her looks as she came into the tent where Mrs. Douglas and Helen were sitting. Mrs. Douglas was an energetic camper and had completed her packing early and was ready for the wagons as soon as the horses had been hitched in.

Mrs. Van Shaw was a showy woman who had done her best to spoil her son ever since his birth, by giving him everything he wanted, simply because he asked for it.

On this occasion she came at once to the point of her errand.

"Mrs. Douglas, my boy wants to see Miss Douglas before you go. He says he wants to say something to her in our presence. He has been begging me to come and see you all the morning. Can you come over now before you leave?"

Helen sat up a little higher on her cot, and her cheeks flamed. Mrs. Douglas looked at her, hesitated, and then answered Mrs. Van Shaw.

CHAPTER XVII

"WHAT does your son want to say to my daughter?" asked Esther. The thought of a dramatic interview between them was exceedingly distasteful to her.

"I don't know," said Mrs. Van Shaw guardedly. "He has been begging me to come and see you. Oh, he is very ill!" and at that the mother in her, mistaken and distorted though it were, in her training of the boy, broke down and she began to sob.

Esther was moved at the sight, and after a moment she said gently, "We are all so sorry for you, Mrs. Van Shaw. The shock of it all must have been terrible for you."

"I am just about prostrated by it. Mr. Van Shaw is expected to-day. He was in New York when the news reached him. But it surely is not asking anything improper to ask Miss Douglas to see my boy before you leave. We shall be obliged to remain here in this dreadful place until the doctor says Ross can be moved."

"Will you see him?" asked Esther, turning to Helen, and speaking quietly.

"Yes, I am willing to go," replied Helen in a very low voice. She dreaded and at the same time courted the interview. It had just the tinge of dramatic setting in it that appealed to her highly romantic imagination. She did not know what he wanted to say to her and she was not in the least prepared for the interview. But it seemed to her that it would be a piece of foolish affectation to refuse his request and especially since she would in all probability not have any occasion to meet him again.

Esther went out of the tent and in a few words told Paul of Mrs. Van Shaw's visit and its object. Helen would have to be carried over to the government farmer's house. Clifford called up two of the Indians and with their help, he and Paul carried Helen over. Bauer, who was hardly yet fit to sit up, but had already climbed into his place in one of the chuck wagons, saw the whole thing from where he sat, and again his mind went into a whirl with jealousy and anger. If Helen's mother had told her of Van Shaw's character, how could the girl, in spite of all that, go and see him now? It seemed to him like an indication of something coarse and low in Helen's nature, something which contradicted his pure thought of her. He could not understand it, and being ignorant of the fact that Helen was going in response to Mrs. Van Shaw's request, he brooded miserably over the whole affair and sat there gazing gloomily at the little stone house into which the group with Helen had gone.

Paul and Clifford and the Indians soon came out and went on completing their preparations for the departure.

Meanwhile, in the little room where Ross Van Shaw lay, tortured in mind and body, a remarkable scene was being enacted.

There was just room close by the door for the cot on which Helen was sitting, and the moment she was placed there, she was aware of Van Shaw's face staring at her. The sight of it shocked her almost to the verge of hysterics. She instantly

controlled herself as she quickly noted the fact that both her mother and Mrs. Van Shaw were watching her.

"I wanted to see you before you went away," Van Shaw was saying, and his voice sounded very weak and a long ways off to Helen as she saw the tremble of his hands and the uncertain glance he cast at her, so sharply different from his previous bold and positive attitude towards her.

"We are so sorry for you," said Helen. "It was a miracle you were not killed."

"Yes. Thanks to Mr. Clifford, mother tells me. I want to thank him before he goes. Mother, won't you ask him to come in?"

"Yes, Ross. But do you think you can bear all this excitement? I am afraid it will be too much for you." The government farmer's wife, who was acting as nurse, added a word of objection.

"No, it won't," he said irritably. "I want to see him. Didn't you tell me he saved my life? I ought at least to thank him for it."

"I'll tell him, yes I will!" Mrs. Van Shaw spoke in the hurried, anxious tone of one who feared a scene if she refused his request.

"Tell him now, then mother. Ask him to come in now."

"I will. I will." Mrs. Van Shaw rose and went out of the room, leaving Mrs. Douglas and Helen staring at Van Shaw and wondering how he had not heard the news of his rescue by Bauer.

Van Shaw turned his look again towards Helen. And she saw then, even in her agitation, that he was moved by the excitement of his fever. As a matter of fact, the doctor, when he came the next day, was in a towering rage with Mrs. Van Shaw over what he called her insane yielding to the request of a delirious patient.

"I wanted to see you, Miss Douglas, before you went and warn you about that German fellow Bauer. He's been telling you stories about me, and trying to butt into my affairs and I just won't stand for it. You ought to know that his father and mother are in disgrace over a great scandal———"

Esther could not bear any more. She stood up and started to speak, just as Mrs. Van Shaw came hurrying in with Elijah Clifford. Helen was looking at Van Shaw with a different look from that which she had given him when she entered. It seemed as if a veil had been suddenly torn away from the girl's face and she was seeing something clearly which she had seen only dimly heretofore.

Before Esther could say what was on her lips, Van Shaw had gone on. But it was evident to all of them now that he was becoming delirious.

"Bauer hasn't any business to butt into my affairs. He's a sneaking cur. I won't stand for it. I'll get even with him. I'll tell Miss Douglas about his family. She'll never look at him again after that. I'll cook his job."

Mrs. Van Shaw looked uncertainly from one face to another.

"Here's Mr. Clifford, Ross. You wanted to see him."

