

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

THE PREACHER TELLS A TOUCHING BIBLE STORY.

The Beauty of Childhood—Its Power Over the Parental Heart—Its Hiselful Transition from Earth to Heaven—The Loved and Lost.

A Harvest Shadow.

While the reapers are busy in many parts of the land and the harvests are being gathered the scene brought before us in this subject is especially appropriate. The text is II Kings, iv., 18, 19, 20: "And when the child was grown it fell on a day that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, 'My head, my head!' And he said to a lad, 'Carry him to his mother.' And when he had taken him and brought him to his mother he sat on her knees till noon and then died."

There is at least one happy home in Shunem. To the luxuriance and splendor of a great house had been given the advent of a child. Even when the angel of life brings a new soul to the poor man's hut a star of joy shines over the manger. Infancy, with its helplessness and innocence, had passed away. Days of boyhood had come, days of laughter and frolic, days of sunshine and promise, days of strange questions and curiosity and quick development. I suppose among all the treasures of that house the brightest was the boy. One day there is the shout of reapers heard afield. A boy's heart always bounds at the sound of sickle or scythe. No sooner have the harvesters out a swath across the field than the lad joins them, and the swarthy reapers feel young again as they look down at that lad, as bright and beautiful as was Ruth in the harvest fields of Bethlehem gleaming after the reapers. But the sun was too hot for him. Congestion of the brain seized on him.

I see the swarthy laborers drop their sickles, and they rush out to see what is the matter, and they fan him, and they try to cool his brow, but all is of no avail. In the instant of consciousness he puts his hands against his temples and cries out, "My head, my head!" And the father said, "Carry him to his mother," just as any father would have said, for our hand is too rough, and our voice is too harsh, and our foot is too loud to doctor a sick child if there be in our home a gentler voice, and a gentler hand, and a stiller footstep. But all of no avail. While the reapers of Shunem were busy in the field there came a stronger reaper that way, with keener scythe and for a richer harvest. He reaped only one sheaf, but, oh, what a golden sheaf was that! I do not want to know any more about that heart-breaking scene than what I see in just this one pathetic sentence, "He sat on her knees till noon and then died." Though hundreds of years have passed away since that boy skipped to the harvest field, and then was brought home and died on his mother's lap, the story still thrills us. Indeed, childhood has a charm always and everywhere. I shall now speak to you of childhood—its beauty, its susceptibility to impression, its power over the parental heart, and its hiselful transition from earth to heaven.

Child Life.

The child's beauty does not depend upon form or feature or complexion or apparel. That destitute one that you saw on the street, bruised with unkindness and in rags, has a charm about her even under her destitution. You have forgotten a great many persons whom you met, of finely cut features and with erect posture and with faultless complexion, while you will always remember the poor girl who, on a cold, moonlight night, as you were passing late home, in her thin shawl and barefoot on the pavement, put out her hand and said, "Please give me a penny?" Ah, how often we have walked on and said, "Oh, that is nothing but street vagabondism!" but after we got a block or two on we stopped and said, "Ah, that is not right!" and we passed up that same way and dropped a mite into that suffering hand as though it were not a matter of second thought, so ashamed were we of our hard heartedness.

With what admiration we all look upon a group of children on the playground or in the school, and we clap our hands almost involuntarily and say, "How beautiful!" All stiffness and dignity are gone, and your shout is heard with theirs and you tremble in their hoop, and fly their kite, and strike their ball, and all your weariness and anxiety are gone as when a child you bounded over the playground yourself. That father who stands rigid and unsympathetic amid the sportfulness of children ought never to have been tempted out of a crusty and unredemable solitariness. The waters leap down the rocks, but they have not the graceful step of childhood. The morning comes out of the gates of the east, throwing its silver on the lake and its gold on the towers and its fire on the cloud, but it is not so bright and beautiful as the morning of life. There is no light like that which is kindled in a child's eye, no color like that which blooms on a child's cheek, no music like the sound of a child's voice. Its face in the poorest picture redeems any imperfection in art. When we are weary with toil, their little hands pull the burdens off our back. Oh, what a dull, stale, mean world this would be without the sportfulness of children! When I find people that do not like children, I immediately doubt their moral and Christian character. But when the grace of God comes upon a child how unspeakably attractive! When Samuel begins to pray, and Timothy begins to read the Scriptures, and Joseph shows himself invulnerable to temptation, how beautiful the scene! I know that parents sometimes get nervous when their children become pious, because they have the idea that good children always die. The strange questions about God and eternity and the dead excite apprehension in the parental mind rather than congratulation. Indeed, there are some people that seem marked for heaven. This world is too poor a garden for them to bloom in. The hues of heaven are in the petals.

