

# ABSALOM THE PLOTTER

STORY BY THE "HIGHWAY AND BYWAY" PREACHER

Scripture authority—2 Samuel 15:1-12.

## SERMONETTE.

"Prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him."—Vain fellow.

Absalom was proud of his personal charms, proud of his high station, proud of his attainments.

The world asks, Why should he not have been?

God says, "Pride and arrogance and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate."

Man in the pride of his heart thinketh that greatness is made up of things possessed, in gorgeous display, in homage received.

God, who sees the end of man from his beginning, knows that "a man's pride shall bring him low."

Pride is the sum of selfishness, and arrogance, and self-esteem, and personal ambition.

Pride leadeth a man to exalt himself to the place from which later he must come tumbling down as surely as the stone thrown into the air will turn and fall to the earth again after the momentum which sent it upward has been spent.

Over and over did Christ declare that "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased."

Pride giveth short vision, shallow perception and narrow judgment.

"Pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall."

Pride is a great deceiver, making wrong seem right and right wrong, for "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

"Absalom rose up early and stood by the way of the gate." Those were strenuous days for the proud young man. He worked hard; oh! so hard! Pride, after all, is a hard taskmaster. It got Absalom up early, and kept him standing all day in the noisy, dusty, hot way by the gate of the city. Day after day—week after week—month after month—year after year.

Pride made a liar and a thief out of Absalom, and it will do as much for anyone else who lets pride consume him. He lied to the people when he told them his thought was for them, when his sole thought was for Absalom and what Absalom could gain; and he stole from his father, King David, when he robbed him of the trust and loyalty of the people.

## THE STORY.

OUT of the way! Out of the way! the king's son cometh." The shouting of the gayly-dressed heralds who ran before the cavalcade, mingled with the notes of the buglers, caused a scurrying and excitement in the narrow streets of Jerusalem. Those abroad at that early hour sought refuge in the friendly nooks of the walls of the houses and in the doorways, while the people within rushed to the windows and doors to watch the procession as it passed.

The splendid turnout of Absalom, son of King David and generally acknowledged heir to the throne, had be-

come a familiar sight in Jerusalem during the past few months, but the people never tired of watching the gorgeous procession as it passed—the company of fifty fleet runners leading the way, the gayly caparisoned horses and the glistening bronze and gold chariots, with their broad-shouldered, brawny-armed drivers, and their splendidly accoutered warriors. All furnished a pleasing and animated picture, the center of which was the handsome youth who rode with such dignity and royal grace in the largest and most splendid of the chariots. As he passed, the people fairly held their breath, so enrapt were they with the rare beauty of the face and form. Never before had they seen so regal a presence, such a wealth of hair, such flashing eyes, such ruddy glow upon the full-rounded cheeks, such graceful poise. Many were the whispered words of commendation, and approving nods, and the people were pleased to think of the day when Prince Absalom should succeed his father, David, on the throne of Israel.

"He is like one of the gods come to earth," whispered one into the ear of the man standing next him.

"Yes," was the response, "and the gods be up early this morning. What bringeth Absalom abroad while yet the sun is scarcely above the top of yonder city's wall?"

"It is early. Perhaps he is bent upon discharging some of the king's business. Let us follow."

And they fell in behind the procession which wound its way through the streets and at last brought up at the chief gate of the city, which, with the rising of the sun, had been thrown open for the incoming stream of travelers.

As we have said, the royal turnout of Prince Absalom had become a familiar sight to the people of Jerusalem, but this was the first morning that the shouting of the heralds, the notes of the buglers, the clatter and tramp of the prancing horses and the rumble of the chariots had been heard so early in the day, and many were the conjectures as to the reason for it.

Absalom noted the expressions of surprise which mingled with the looks of admiration and approval on the faces of the people as he passed, and, turning with a significant smile to his attendant and confidant who rode with him in the chariot, he whispered:

"They will soon become used to this early-morning appearance. Yea, all Israel shall know that Absalom sitteth at the gate of the city and thinketh upon the welfare of the nation."

"Thou hast the wisdom as well as the beauty of the gods," flatteringly responded the other.

"And Absalom hath a right royal adviser in thee," said the prince, patronizingly. "Was it not thee who first got an inkling of the scheming of Bathsheba to place her son Solomon on the throne? And was it not thee who hinted that the place for the prince and heir was in the gate of the city of the king, whither those from every tribe in the nation come on matters of business?"