"Clifford! Clifford!" Van Shaw turned his burning eyes on Clifford, who stood at the end of the bed gravely looking at him, and for a moment the delirium cleared and he spoke quietly.

"Oh! I wanted to thank you for pulling me up that cliff. It was a mighty brave thing to do and I won't forget it."

Elijah Clifford was not a cultured man as the word is ordinarily used, but he was more than that. He "sensed" things. He knew what to do in awkward situations. He did not know what had been said before he came but he saw in one swift glance that matters were in a delicate and critical state. He also saw in a moment what Van Shaw's condition was. He was not in a mental attitude to be reasoned with. So Clifford walked quietly up to the bedside, put one of his strong, firm hands on Van Shaw's trembling fingers as he had clasped them together and said:

"If I had anything to do with helping to save your life, I am very thankful the good God used me. But your mother will tell you when you get well enough to hear it that you owe your life, not to me, but to a braver man, Felix Bauer. I can't help hoping—" Elijah said it with an indescribable accent of tenderness—"that when you get well again, you will make the most of your life to the glory of God!"

For a moment Van Shaw looked up at Clifford in a bewildered manner, but as if

he partly understood. Then he turned his head towards Helen and his glance wandered uncertainly about the room. Then he burst into a delirious laugh.

"Bauer saved me! That sneaking cur! Why, he pushed me over the cliff!
I'll get even with him! Butting into my affairs! I won't stand for it.
His father and mother———"

But Helen could not bear any more. She had cowered down when Van Shaw spoke the first word. Now she whispered to her mother, "Take me out, mother, I cannot bear it."

Clifford simply said to Mrs. Van Shaw:

"We had better go, Mrs. Van Shaw. If you and the nurse need any help, call us."

He took hold of one end of the litter and Mrs. Douglas took the other and they carried Helen out. Before they were out of hearing, Van Shaw was cursing and swearing in a torrent of words that made Helen cover her ears as she lay back on the cot sobbing from the nervous strain she had been bearing.

Clifford and Paul and the Indians finished the work of breaking up camp and in half an hour the party was ready to leave Oraibi. Esther had asked Clifford to wait until she went over to enquire if she could do any more for Mrs. Van Shaw, when she met her coming out of the house.

"No, there is nothing you can do," she said, in answer to Mrs. Douglas's inquiry. "Ross was always that violent whenever he had a fever. Ever since he was little, he has been the same. It is dreadful what words he will use when he is out of his head. But I cannot let Mr. Clifford go until I know the truth about the German, Bauer. If he saved Ross, Mr. Van Shaw would not forgive me if—if we didn't do something for him. But I have been so confused during all this dreadful affair that I haven't really known how it all happened. I want to see Mr. Bauer, if you can wait a little."

Mrs. Van Shaw was agitated and tearful. Esther could easily see in her a naturally good natured, kind hearted woman, with a superficial education, who had ruined her children by unlimited indulgence of all their selfish habits, A woman who had been brought up to believe that the greatest of all things in the world is success in getting money and ingenuity in spending it. With all the rest she was a woman of some direct force of character which, in times of crisis as at

the present moment, asserted itself with considerable positiveness.

She came up to the wagons and spoke to Clifford first.

"Mr. Clifford, before you go, I want to know the truth about the rescue of Ross from that fall. I know you told me about Mr. Bauer, but I wasn't clear about it. Mr. Van Shaw would never forgive me if I didn't get the thing straight. He is very particular. And of course, I naturally am deeply interested in knowing what occurred."

"There is Mr. Bauer, madam," said Clifford gravely. "You had better ask him about it."

Bauer was in the same wagon with Mr. and Mrs. Douglas and Helen. On the return trip, in the absence of Mr. Masters, Paul was driving the chuck wagon which had been reloaded so as to allow room for Helen's cot in the rear end of it.

Mrs. Van Shaw went over to the wagon and began to ask Bauer questions.

"Is it true that you went down after my son before Mr. Clifford came?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"In the dark?"

"There are no lights on the edge of the rock."

"Did you see him lying there below?"

"I saw something that looked like a body."

"How far below was it?"

"I don't know. I hadn't time to measure."

"Mr. Clifford said something to me about finding you clinging to Ross's arm. Why were you doing that if he was lying on the ledge?"

"He had turned over and was rolling off."

"Then you were holding his arm———"

"Until help came. Then Mr. Clifford pulled him back over the edge."

Mrs. Van Shaw paused. Then she said abruptly:

"My son says you pushed him over the cliff."

"How dreadful!" a voice broke in and there was Helen, Her cheeks on fire, sitting up confronting Mrs. Van Shaw.

"I know, Miss Douglas, he spoke in his delirium. But what were you doing out there together? Why should you and Ross be there?" she said, turning again to Bauer, who, when confronted with Van Shaw's charge, had turned pale and clenched his fingers deep into his palms.

"I cannot tell you why we were there. I did not push him over the cliff. The edge of it where he stood, crumbled and he went down."

"Why were you there with him? Can't you tell me that?"

"I would rather not."

Mrs. Van Shaw looked uncertainly from one to another. There was a mystery here. She was too much of a woman of the world not to know, and indeed, her son had plainly told her that he was infatuated with Miss Douglas, but what had this obscure German invalid to do with it? In the midst of all her questions, Helen broke in.

"Mrs. Van Shaw, do you realise that Mr. Bauer risked his life to save your son? What he said about being pushed over the cliff is a fearful thing to say even in delirium. Surely you can't believe that, after knowing that Mr. Bauer went down the cliff to save him."