There is something about their forehead that makes you think that the hand of Christ has been on it, saying, "Let this one come to me, and let it come to me soon." While that one tarried in the house, you felt there was an angel in the room, and you thought that every sickness would be the last, and when finally the winds of death did scatter the leaves you were so much surprised that to see a star come out above the cloud on a dark night, for you had often said to your companion, "My day, we shall never raise this child." But I must close the door, and I must close the door.

pious boy became Samuel the great prophet. Christian Timothy became a minister. Elisha, Young David, consecrated to God, became prime ministers of all the realm, and there are in hundreds of the schools and families of this country to-day children who love God and keep his commandments, and who are to be foremost among the Christians, and the philanthropists, and the reformers of the next century. The grace of God never kills any one. A child will be more apt to grow up with religion than it will be apt to grow up without it. Length of days is promised to the righteous. The religion of Christ does not cramp the chest or curve the spine or weaken the nerves. There are no malarias floating up from the river of life. The religion of Christ throws over the heart and life of a child a perpetual beauty. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Susceptibility of Childhood.

I pass on to consider the susceptibility of childhood. Men pride themselves on their unchangeability. They will make an elaborate argument to prove that they think now just as they did twenty years ago. It is charged to frailty or fraud when a man changes his sentiments in politics or in religion, and it is this determination of soul that so often drives back the gospel from a man's heart. It is so hard to make avarice, charitable, and fraud honest, and pride humble, and skepticism Christian. The sword of God's truth seems to glance off from those mailed warriors, and the helmet seems battle-proof against God's battle-axe. But childhood—how susceptible to example and to instruction! You are not surprised at the record, "Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob," for when religion starts in a family it is apt to go all through. Jezebel a murderer, you are not surprised to find her son Jehoram attempting assassination. Oh, what a responsibility upon the parent and the teacher! The musician touches the keys, and the response of "those keys is away off amid the pipes and the chords, and you wonder at the distance between the key and the chord. And so it is in life—if you touch a child the result will come back from manhood or old age, telling just the tune played, whether the dirge of a great sorrow or the anthem of a great joy. The word that the Sabbath school teacher will this afternoon whisper in the ear of the class will be echoed back from everlasting ages of light or darkness. The home and the school decide the republic or the despotism, the barbarism or the civilization, the upbuilding of an empire or the overthrowing of it. Higher than Parliament or Congress are the school and the family, and the sound of a child's foot may mean more than the tramp of a host. What, then, are you doing for the purpose of bringing your children into the kingdom of God? If they are so susceptible, and if this is the very best time to act upon their eternal interests, what are you doing by way of right impulsion?

The two were some harvesters in the fields of Scotland one hot day, and Hannah Leonard was helping them gather the hay. She laid her babe under a tree. While she was busy in the field there was a flutter of wings in the air, and a golden eagle clutched the swaddling band of the babe and flew away with it to the mountain crags. All the harvesters and Hannah Leonard started for the cliffs. It was two miles before they came to the foot of the cliffs. Getting there, who dared mount the cliff? No human foot had ever trod it. There were sailors there who had come upon the mast in the day of terrible tempest. They did not dare risk it. Hannah Leonard sat there for awhile and looked up and saw the eagle in the air, and then she leaped to her feet, and she started up where no human foot had ever trod, and she reached the top of the cliff, and she caught her babe, the eagle swooping in fierceness all around her. Fastening the child to her back, she started for her friends and for home. Oh, what a dizzy descent, sliding from this crag to that crag, catching by that vine and by that root, coming down farther and farther to the most dangerous pass, where she found a goat and some kids. She said, "Now I'll follow the goat. The goat will know just which is the safest way down." And she was led by the animal down to the plain. When she got there, all the people cried, "Thank God, thank God!" her strength not giving way until the rescue was effected. And they cried, "Stand back now. Give her air." Oh, if a woman will do that for the physical life of her child, what will you do for the eternal life of your boy and your girl? Let it not be told in the great day of eternity that Hannah Leonard put forth more exertion for the saving of the physical life of her child than you, O parent, have ever put forth for the eternal life of your little one. God help you!