That was the beginning of busy days with Prince Absalom. No one loved ease and pleasure more than he, but when it came to personal ambition and the gratification of his pride no hour was too early for him and no task too hard for him to undertake. When the first intimation had come to him that plans were being laid whereby the kingdom should go to Solomon, the youngest son of David, rather than to him, the eldest living son and rightful heir, he was filled with the bitterest of anger and was for plotting the death of the young prince, but his close confidant, seeing at once the folly and peril of such a course, had persuaded him to abandon the thought, and had showed him that if he was to save the kingdom for himself he must do it by subtlety. He must turn the hearts and thoughts of the people to himself, and then strike the blow that would place the throne within his grasp. And so it came to pass that

day after day he rose up early and stood beside the way of the gate and greeted in gracious manner all who came thither. And when any man that had a controversy in the town or district from which he had come and sought the king out for judgment, Absalom would draw from him his story, win his confidence, and then exclaim:

"See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Oh, that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come to me, and I would do him justice!"

And when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand and took him and kissed him. And in this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment, and as the years went by the fame and favor of Absalom spread throughout all the tribes of Israel, so that none was so popular or so much talked of as he.

But disquieting word came to him one day as he sat in his accustomed place by the gate. There had been secret messengers from the king, so it was intimated, mingling with the people who had come to him for succor and to do him obeisance, and he feared lest the matter of his plotting should reach the ears of the king and bring him into trouble ere he had had time to strike the final blow. For this reason he quickly gathered his followers together and sent them secretly throughout all the land, saying:

"As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say Absalom reigneth in Hebron."

And when he had sent the last man away he repaired to the palace and, being admitted to the presence of the king, his father, he did obeisance, and said unto him:

"I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then will I serve the Lord."

And the king said unto him: "Go in peace."

## Decorating with Flowers.

When decorations are very extensive, the bric-a-brac is sometimes entirely removed. It depends largely upon the character of the bric-a-brac whether this is necessary. Surely enough must be removed to prevent an impression of crowding when the flowers are added. Very frequently, however, some of the bric-a-brac can be used with the floral decorations to obtain an artistic effect. Pieces of brass and copper are very effective used against green foliage and in brightening up dark corners. Brass candlesticks with burning candles are a wonderful addition. Candle light is the most artistic light possible, and will enhance all the beauties of the decorations. Masses of holly with its brilliant red berries, red candles in brass candlesticks, and the only light that of the candles, and of an open wood fire, and we have a never-to-be-forgotten background for Christmas mysteries and festivities.—Harper's Bazar.

## Crosby's Great Mistake.

William Crosby, for many years a prominent publisher and bookseller in New England, is dead at his home in Roxbury, Mass. His firm, Crosby & Nichols declined to print a volume of poems called "Voices of the Night" by Longfellow. The poet offered the poems with the stipulation that the firm give him a position. For this refusal the firm lost Longfellow's work, which later became famous.

## Get What They Pay For.

Women get their rights as well as their lefts at a shoe store.

## Brick Absorbs Water.

The absorbing capacity of a brick is about 16 ounces of water.

## Loving a Miser.

A miser is loved by his neighbors as mice love a cat.

## Country Manual Training.

Even manual training needs new direction as it touches country life. It may not be necessary to eliminate the formal exercises of model work and weaving and the like; but some of the practical problems of the home and farm may be added.

How to make a garden, to lay out paths, make fences and labels, are manual training problems. How to saw a board off straight, to drive a nail, to whittle a peg, to make a tooth for a hand hay rake, to repair a hoe, to sharpen a saw, to paint a fence, to hang a gate, to adjust a plow point, to mend a strap, to prune an apple tree, to harness a horse—the problems are bewildering from their very number.

Manual training can be so taught in the schools that are equipped for it as, in 10 years, to start a revolution in the agriculture of any commonwealth.—Century Magazine.

## The Rich Poor.

The poor in this world's goods may be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom.

# THE CANADIAN CROPS

THREE-QUARTERS OF THE AVERAGE YIELD IS REPORTED.