She spoke with a passionate eagerness that was an expression of one of the splendid traits of her personality,—a genuine love of justice. Poor Bauer hardly realised that she was defending him, but he said to himself even then that he had never seen her beauty flame out so magnificently. And then before Mrs. Van Shaw could reply to Helen, he said to the astonishment of all in the breathless group:

"I ought to confess to you, Mrs. Van Shaw, that just before your son fell over the

cliff, I had a feeling of hatred for him so strong that I—I—think I had murder in my heart. I don't pretend to deny that I came the nearest that night to being a murderer in feeling that I ever came. But I was at least six feet away. I never put my hands on him. His fall was a pure accident. May I add that the moment he fell, my hatred seemed to leave me, and I had no thought except to try to save him."

Mrs. Van Shaw stared at Bauer in astonishment. She had never met anyone in her circle of acquaintances who possessed such transparent honesty. But she was a woman who, with all her faults, had some rugged sense of honour and was more than an ordinary judge of character. She came up to Bauer closer and put out her hand.

"Mr. Bauer," she said frankly, "I believe what you say. And I can't let you leave without expressing my great thanks for your brave act. Ross must have been talking in his delirium. But you know—I remember one German proverb in my schoolgirl exercises—'Jeder Mutter Kind ist schon?' 'Every mother thinks her own child beautiful.' And I couldn't understand how Ross could make such a statement. But why should you have such a hatred for my poor boy?"

The question was one Bauer could not very well answer, and he did not even speak a word. Mrs. Van Shaw looked at Mrs. Douglas and Helen. Helen's cheeks burned. Mrs. Van Shaw was a woman of the world and she thought she understood some of the reason for Bauer's silence and Helen's confusion. But she was also convinced that something more than a jealous rivalry between two young men must account for the depth of feeling on the German student's part.

She did not ask her question again but gravely said to Bauer as she turned to go, "Mr. Van Shaw will want to express his thanks to you. What will your address be?"

"I suppose I shall be at Tolchaco this fall and winter. I would rather not have you or Mr. Van Shaw feel under any obligation to me at all. Mr. Clifford certainly did much more than I did. If he had not gone down there, your son would not be living."

"We shall thank Mr. Clifford also. And we shall not forget either of you."

She went back into the little stone house and a few minutes later, Clifford and Paul had the horses headed down by the Oraibi Wash, bound for Tolchaco.

All through that day's drive Helen Douglas hardly said a word, even to her mother. She was going over the strange experiences which had become a part of her life since she had come into this desert land. The scenes at Oraibi would never become dim in her memory, and especially those which had occurred during the last two days.

Her probing of her feelings in the analysis she was somewhat fond of making of herself resulted in a complete reversion of her attitude towards Ross Van Shaw. She said to herself she dated that change of thought from his words and actions that morning, and especially on account of his brutal attempt to "get even," as he said, with Bauer. Even allowing a great deal for his action as due to his mental and physical condition, the whole thing, Helen now felt sure, was an indication of his general character. He had been caught for a little while off his guard, and in that time, Helen had seen him as he was. And the vision she had caught of his perverted heart and mind was not a pleasant vision. She even shuddered at herself as, with burning face, she recalled how near she had come, on such brief and slight acquaintance, to giving herself to such a life, lured in great part by the glamour of that golden mirage into which so many of earth's brave and beautiful souls have hastened, only to find its sparkling waters to be nothing but dust and its promise of luscious delights of the senses, nothing but the dead sea fruit of bitter disappointment.

It should be said in all honest judgment of Helen's experiences at this time, that the girl's final rejection of all thought of Van Shaw (who, before she had reached Milton, passed out of her history), was due to more than the revulsion she felt over his words in the little stone house at Oraibi. It was due as much to her mother's counsel, and in fact, to the entire atmosphere of a healthy, happy home life which she had always known, and in which Esther had trusted for the final outcome of Helen's choices. So that what seemed to her at that time to be a sudden act due to an accidental revelation of character, was, as a matter of fact, due to a life long training in a home which had established in the fibre of its whole system, underlying principles of right thinking and pure living.

When, a few days later, word came to Tolchaco that Ross Van Shaw had recovered sufficiently to be taken home and that he would probably suffer no permanent crippling from his fall, Helen found herself simply in a mild way glad to know the fact, but that was all, and Van Shaw faded out of her mind even more quickly than he had blossomed into it.

All through this first day's travel towards the mission, Felix Bauer was also going through some tumult of feeling over the events that had made history since the party had left the mission.

He was sore at heart over much that had taken place and could not reconstruct his former image of Helen as at heart a maidenly, dignified girl, worthy of the most exalted worship. He said to himself that even after she must have known from her mother what Van Shaw was, she had gone to see him, to say good-bye, to encourage him, to—his mind could find no excuse for her and do what he would, he felt himself growing more and more distressed over it.

Mrs. Douglas was a very wise woman and Bauer's trouble did not escape her notice. She understood the reason for it, but it was only at the close of the day, during the preparations for the night camp, that she found an opportunity to speak to Bauer alone.

"Felix," she said, using his first name as she had begun to do of late, to Bauer's quiet pleasure, "I know what is troubling you now. But Helen did not go over to see Van Shaw of her own wish. She went because his mother came over and brought a request from him to see Helen. No, I don't think you need to know what was said there in our presence. It ought to be enough for you to know that I am quite sure Helen has passed the place of her infatuation, if indeed she has gone so far as to yield to such a feeling. I could not let you imagine that Helen was really lacking in real maidenly conduct."