Power of Childhood.

I pass on to consider the power which a child yields over the parental heart. We often talk about the influence of parents upon children. I never hear anything said about the influence of children upon their parents. You go to school to them. You no more educate them than they educate you. With their little hands they have caught hold of your entire soul, and you cannot wrench yourself away from their grasp. You are different men and women from what you were before they gave you the first lesson. They have revolutionized your soul. There are fountains of joy in your heart which never would have been discovered had they not discovered them. Life is to you a more stupendous thing than it was before those little feet started on the pathway to eternity. Oh, how many hopes, how many joys, how many solitudes that little one has created in your soul! You go to school every day, a school of self-denial, a school of patience, in which you are getting wiser day by day, and that influence of the child over you will increase and increase, and though your children may die, from the very throne of God they will reach down an influence to your soul, leading you on and leading you up until you mingle with their voices and sit beside their thrones.

The grasp which the child has over the parent's heart is seen in what the parent will do for the child. Storm and darkness and heat and cold are nothing to you if they stand between you and your child's welfare. A great lawyer, when yet unknown, one day stood in the courtroom and made an eloquent plea before some men of great legal attainments, and a gentleman said to him afterward, "How could you be so calm standing in that august presence?" "Oh," said Esquire, "I felt my children pulling at my skirts, crying for bread." What stream will you not swim, what cavern will you not enter, what battle will you not fight, what danger will you not undergo for your children? Your children must have bread though you starve. Your children must be

well clothed though you are in rags. You say, "My children shall be educated, though I never had any chance." What to you are weary limbs and aching heads and hands hardened and callous if only the welfare of your children can be wrought out by it? They know your sorrow, their joy your joy, their advancement your victory. And when, when the last sickness comes, how you fight back the march of disease, and it is only after a tremendous struggle that you surrender. And then when the spirit has fled the great deep is broken up, and Rachel will not be comforted because her children are not, and David goes up the palace stairs, crying, "O Absalom, my son, my son, would to God I had died for thee; O Absalom, my son, my son!"

The Lost Treasure.

There is not a large family, or hardly a large family, that has not been over such a treasure and lost it. In the family fold is there no dead lamb? I have seen many such cases of sorrow. There is one precious in my memory, a pastor—Scottsville Hayes McCollum. The story of his death has brought hundreds into God. He belonged to my parish in the West. A thorough boy, 9 or 10 years of age. Nothing morbid, nothing dull about him. His voice loudest and his foot swiftest on the playground. Often he has come into my house and thrown himself down on the floor in an exhaustion of boisterous mirth, and yet he was a Christian, consecrated to God, keeping his commandments. That is the kind of childish piety I believe in. When the days of sickness came suddenly and he was told that he could not get well, he said, "Jesus alone can save me. Jesus will save me. He has saved me, don't cry, mamma. I shall go right straight up to heaven." And then they gave him a glass of water to cool his hot lips, and he said, "Mamma, I shall take a draft from the water of life after a while, of which if one drink he shall never get thirsty again. I lay myself at Jesus' feet, and I want him to do just what he thinks best to do with me." In those days "Rest for the Weary" was a new hymn, and he had learned it, and in a perfect ecstasy of soul in his last hour he cried out:

"In the Christian's home in glory
There remains a land of rest,
There my Savior's gone before me
To fulfill my soul's request,
There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for you."

"Sing, oh, sing, ye heirs of glory,
Shout your triumphs as you go!
Zion's gates are open for you,
You shall find an entrance through,
There is rest for the weary."