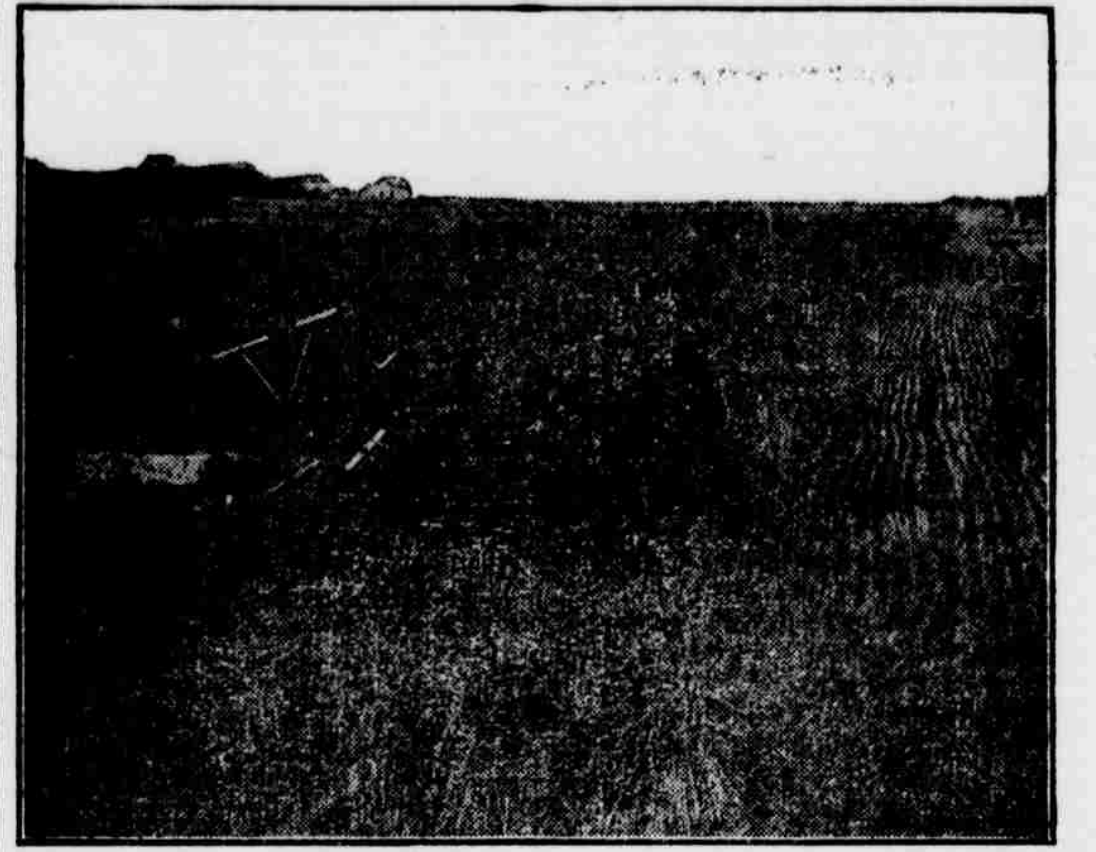
## THE FARMERS DO NOT LOSE

Increased Prices for Grain More Than Compensates Them for the Decrease in Quantity—Reports from Crop Experts.

Most of the states of the union felt the unusually severe winter of 1906-7, and the effects of the succeeding late spring were everywhere apparent. Corn was planted two and sometimes three times, the winter wheat suffered and generally there was a nervous feeling as the retarded growth was in evidence. From the Dakotas to Texas the feeling of dread existed, and the fears were entertained that the crop of corn, wheat, oats and barley would be a distinct failure. How far this was the case is best left to those who passed through the experience. Naturally the same conditions were prevalent through the province of Man-

a most careful purveyor of news, writing from Winnipeg, Manitoba, says:

"Excellent progress in the process of converting the crop into marketable commodity has been made. The days have been fairly warm considering the season of the year and while the amount of sunshine per day is less than in an ordinary harvest the grain has matured well. The reports from far and near show that the aggregate yield for the whole grain-growing country is likely to be large, and there are those who assert that the quantity will be equal to about 75 per cent. of that secured last season. The quality will be the important consideration especially in view of the steadily rising markets. Cash wheat in Winnipeg closed yesterday at \$1.11½ per bushel, Fort William delivery. The cost of freight and handling for wheat strikes an average of 10c per bushel for the whole west. This means that the average price to the farmer for contract wheat all over the prairie country is exactly \$1 per bushel. The farmers have been looking for the day when dollar wheat would rule and they have it now. Some old rule is still coming forward from the elevators and a little of last year's crop remains in the hands of the farmers. This nearly all grades up to the contract, and it means a great gain for those who held it. The new wheat is still grading very high, when one considers the conditions under which it was produced. Out of 469 cars, 328 in two days contained wheat which would answer for delivery on contracts. In other words over 300,000 bushels of wheat which would bring the farmers an average of about \$1 per bushel, reached Winnipeg in two days. The significance of \$300,000 worth of wheat being passed by the inspectors in two days at the close