Bauer's face shone with delight. "Oh, thank you, Mrs. Douglas! I have been doing her injustice all day. You have no idea how relieved I feel. And I have been sitting in judgment on everybody. Oh, if I were a monk now, like one of my ancestors, I would lash myself bloody. What a fool I must be to think I have a right to judge others as I have. And I have let hatred and malice and revenge creep into my soul at the thought of Van Shaw. I don't see how God can forgive me."

"He has forgiven a good many worse men than you, Felix," said Mrs. Douglas, smiling at him. "Don't lose any sleep over that."

Felix Bauer slept like a child that night and as his habit was he wakened early and as he sat up and saw the figure of Elijah Clifford kneeling out on the sand, the same thought of God's benignant presence occurred to him which the same

sight had roused in him before. Clifford rose and came in to make the usual preparations for breakfast.

"I have been praying for Ansa. By this time the folks must have got there if the river is not in flood. We haven't had any runner bring bad news. I don't know what I'd do if Ansa should be taken. It would just about break Miss Gray's heart too. She thinks everything of that child. She says she is going to train her to be a great teacher for her people."

Bauer expressed his sympathy and asked if there was a good doctor to come over to the mission from Flagstaff.

"Yes. Or it's possible Doctor West will be there from Raymond. He sometimes pays us a visit about this time of the year. My! Wouldn't it be providential if he should come along for Ansa. And he could dissect you at the same time and like as not find out that your hemorrhages don't come from your lungs, and that you haven't got consumption any more than I have. The doctors sometimes make mistakes in their diagnoses you know. Would you feel bad to learn that you didn't have tuberculosis after all?"

"I believe I would be able to bear the news if it was broken to me gently."

"But maybe Miss Helen wouldn't pity you so much, eh?"

"I don't want to be pitied."

Clifford looked up from his fire approvingly at Bauer.

"You're right, my son. Pity from a girl when you want something else from her is like apple pie minus the apple. It's pretty dry fodder. But say," Elijah abruptly changed the topic of talk, "What about Walter Douglas? He's a likely fellow, isn't he? Bound to make his mark, isn't he?"

Bauer stared a little, not knowing why Clifford was asking the question.

"Yes, Walter is going to surprise everyone with his talents one of these days."

"And he's a good fellow morally and all that I suppose?"

"He certainly is. I don't know a better. Anyone that has such a mother as Mrs.

Douglas can't help being good."

Clifford was silent while he adjusted various utensils around the fire.

"Yes, Mrs. Douglas is an angel. Mr. Douglas will never have to buy an aeroplane for her. She's got her own wings. And some day they'll carry her right up to heaven." Then, after another pause:

"How old is Walter?"

"Twenty-four."

"How old should you take Miss Gray to be?"

Bauer was surprised at the question.

"I don't know. I am a poor hand at guessing."

"I know, because she told me. She is twenty-eight. How old would you take me to be?"

"I have no idea."

"I'm just thirty next Thanksgiving. When I was born in Vermont thirty years ago turkeys were only eight cents a pound. Now they are twenty-six and we can't raise 'em out here at any price on account of the cost of feed. I'd give most anything for a good plateful of turkey with stuffing and fixin's. But there's lots of things in this world we can't have. We must learn to get along on mutton and pancakes and canned ginger bread. Such is life."

It seemed to Bauer that Clifford was a little sober over his philosophy. But during the day he was jolly and high spirited, keeping the whole company at concert pitch with his stories and fun. But through it all ran a thread of sombre hue as the thought of Ansa obtruded.

When the river was reached the party anxiously scanned its muddy stretch to see if it was too high to ford. Big rains had come down from the mountains during their absence from the mission and the banks were pressing full. Elijah, however, thought it safe to make the ford, and after a somewhat exciting and perilous passage they got across and by night of that day were at the Mission where they

were joyfully welcomed by the mission workers and the news that Dr. West had come in two days before, and had declared Ansa out of danger and rapidly recovering. After supper Mr. and Mrs. Masters, Miss Clifford, Miss Gray and Elijah, the Douglases and Bauer, and Dr. West met in the school room and held a Thanksgiving service. The last thing that night that Bauer was conscious of was the memory of Elijah Clifford's prayer. He had never heard anything to equal it for tenderness and exaltation of feeling.

The Douglases were to leave for Milton in three days. The last day of their stay at the Mission Helen was sitting on the old cottonwood log by the river when Miss Gray came down and sat by her, going over some of the desert experiences.

After a while Helen said: "We have not had any opportunity to talk over the matter I mentioned at Oraibi. I don't think it's necessary now."

Miss Gray looked very much pleased.

"I am more than relieved to hear you say that. If I had thought there was any danger to you—I would have warned you—I did not realise that there was any _____"

"There was, for a little while," Helen said in a low voice, not looking up. "It has passed."

"Anything I could say now would only revive a painful memory. Only, I feel as if out of justice to what your mother may have said to you I ought to confirm it. Helen—if you had come to such an impossible act as becoming the wife of Ross Van Shaw, it would have been the ruin of your life. I must say this—Van Shaw was engaged to my sister during his first year at Burrton. She is remarkably like you in many ways. A great lover of wealth and luxury. Van Shaw broke her heart by his conduct. Let us not say any more. I did not mean to say this much." Miss Gray exhibited an agitation that Helen had never seen in her before. "You need not fear for me any more," Helen said earnestly. "I begin to see more and more the danger I was in. I am thankful to escape."

She began to tell Miss Gray about the meeting between Mrs. Van Shaw and Bauer. That led naturally to enthusiastic comments on the bravery of Bauer and Clifford.

"Your brother Walter said when he left for Milton the day of our arrival here that

he would have given anything to have had the courage to do what Bauer did."