"There is rest for you, papa; there is rest for you, mamma." And then putting his hands over his heart, he said, "Yes, there is rest for me." And then he asked them to read "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures and leadeth me beside still waters," and he cried out: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Only 10 years old. And then he said, "Now I wish you would just turn this bed so I can look once more on the foliage and see the sun set." And they turned the bed. And he said, "I do so wish that Jesus would hurry and come and take me." They said to him, "Why are you not willing to await the Lord's time?" "Yes," he said, "I am; but I would rather Jesus would come and hurry and take me." And so, with a peace indescribable, he passed away.

The Lord's Will.

Oh, there is nothing sad about a child's death save the grief in the parent's heart. You see the little ones go right out from a world of sin and suffering to a world of joy. How many temptations, how many troubles! Children die safe. Those that live are in peril. We know not what dark path they may take. The day may come in which they will break your heart, but children dead are safe—safe forever. Weeping parents, do not mourn too bitterly over your child that has gone. There are two kinds of prayers made at a child's sick bed. One prayer the Lord likes; the other prayer he does not like. When a soul kneels down at a child's sick bed and says, "O Lord, spare this little one. He is very near to my heart. I don't want to part with him, but he will be done"—that is the kind of a prayer the Lord loves. There is another kind of prayer which I have heard men make in substance when they say, "O Lord, this isn't right. It is wrong to take this child. You have no right to take this child. Spare this child I can't give him up. Spare this child I can't give him up." The Lord answers that kind of a prayer sometimes. The child lives on and lives on and travels off in paths of wickedness to perish. At the end of every prayer for a child's life say, "Thy will O Lord, be done."

The brightest lights that can be kindled Christ has kindled. Let us, old and young, rejoice that heaven is gathering up so much that is attractive. In that far land we are not strangers. There are those there who speak our name day by day, and they wonder why so long we tarry. If I could count up the names of all those who have gone out from these families into the kingdom of heaven, it could take me all day to mention their names. A great multitude before the throne. You loved them once, you love them now, and ever and anon you think you hear their voices calling you upward. Ah, yes, they have gone out from all these families, and you want no book to tell you of the dying experience of Christian children. You have heard it. It has been whispered in your ear, O father, O mother, O brother, O sister. Toward that good land all Christians are bearing. This snapping of heartstrings, this light of years, this tread of the heart reminds us that we are passing away. Under spring blossoms and through summer harvests and across autumnal leaves and through the wintry snowbanks we are passing on. Oh, rejoice at it, children of God, rejoice at it! How we shall gather them up, the loved and the lost! Before we mount our throne, before we drink of the fountain, before we strike the harp of our eternal celebration, we will cry out, "Where are our loved and lost?" And then how we shall gather them up! Oh, how we shall gather them up!

In this dark world of sin and pain We only meet to part again,
But when we reach the heavenly shore We there shall meet to part no more.

The hope that we shall see that day should chase our present griefs away. When these short years of pain are past We'll meet before the throne at last.

It is held that it is on instruction and education that the future security and direction of the destiny of every nation chiefly and fundamentally rest.



A MAN'S VENGEANCE.

It was a stiff climb from Pengelly and the basket of fish Isaac Hocken carried was heavy. At the top of the hill he was fain to stretch himself on the turf and rest his bent old back against the low stone wall which inclosed John Tregon's field.

"No use going up to the house; John's at market and the misses'll be turning the place topsy-turvy," he reflected. "What with spring cleaning's all the year round and the drivin', Bertha has had a terrible hard time. And they do say in the village—Well, well," he muttered, checking himself. "It wasn't to be expected with her pretty face that Jim's her first sweetheart. And if Will Carter deceived her, mebbe she'll think the more of him. Jim just dotes on her. More fule, he! Bad wives are of no account whatever, and soppin' you do hap on a good woman and it pleases the Lord to take her, the year won't fill the emptiness in you she leaves behind. I ought to know," and Isaac heaved a mighty sigh. "I've buried wives of both sorts—three of 'em."