The proceeds of this field of wheat, grown in western Canada, were sufficient to pay out of the one crop the price of every acre of land upon which it was grown.

toba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, in western Canada, and with from 250,000 to 300,000 farmers there from the United States a large degree of interest was manifest in almost every state of the union, for every state has some representative there. This interest was a nervous one and caused considerable indecision on the part of friends and others intending to follow. Those interested in injuring the country circulated stories of ruin and disaster, but the effect was lost, as it had been long enough in the limelight to prove its high standing amongst the agricultural sections of the continent. The heavy strain placed upon it was not too great; it has shown that the faith placed in it has been warranted, and

of an admittedly unfavorable season should not be allowed to sink out of sight at a time when returns from agricultural activity in the west are being anxiously awaited. These figures do not take account of the lower grades, of which there were 131 cars. More than one-third of these contained milling wheat, which would remunerate the farmer at the rate of 92c per bushel on the basis of to-day's closing figures. The balance consisted of low grade stuff which would show great "spreads" in prices.

"The approximate value of the two days' receipts of wheat, however, would be more than \$400,000 calculating the capacity of a car at 1,000 bushels and the railroads do not carry very much of the wheat to the Lake Superior ports before the freeze-up comes, and the proportion will probably be smaller than usual this year on account of the lateness of the thrashing season.

"On the whole the prospect is a most cheerful one, the likelihood being that the satisfactory returns for the past few days will be greatly exceeded in the coming six or seven weeks. The fact that wheat of any kind is bound to bring a remunerative price this season is the comforting feature of the situation and there is no occasion for concern over the possibility of the general quality of the grain being below that of previous years. The high standard of the wheat raised in the west in 1905-1906 was undoubtedly a great advertisement for the country and it would have been well if that excellent record could have been continued, but it is not reasonable to expect that 90 per cent. of the wheat will be of contract grade every year as it was in the years mentioned. If 75 per cent. or even 50 per cent. of this season's yield be up to the contract standard there will be room for congratulation. The west will reap a large return of its investment of money, time and labor this year as it did in any preceding season, and by so doing it will have done its whole duty to those who have placed faith in its fertility and resourcefulness. The breathing spell if it comes will enable the transportation companies and other elements in the trade of the country to catch up with some of their obligations and the improvements effected by that means will more than offset any inconvenience which will result from a relatively smaller production. The general commercial outlook is bright enough and only depressing factors are due to the position of a few communities widely separated in which there is a small return from the crop.

## Sublimity of Forgiveness.

George Sand: To forgive a fault in another is more sublime than to be faultless one's self.

## BY-USE OF KALEIDOSCOPE.

How Many Floor Covering Patterns Are Obtained.

"Do you know," says a St. Louis carpet dealer, "that some of the most exquisite patterns in carpets, oil cloths and other floor coverings are obtained by the aid of the kaleidoscope?"

"It used to be considered merely a toy to amuse children, and they generally tired of it in a few hours, then broke it open to find out what was inside of it. It is not often seen now on the toy counters, but very expensive kaleidoscopes are made for the use of artists who design geometrical patterns. The kaleidoscope is fixed in a frame which holds it perfectly still, and a photographic apparatus is attached by which to reproduce any desired figure. The artist turns the kaleidoscope until a combination appears which he thinks he can use, then, by turning a screw, the kaleidoscope is held steady until a photograph is secured, which is enlarged

and colored to taste. There are some instruments which, by a modification of the mirrors, produce arched patterns that are useful for borders, and as there is absolutely no end to the combinations, the former toy is now regarded as a most important adjunct, not only in geometrical ornamentation, but in freehand work, for after the pattern is once obtained it is an easy matter to disguise the geometry with leaves, vines and flowers."

## Hidden Treasures.

Down in every heart are treasures unexplored, and it needs only love to make the discovery.

## Proof of Christianity.

Christianity does not put chicory in the coffee, or sand in the sugar; it is at least decent.

## Resting in God.

He who pillows his head upon omnipotence can quiet his fear of every temporal ill.

## Love.

The thunders of providence are tremulous with love.