"It seems to me that Mr. Clifford was just as brave."

"Yes, only he insists that he had a lantern and that he was greatly helped when he got down on the ledge by having the lantern to brace his feet against. Did you ever see anyone so absurd or so—brave—as Elijah Clifford?"

"No, unless it is yourself."

Miss Gray blushed.

"I am not brave. I am a coward in many ways. Why, I am down here because I delight to do this work. It is no cross for me. And—in other ways I am a coward. And—I am very proud. Tell me, Helen, do you think of Elijah Clifford as—as an illiterate man? Does he seem to you like—like an ignorant person?"

Helen was astonished at the question and could not help noticing her friend's embarrassment.

"No. It has always seemed to me that Mr. Clifford was a remarkably intelligent and refined character for one who had never had a college education. I would never think of him as illiterate or ignorant. He uses beautiful language. I have never heard such English as he uses in his prayers. And he is a good linguist. I heard Mr. Masters say only this morning that he didn't know what he would do without Clifford's help in translation."

Miss Gray looked pleased, but her face glowed in anticipation of what she was about to say.

"Helen, I am going to confide in you. There is no one here at the mission I want to share with me in this and—and—I feel as if I wanted to talk with you about it. Mr. Clifford has asked me two different times to be his wife, and each time I have refused. And each time it was not because I did not respect and admire him, but because I thought I did not love him and most of all because I felt superior to him in education. I have been to college. It seemed to me as if I should be marrying beneath my rank if I were to be his wife. Do you think I should?"

"Should what? Be his wife?"

Lucy Gray blushed and laughed.

"You know what I meant. Should I make a mistake in marrying him or does it seem to you that I should run the risk of being disappointed in him all the time simply because I am college bred and he is not?"

"No," said Helen frankly. "I believe Mr. Clifford is the kind of man to satisfy you in that respect. He is studying all the time. Have you noticed he has learned an astonishing lot of German from Baeur since he came? I believe he can almost read Hermann and Dorothea now." Helen said it with a significant emphasis which made Miss Gray blush again. And then she added—"Lucy, you said you thought you did not love him and that was the reason you said no. Have you changed your mind?"

"Yes. Oh, I can't help myself! Let me tell you. That night at Oraibi when I first knew that Elijah had gone down there to rescue Bauer and Van Shaw I learned how much he meant to me. I believe I would have gone there myself if Mr. Masters and your father had not been quick witted enough to take the rope the workmen had left out there by the great rock cistern, the first one in all Oraibi. When the three men were pulled up you remember Mr. Clifford was the last. I know that I pulled with the others, but I believe I never thought of either Bauer or Van Shaw. All I cared for was Elijah. I blistered my hands, see!" She opened her palms for Helen to look. "But I never told anyone. And even when he was telling that night about it, I seemed to see him slipping, slipping over that horrible ledge and I just couldn't help actually putting out my hand to draw him back. They say that college graduate young women don't know how to fall in love and that they don't get married because young men are afraid of them, they are so prim and intellectual and superior, but, oh, Helen, I am almost ready to propose to Elijah myself. I love him so much. Isn't that dreadful for a schoolma'am and a college graduate, and especially after she has refused him twice? What would he say?"

"I think he would say yes," replied Helen, delighted to be the confidant in this desert romance.

"I didn't mean that. I mean what would he say if he knew what I have been confessing to you? I would lose his respect."

"And gain his love," laughed Helen. "Lucy, I don't believe it is all hopeless. And

you don't need to fear that you are too intellectually superior to Mr. Clifford. After you are married you will find that he will go on developing mentally."

"He is my superior now in nearly every true thing," said Miss Gray. The blush was still on her cheek and the love light in her eye. At that moment she was recalled to the mission building by one of the children. As she left Helen she said to her, "I trust you to respect my confidence."

Helen sat on the old cottonwood, her eyes on the river, her thoughts musing over her friend's story. She was so absorbed in it that she did not notice Bauer until he was near the end of the log.

"Oh!" she said a little nervously and then quickly, "Won't you sit down? This seems to be the only seat in the park."

Bauer sat down gravely and Helen asked him politely how he was feeling.

Bauer's face lightened so that for a second he looked almost handsome.

"That is partly what I came down to tell you. Dr. West has given me a very careful examination. He says any hemorrhages are not permanent. There is no reason, he says, why I may not entirely recover, even to the extent of going back to school again."

"Will you go back soon?"

"No, he advises me to stay here this winter. I can help Mr. Masters with the trading, handling the rugs that are sold for profit for the mission work. I begin to feel quite strong again."

He sat there silently watching the thick muddy flow of the stream. His face in repose was almost stern. Helen glanced at it timidly and could hardly realise that she was sitting so near to a real hero, one who had risked his life to save an enemy.

"I haven't ever told you, Mr. Bauer, what admiration I feel for your act that night, I think it was the most courageous thing I ever knew."

Bauer turned his head and looked full at her. His eyes were, as Helen had once said, the most splendid she had ever seen. This time they looked at her with a

calm sadness that compelled her own to waver and finally to drop.

"Loben ist nicht lieben," said Bauer firmly. It was the nearest he had ever come to declaring himself, in words. And Helen was the most deficient girl, Walter always said, when it came to languages. She did not know German and did not care to learn. Miss Gray had laughed at her more than once on account of her obtuseness. So Helen now, with some heightened colour, said as she raised her eyes.

"What does that mean?"

"Loben ist nicht Lieben," repeated Bauer.

"Won't you translate it?" asked Helen petulantly. "You know I never understood German."