Not a breeze stirred the lifeless calm; and the midday sun poured fiercely down. Presently he sought the shade of a spreading tree which overhung the wall a few paces from him. But he was no longer solitary. Voices fell on his ear—Bertha Tregon's and that of the man who report said had fitted her.

"My poor Bertha! You've no cause to fear me. I know exactly how it was you forsook me for James Hocken. But I wrote whenever I had the chance."

"Not a single letter reached me."

"Because your mother waylaid the postman."

Despite the heat, Isaac shivered. Will's insight was making clear much that had puzzled him.

"Perhaps. What matters now?" asked Bertha in forlorn tones. "You should have kept away. It would have been kinder."

"And let you continue to think that I was false. Lookee here, Bertha, you promised to be my wife before ever Hocken courted you. And now you know I've been faithful to you—"

"I durstn't break with Jim. Mother is set on him. Oh, why did you come? You'll get a fresh sweetheart, but Jim won't. I feel he won't. And I shall keep my promise to him."

But Bertha's love was unchanged, and to the breathless listener on the thither side of the wall, Will's tender pleadings were the knell of his son's hopes.

What girl who loved him could resist handsome Will Carter?

Gaunt and grizzled, with weather-beaten, strongly marked features, he had always known that Jim wasn't one that a girl would fancy. And Bertha had only accepted him at her mother's bidding, believing that Will was untrue to her. It was all so plain to him now. Poor Jim! Even a flower that Bertha had plucked was precious to him. Hadn't he found a rose withered and dead in his pocket? And all his love in vain! Isaac whipped out his hat, clenched and mopped his face. Yet, if Will hadn't returned—

"I won't listen to it," she said at last, roused by Will's upbraidings. "Jim isn't to blame—he knew nothing of our sweethearts—nor am I. It didn't enter my mind that mother might've got your letters. How should it? As if you alone suffered!" she faltered. "Let us part friends."

"Sweethearts or nothing," said Will, gruffly.

With the swish, swish of feet through the long grass, crawling to his knees, old Isaac peered eagerly over the wall. Bertha was raising toward the house and Will Carter, with his head thrown back, striding in an opposite direction.

"Bless the little waid!" he ejaculated. "One time I was scared for Jim. But she's got a good grip of things. Yes, plenty more sweethearts for Will," he chuckled, observing of the pose of his head. "And there's but one in the world for my lad—Bertha Tregon. May my tongue be slit if I let her go!"

Rising, Isaac shouldered his basket and proceeded on his round.

The old fisherman had been somewhat rash, however, in his conclusions. By her own admission, Bertha's decision had been prompted solely by fear of her mother and consideration for James Hocken. But if on reflection she were still willing to sacrifice her happiness, Will Carter certainly had no intention of yielding to her weakness.

A fine seaman, of whom Pengelly was proud, for the last year Will had been aboard a yacht cruising in the Mediterranean. But for reasons best known to herself, Mrs. Tregon had discontinued his suit, and, although he had every confidence in her, Bertha's silence had inspired misgivings not easy to allay. Once more free, he had returned at the earliest date to England, and at Plymouth, where he landed, had met a friend, who, among other items of Pengelly news, informed him of her desertion, adding:

"And she'll be Mrs. Hocken in a fortnight."

Determined to demand a full explanation from Bertha herself, Will made no comment, but his laugh was unmitigated. And with rage in his heart he had hired a passing cab, driven to the railway station and taken the train

for Wadebridge. Thence he could walk to the Tregons'.

But the house in view, in crossing the field, Will had espied Bertha in the garden and, with a muffled ahoy! sped to the tree that sheltered old Isaac. She had swiftly joined him. Nevertheless, the shock of his return was visible in her white face, and her trembling lips would frame no welcome. Looking at him imploringly, her blue eyes filled. And, longing to clasp her in his arms, the reassuring words which, whilst enlightening him, had chilled Jim's father, did duty for the reproaches he had come primed with.