"I—can't," said Bauer. And to Helen's surprise, he abruptly got up and walked away.

"Loben ist nicht lieben," she softly murmured. "I'll ask Lucy what it means. But he needn't have gone so. He has no manners. I do not think he is nice."

That night after supper she found Miss Gray alone in the school room.

"Lucy, what does this German mean. As near as I can pronounce it, it sounds like this. 'Loben ist nicht lieben'?"

"Say it again."

Helen repeated the sentence.

"Oh! Why, it sounds like 'praising is not loving.' Where did you hear it?"

"Oh, I heard it. I wondered what it meant. You know I don't care for German."

"Nor for *the* German?" Miss Gray ventured.

"Nor for *the* German," Helen said after a pause. And that was as near as she came to exchanging confidences with Miss Gray. But was there anything to give

in exchange?

She asked the question several times on the way home. Her good-bye to Bauer had been commonplace enough. He had ventured at the last moment after the party was seated in the wagon ready for the drive to Canyon Diablo to hand up a book to Helen.

"Would you accept this to use on your journey? You may find it help pass the time. It's the collection of desert flowers I've been making."

Helen was really pleased and expressed her thanks warmly. But nothing more was said except the regular good-byes as the Douglases waved their farewells to all the mission people on the little knoll.

When she was on the train and started for home Helen found on examination that Bauer's modest volume was in reality composed of a rare collection of desert plants, and in the back leaves of the book were several photographs of desert scenes, including a dozen of Oraibi and the snake dance itself. She found her own person in several of the pictures, and the farther she travelled from Tolchaco the more persistently her mind travelled back to that enchanted land of adventure and heroism and love of humanity. She sighed to think that her own life seemed so commonplace. And always there obtruded on her mind the thought of Bauer as he sat there by the river looking at her out of his great brown eyes and saying, "Loben ist nicht lieben." And always as the days flew by and she resumed her special work in music at home, the figure grew more heroic and dignified the longer she mused upon it, while over all shone the desert sun and the white translucent light, with the San Francisco mountains calmly lifting up their cool blackness against a turquoise sky.

Two months later it was Thanksgiving time at the Mission. Somehow, Elijah Clifford gradually became aware that things were going on that were being kept from him. Bauer made a mysterious trip to Flagstaff and when he came back, Mrs. Masters and Miss Clifford carried several packages into the house which Elijah never had a chance to examine. His Yankee curiosity finally got the better of him.

"What is all this?" he asked Bauer one evening. "Is someone going to get married? They needn't keep it from me. But I would like to be invited."

"You'll be invited all right," said Bauer with his rare smile.

When Thanksgiving Day dawned, Masters succeeded with what seemed like a perfectly natural excuse to get Clifford to take a forenoon trip with him up to Touchiniteel's hogan to see the old man and take him a few luxuries for his dinner. When they returned, the Thanksgiving dinner was all ready.

It was impossible to surprise Elijah Clifford entirely, for before he and Masters had stepped into the house he said, "I smell turkey."

Masters laughed. And as Clifford stepped into the dining room everyone greeted him with a shout of welcome.

There on the table in all its glory was a fourteen pound turkey surrounded by all the "fixin's." Elijah Clifford was simply overcome.

"Evidently," he said when the mission family was all seated and were being served, "Mr. Van Shaw has sold one of his railroads and bought this bird to express his gratitude to Mr. Bauer for his recent trapeze performance. Otherwise I don't see how we can afford such hilarious luxury."

"This is Mr. Bauer's treat to you and us on your birthday," said Mr. Masters. "Felix, I'm going to tell. Your modesty will not save you. It seems that our friend's incubator has begun its sales in fine shape and the first royalties came in to Mr. Bauer a few days ago. What does he do but come to me and tell me what you said the other day about wanting a taste of turkey again. So this is Mr. Bauer's treat. He insisted on getting everything down to the nuts and raisins."

"You have all been so good to me that I couldn't repay it if I bought turkeys for every meal. And I don't forget, of course," he added with a grateful look at Elijah, "that I owe my life to you. I am not trying to pay even with fabulously high priced turkeys."

"Well, of course, I had the advantage over you down there in having a lantern to brace my feet against. You hadn't a thing. Not even Van Shaw. But don't mention it. It was no trouble. 'Don't think of such a thing,' as Miss Gray says. And after all, I don't know what would have happened to all of us down there if the folks at the top hadn't let that rope down just in time."

"Everybody is a hero in this country," said Bauer.

"And the turkey is the biggest of all," said Elijah, who was doing it full justice.

"We all hope Mr. Bauer's incubator will continue to head the list of the six best sellers. And say, Bauer, why not get out a special illustrated Thanksgiving edition incubator made to hatch out nothing but turkeys. At the price you must have paid over at Flagstaff for this one, it wouldn't take long before you could make Van Shaw's railroads look like a blind trail through the Grand Canyon."

That Thanksgiving Day dinner was a memorable one at Tolchaco. Everyone was in fine spirits. Clifford kept everyone in a roar with his remarks. Bauer surprised the company by telling two funny stories from the Fliegende Blaetter. Clifford's sister laughed so hard she almost choked on a bone. Mr. and Mrs. Masters grew unusually witty. And Lucy Gray, while not in any way distinguished for any brilliant remarks, glowed with a quiet happiness all through the meal and looked so attractive that Elijah Clifford more than once shot an approving glance at her as she sat by Mrs. Masters and insisted on filling up Clifford's plate whenever a spot on it showed any signs of being uncovered.

After the dishes had been washed by the gentlemen who gallantly offered to do that task, the ladies sauntered up the river to inspect the new site for the new school house which Mr. Douglas thought he could secure for the Mission.