But Will had taken Bertha by surprise, and between her dread of him and terror of her mother, who ruled the Tregon household with a rod of iron, he rightly divined that she had caught at the readiest means of escape which in her distraction had presented itself to her. Yet his faith in her firmness was limited; the revival of fond memories would tend to lessen her mother's influence. And cunningly calculating that apparent indifference would further incline her to be guided by his counsels later, he devoted a week to his friends and generally enjoying himself. His disappointment treated thus lightly, he succeeded in deluding everybody, including Bertha, who shed bitter tears in secret that he should be so easily consoled for her loss. The bare sight of James Hocken almost maddened her, and she had to hide her aversion to him and listen evening after evening to his dull talk. And in another week she would be his wife.

The tree beneath which she and Will had parted became her favorite resort. Here she could indulge in the luxury of a "good cry" unrebuked, and, grown desperate with the nearer approach of the wedding day, sitting on the gnarled roots one afternoon, she burst into a very passionate grief.

A face—Will's—appeared above the wall.

"Ahoy! Whatever's the matter, Miss Tregon?" he gravely inquired. "Shall I fetch Mr. Hocken to 'ee?"

"I hate him! I hate him!" she sobbed hysterically.

"That's bad," said Will, sympathizingly. "What's he been up to?"

"Up to! Isn't he old, isn't he ugly, isn't he stupid? And—and—I hate him. Mother may storm, but I don't care."

Will vaulted over the wall.

On the day appointed for James Hocken's nuptials the whole village-flocked betimes to the church. But neither bridegroom nor bride put in an appearance, and by and by it was known that Will Carter and Bertha Tregon were missing, and that there would be no wedding at Pengelly that day.

Weeks and months rolled by, and no tidings could be gleaned of the graceless couple. They had clean vanished, leaving no clue to their whereabouts. Mrs. Tregon's tongue sharpened to a double-edged sword, ready to slay friend and foe alike who alluded to her daughter. And the dumb misery in Jim's plain face was pitiful to see. Old Isaac's heart ached for his son. If he had only prepared him for the blow! To have him so imposed on! And with his experience of womankind.

Curiosity was at length appeased. An acquaintance of the runaways visited London and returned with a woful story. She had seen Bertha, who had confided to her that after being married at a registry office Will and she had decided to go to America, but while looking in a shop window he had been robbed of his savings, and that subsequently they were reduced to great straits. Then he had brought her the welcome news that he had obtained a berth on a steam launch, and the next morning bade her good-by to go aboard, since when she had never clapped her eyes on him. Mrs. Tregon also said that Bertha had refused to give her address. But Jim ascertained that she had met her at Rotherhithe, and that was enough for him.

"I'm off to London," he announced when he came downstairs, after pacing the floor the livelong night. "I shall never rest until Carter and me are face to face."

"There be a fule, Jim," his father, who had been disturbed by his monotonous tread overhead, said poevishly. "If you must stir in this business, find Bertha. I'd be a charity. For all her sharp temper, her mother's frottin' herself into the grave. Take what money you want out of my leather bag; only promise, lad, not to meddle with Will."

"Trust me to find Bertha! But she would be destitute," he said hoarsely. "And she may have become a shame to her kith and kin. And in that case no promise would bind me, father. I'd've his life if I swung for it."

But Pengelly was convinced that Will had betaken himself to "foreign parts." And, recalling this, old Isaac was encouraged to hope that Jim would be denied the opportunity of vengeance.

Jim had been in London three months; his quest had been unsuccessful; yet he continued to hunt the principal thoroughfares, tramping north, south, east and west in turn.

Big Ben had struck one; he was re-organizing Westminster bridge to his ad-igning when a woman crouching by a lamp post ahead of him fell forward

in a heap and, hastening his steps, he endeavored to raise her. But, with the light falling on the pallid, hunger-pined face, a groan escaped him. His quest for Bertha Carter had ended.

At that moment a policeman came up. "Poor soul! she's dead," he said at a glance. "Better so than the leap into the water she was bent on. I've had my eye on her since 7 o'clock. She seemed dazed."

The body was conveyed to the mortuary and the verdict at the inquest was in accordance with the medical testimony, that death was due to starvation.

Outwardly calm, his sole thought to avenge Bertha, Jim staggered out of the court.