It was a desert day, clear and warm in the sun. Masters and Bauer went out to inspect some pottery recently found near an excavation for a well. Elijah Clifford busied himself at the little barn with some plans for an improved hobble to use on an unusually cunning and inventive pony.

When he stepped out of the barn and looked over to the river bank he saw Miss Gray sitting on the old cottonwood log. The other ladies had gone back to the mission buildings.

Clifford stopped where he was a minute and then slowly walked over to the log and sat down.

"That was a good dinner," he said, a little awkwardly, as he looked first at Miss Gray and then at the river.

"Wasn't it?" said Miss Gray with even more enthusiasm than the subject called for. "Did you enjoy it?"

"Did I? I haven't got over it yet. Somehow I feel as if it would be wrong to eat any canned goods for quite a while. A sort of uncomplimentary reflection on

Bauer. I wouldn't have eaten so much only I didn't want to hurt his feelings by appearing not to appreciate his treat. Isn't he a fine fellow?"

"Yes," said Miss Gray. She did not seem very talkative and appeared very nervous for a young woman who had figured as a life saver on various occasions.

"I wish the Douglases had been here, don't you?" asked Clifford. He had his knife out and, Yankee-like, was busy shaving pieces off the old log. It seemed to help him in keeping up what seemed to promise to be a one-sided talk. "Yes. I—I've had a letter from Milton. Would you like to read it?"

"Sure. I always did enjoy Miss Helen's talk. I expect her letters are as interesting."

"This isn't from Helen. It's from her brother," Miss Gray blushed as Clifford quickly looked up at her. "But I would like to have you read it and give me your advice."

Clifford took the letter without a word. He opened it slowly and read it. Then he looked at Miss Gray with a puzzled look.

"The young man seems to want to open a correspondence with you. That is certainly all right. But you don't want my advice about that, do you?"

"Oh! I meant to give you this letter. It is the second one I received." Miss Gray handed Clifford another letter, and he gravely read that through slowly.

"He seems to be making good progress," was Elijah's comment. "In the first letter he wants to know if he can write, and in the second he wants to know if you will be Mrs. Douglas some time. I call that going some. But it's no more than I expected."

Miss Gray was almost crying.

"Isn't it absurd? What do you think I ought to do? What would you say to him?"

Elijah Clifford looked at Lucy Gray strangely. And then he said very, very quietly:

"Miss Gray, do you think you ought to ask me such a question? Answer it out of your own heart. I have no business to advise you in such a matter."

Lucy Gray gave him one searching look, as her face flamed.

"Give me the letter," was all she said.

Elijah handed it to her, and in some way their fingers touched as Lucy took the letter, and then she deliberately tore it into bits and scattered the pieces down upon the top of the log.

A sudden light came into Elijah Clifford's eyes.

"Is that your answer to it?" he said, moving over on the log a little nearer to Lucy.

"Yes," she answered, and it is a historical fact that she did not move back any. But she said afterwards that she was sitting near the end of the log and couldn't have moved far without falling off and that Elijah knew it.

"Then you don't need my advice? What made you ask for it?"

Lucy Gray, prim school ma'am as she had called herself, answered between crying and laughing, "Oh, I don't care for him. Why, he is only twenty-four and I am twenty-eight. And I can never leave these people here. I am so in love with them."

"With all of them?" asked Elijah desperately.

"Yes. But with some more than others."

Again a light came into Clifford's face as he moved up a little nearer. The bits of paper which had been poor Walter's letter began to fall over the sides of the log. But Elijah Clifford was pale as he said:

"Lucy, I don't want to make another mistake. I have not been able to conceal my feeling for you and I realise the great distance between us when it comes to education. I'm not college bred. And no one feels it more than I do. But I'm not too old to learn. I'm only thirty. And I find my brain works pretty well when I have a motive. I can almost read Herrmann und Dorothea. And I've committed

no end of Heine. I can say 'Die schonste die Jungfrauen sitszet, Dort oben wunderbar' and a lot more. But—I don't dare ask you again to be my wife unless —unless—I can be sure that the differences between us will not make you unhappy. But, oh, if this happiness could be mine! You cannot love these people more than I do. Or yearn over them more. And we are not so far apart after all."

"I'm sure," said Lucy Gray, looking up at him, tears flowing down her cheeks. "I'm sure, Elijah, that we are not so very far apart in any way. And if you want to be happy I am sure———"

She did not need to say any more. Elijah Clifford saw happiness looking into his eyes out of hers and he would have been very much lacking in education if he had not then and there claimed his own.

They did not hear Mr. and Mrs. Masters approach because sand does not echo under peoples' feet, but they heard Mr. Masters say to his wife:

"I'm sorry we left the kodak up at the house. I've been hoping and praying for this for the last two years. And now my prayers have been answered, I would like to have some record of the fact."

Elijah Clifford and Lucy Gray stood up side by side. They were not embarrassed nor confused. The light of heaven seemed to shine on them out of that Thanksgiving Day glow in the desert sky. Their happiness had a sacred divine atmosphere about it that checked even as joyful a word of congratulation as Mr. Masters was about to speak. Ansa had come running down from the Mission and seeing Miss Gray and Clifford there she had come up and put her little hands one in each of theirs.

"Ah!" cried Masters. "This is the picture we want!" while Lucy and Elijah standing there by Ansa spoke of the years they were now to live together in the sacred union of husband and wife, consecrated heart and mind to the love of a neglected people, their human happiness intensified and purified by the service they were to give as one in answer to that which spoke to them even louder than their own earthly love—the sound of the High Calling.