His inquiries for the man who had robbed him of the one jewel he coveted, to cast it from him, at length elicited that a seaman answering to his description of Carter was homeward bound from Singapore. Thenceforth, knowing neither hunger nor weariness, he was watchful of new arrivals at the docks.

His desire for revenge was by now a monomania. And to-day he had a strange prescience that Will and he were soon to meet. Self-absorbed, in crossing the street, he was knocked down by a dray, and, stunned, conveyed to the hospital.

On recovering consciousness, his first request was for his discharge. "Not yet awhile," said the nurse. "But you won't be dull. That poor chap yonder," indicating a bandaged object in a distant bed, "has been asking for you. You don't recognize him? No wonder! He was brought in months ago—after the fire in St. Thomas street. He was looking on, and a woman and some children appeared at a top window. The firemen were beaten back by the blaze below, and poor Will—he won't tell us his surname—couldn't withstand their cries, and he climbed up the waterspout on to the roof with a rope, and threw one end to them, and had actually lowered two of the children in safety when the walls collapsed. He was picked up so terribly injured that we had little hope of him. But he has done splendidly. If you—"

But Jim was midway across the ward. Oh, heaven, to think that this poor mangled wretch was "handsome Will!" And so sorely misjudged! Lending over the brave fellow, Hocken's emotion was hard to restrain.

"Don't give 'em my name," whispered Will. "I'm maimed for life. And wouldn't 'ye my poor little Bertha saddled with a helpless husband—not likely. To have happened just when the tide had turned!" he groaned. "Where is she?"

"She has reached port before us," said Jim, in a smothered voice. "Don't 'ee take on, Will." His own tears were coursing down his rugged cheeks. "We'll go back to Pengelly. I can work for both."

"You work for me? You—"

"We both loved her, Jim reminded him. "If so be you'll trust yourself to me. You will be doing me a favor."

Feebly pressing the hand that gripped his, Will mumbled indistinctly, and hastily covered his face.—Household Words.

How They Baffle Pass Friends.

Charles C. Black, assistant attorney of the Missouri Pacific, who for the last two years has resided in Atholton, has resigned his position with the company, and will resume general practice of law at Kansas City, Mo. Sam Harburger will succeed Mr. Black. Harburger long has been Bailey Waggener's right-hand man.

They have a code of signals, which are particularly helpful when the man who wants a pass drops in. "Sam," Waggener will say when a statesman who has no claim on railroads presents himself, "Has Doddridge sent those blanks?" "No," Sam will promptly reply, marking the interrogation, "and I guess he has applied the interstate commerce rule to us and we will not get any more."

"Then," a troubled look stealing over his face, Mr. Waggener will suggest that Sam "try Rathburn." "It would do no good," the ready lieutenant will say. "You know we sent over to him yesterday with a request for transportation for Senator Ingalls, and he was out of blanks, too." "Then," Mr. Waggener will say, wearily, to the applicant: "I am afraid I can't help you. It's got so now that I am little more than a clerk. Sometimes I am tempted to resign."

The next applicant comes within the rule. "Sam," Mr. Waggener will say, imperatively, "write out a pass for Mr. Bill here," and the pass is written.—Kansas City Star.

Pathos of Presidential Conventions.

No one can examine the records of Presidential conventions, with their personal successes and failures, and easily escape the conviction that there is far more of tragedy than comedy in our national politics. There are touches of humor here and there, but the dominant note is that of pathos. Behind every great success there is to be seen the squalid shadow of bitter disappointment, of wrecked ambition, of life-long hopes in ruins. As one pursues through biography, autobiography, and memoir, the personal history of the chief figures in the conventions that have been held during the sixty years which have passed since that method of nominating Presidential candidates came into use, he finds it almost invariably ending in sadness and gloom. Not one of those seeking the Presidency with most persistence has succeeded in getting possession of that great office, and few of them, when final failure has come, have shown themselves able to bear the blow with fortitude.—Century.

First American Railway.

The first American railroad was laid in 1825. It was three miles long, from the granite quarries of Quincy, Mass., to Neponset River.