If, as is easy for the writer and reader, we agree to let a few years slip by, as they have a way of doing whether we wish to let them or not, we shall find ourselves again in Milton at the home of the Douglases.

It is Thanksgiving Day again and Esther seems to have even more than the usual happy look on her face as she says to Helen:

"Isn't it remarkable that Walter coming up from the Isthmus is going to bring Bauer with him from Berlin? The world is getting smaller every day."

"We must learn to say 'Professor' Bauer, mother. You know Walter wrote that he has several honorary degrees conferred on him for his inventions. I understand he is held in high respect at all the universities."

"He will never be anything but plain Felix Bauer to me, Helen. And I hope his honours have not spoiled him. I don't believe they could."

Helen is silent as she sits down by the window which commands a view of the front walk. Time has dealt generously and kindly with her. The girlhood has ripened into the stately strong womanhood. Many suitors have come and gone, among them some noble gentlemen who have received their answers from her with sore hearts, but Helen still has not seen her ideal of the romantic days and her heart is yet—she says to herself—free—at least she has refused both wealth and high character for the vision she has cherished all these years of the nameless one who, so far, she says, has never appeared to her. And all through this testing, refining process of growth, she has developed into a spirit of rare strength and grace, of whom Paul and Esther have been increasingly proud.

Two young men come briskly up the walk. Mrs. Douglas opens the door and rushes out on the porch as Helen rises to tell her they are coming.

Walter laughingly lifts Esther off her feet as he kisses her and then turns to Helen. Evidently he has not broken his heart over that romance in the desert.

First greetings over he announced Bauer just as Paul steps into the front room.

"Professor Felix Bauer, F. R. G. S., F. S. S. K. L. G. X. Y. Z. and others. Isn't he great?"

Esther simply says, "Felix, welcome. I do not know how to say 'professor.'"

Bauer lifts her hands to his lips. Helen looks at him as if she were seeing some new vision at a distance. Felix Bauer smiles in the old way and says:

"Mrs. Douglas, I don't care for these titles. I would gladly give a bushel of them for one kind word from Walter's mother."

He looks at Helen as he speaks and Helen notes his clear, strong accent and the self-control and ease of a man who has met the world and looked it in the face without fear and without shame.

It is only when they are seated at the table that Helen has opportunity to note Bauer's strong face and figure, and wonder at the transformation time and testing have made in him. He still speaks in the slow deliberate fashion of the other days, but he is a full grown man now, conscious of power and Helen has to readjust her picture of him as she last saw him.

As the talk goes on, Paul's probing questions, aided by Walter and his mother, bring out the facts about Bauer which his own modesty would keep in the background.

Sent to Berlin to make special studies of new methods in lighting, he had made the startling discovery of the formula of the fire fly's secret, and revolutionised the entire system of city lighting. He had been careless of wealth. Walter drops a hint of thousands given to pay off old family indebtedness, or charities aided, of new enterprises fostered until Bauer blushingly begs him to stop.

"Really, Mr. Douglas, I am no millionaire as Walter would make out. Only I have been permitted to help some this great tuberculosis movement that has been a great joy to me."

Helen catches the vision of consecrated wealth and looks at Bauer again. Then later when they are seated in front of the old hearth and the lights have been turned on while a heavy snow falls outside, Bauer in his turn receives a surprise from her.

He has referred to the old days and recurred to the many kindnesses shown to him by Esther and Helen and the mission workers at Tolchaco. He is delighted to hear of the marriage of Clifford and Miss Gray, but in all the reminiscent talk he is evidently preoccupied and looks often at Helen as a hungry and thirsty man would eye the full table from which he may be debarred.

The clock strikes a late hour. He makes a feeble excuse to go and mutters something about not having observed the time.

"Die Uhr schlagt keinem Glucklichen?" Helen smilingly observes.

Bauer starts in surprise and leans over towards her.

"You speak German?" he asks with a strange look on his face.

"I have had plenty of time to learn it since you left us."

He looks up and sees that the other members of the family have in some way become much interested in Walter's new plans of electrical dock openers which are spread out on the dining room table.

"You mean since I left you sitting on that log at Tolchaco?"

"Maybe that is what I mean," Helen says, and she is more agitated than she has for years thought she could be.

"Then you know what 'Loben ist nicht Lieben' means now?"

"Yes, I know that and—

"The world has praised me much since that time, but it is an empty thing. I am a lonesome man, sitting alone with honour. 'Loben ist nicht lieben?' Is it not so?"

The tears are in Helen's eyes. This man will win her yet. Bauer mutters again.

"Was vonHerzen kommt, geht zu Herzen," and then forgetting that Helen understands he says as if talking to himself, "'What comes from the heart goes to the heart.' May I come to-morrow or soon and—tell you what is in my heart?"

Helen smiles as she notes the old sign of distrust in himself that used to mark the old young Bauer she used to know. But she says with a new note of life in her own voice: "Yes, come to-morrow."

"There will be much for my heart to tell thine," he says dropping inevitably into the endearing pronoun.

And as he rises and goes away Helen follows his stalwart figure out of the doorway and then goes and sits down by the fire again.

Her mother finds her there.

"Mr. Bauer, Felix, is coming here to-morrow, mother. I know what he is coming to say."

Esther pauses. Helen answers her unspoken question.

"I am going to find my happiness, mother. It is the highest voice I have heard. I am not afraid to answer it."

So with all who have fought and prayed and yearned for the overcoming life in this story, may they all say, "I am not afraid to answer the call when it sounds to me, the sound of 'The High Calling.'"

THE END

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