

The Redemption of David Corson

By CHARLES FREDERIC GOSS

Copyright, 1909, by The Bowen-Merrill Company.

All Rights Reserved



WE announce with a great deal of pleasure a serial that is somewhat exceptional, even in these days of active fiction. It is a story of unusual power, of wonderful pathos and yet dealing with practical, every-day life in a way that stirs the soul and teaches a lasting lesson.

The story begins with a description of the home and life of David Corson, a young Quaker, whose career has been so peaceful and uneventful that when a traveling mountebank and his beautiful assistant, Pepeta, visit the town, the glare and glamour of tinsel and excitement lead David to turn his back on the old life and plunge into the wide world he had only read about previously. David is entranced by the beauty of the peerless girl. He is led into a mad whirl of pleasure by the mountebank. Finally, he induces Pepeta to desert her husband and flee with him. A rivalist brings David back to a sense of his misspent life. It is a marvelous life study. Everybody should read it.

CHAPTER I.

Hidden away in this worn and care-encumbered world are spots so quiet and beautiful as to make the fall of man seem incredible, and awaken in the breast of the weary traveler who comes suddenly upon them, a vague and dear delusion that he has stumbled into Paradise.

Such an Eden existed in the extreme western part of Ohio in the spring of 1849. It was a valley surrounded by wooded hills and threaded by a noisy brook which hastily made its way, as if upon some errand of immense importance, down to the big Miami not many miles distant. A road cut through a vast and solemn forest led into the valley, and entering as if by a corridor and through the open portal of a temple, the traveler saw a white farm-house nestling beneath a mighty hackberry tree whose wide-reaching arms sheltered it from summer sun and winter wind. A deep, wide lawn of bluegrass lay in front, and a garden of flowers, fragrant and brilliant, on its southern side. Stretching away into the background was the farm newly carved out of the wilderness, but already in a high state of cultivation.

In this lovely valley, at the close of a long, odorous, sun-drenched day in early May, the sacred silence was broken by a raucous blast from that most unmusical of instruments, a tin dinner horn. It was blown by a bare-legged country boy who seemed to take delight in this profanation. By his side, in the vine-clad porch of the white farm-house stood a woman who shaded her eyes with her hand as she looked toward a vague object in a distant meadow. She was no longer young. As the light of the setting sun fell full upon her face it seemed almost transparent, and even the unobservant must have perceived that some deep experience of the sadness of life had added to her character an indescribable charm.

"Thee will have to go and call him, Stephen, for I think he has fallen into another trance," the woman said, in a low voice in which there was not a trace of impatience.

The child threw down his dinner horn, whistled to his dog and started. Springing up from where he had been watching every expression of his master's face, the shaggy collie bounded around him as he moved across the lawn, while the woman watched them with a proud and happy smile.

Unutterable and incomprehensible emotions were awakened in the soul of the boy by the stillness and beauty of the evening world. His senses were not yet dulled nor his feelings jaded. Through every avenue of his intelligence the mystery of the universe stole into his sensitive spirit. If a breeze blew across the meadow he turned his cheek to its kiss; if the odor of spear-mint from the brookside was wafted around him he breathed it into his nostrils with delight. He saw the shadow of a crow flying across the field and stopped to look up and listen for the swish of her wings and her loud, hoarse caw as she made her way to the nesting grounds; then he gazed beyond her, into the fathomless depths of the blue sky, and his soul was stirred with an indescribable awe.

"Oh, Uncle Dave, I'll never do it again! Never! Never! Let me down." Still holding him aloft as a hunter would hold a falcon, the reincarnated "spirit" laughed long, loud and merrily, the echoes of his laughter ringing up the valley like a peal from a chime of bells. The child's fear was needless, for the heart and hands that dealt with him were as gentle as a woman's. The youth, resembling some old Norse god as he stood there in the gathering gloom, lowered the child slowly, and printing a kiss on his cheek, said: "Thee little pest, thee has no reverence! Thee should never disturb a child at his play, a bird on his nest nor a man at his prayers."

"But thee was not praying, Uncle Dave," the boy replied. "Thee was only in another of thy tantrums. The supper has grown cold, the horses are tired and Shep and I have walked a mile to call thee. Grandmother said thee had a trance. Tell me what thee has seen in thy visions, Uncle Dave?"

ribbon of earth rolled from its blade like a petrified sea billow, crested with a cluster of daisies white as the foam of a wave.

Between the handles of the plow and leaning on the crossbar, his back to the horses, stood a young Quaker. His broad-brimmed hat, set carelessly on the back of his head, disclosed a wide, high forehead; his flannel shirt, open at the throat, exposed a strong, columnar neck, and a deep, broad chest; his sunburned and muscular arms were folded across his breast; figure and posture revealed the perfect concord of body and soul with the beauty of the world; his great blue eyes were fixed upon the notch in the hills where the sun had just disappeared; he gazed without seeing and felt without thinking.

The boy approached this statuesque figure with a stealthy tread, and plucking a long spear of grass tickled the bronzed neck. The hand of the plowman moved automatically upward as if to brush away a fly, and at this unconscious action the child, seized by a convulsion of laughter and fearing lest it explode, stuffed his fists into his mouth. In the opinion of this irreverent young skeptic his Uncle Dave was in a "tantrum" instead of a "trance," and he thought such a disease demanded heroic treatment.

For several years this Quaker youth, David Corson, had been the subject of remarkable emotional experiences, in explanation of which the rude wits of the village declared that he had been moon-struck; the young girls who adored his beauty thought he was in love, and the venerable fathers and mothers of this religious community believed that in him the scriptural prophecy, "Your young men shall see visions," had been literally fulfilled. David Corson himself accepted the last explanation with unquestioning faith.

The life of this young man had been pure and uneventful. Existence in this frontier region, once full of the tragedy of Indian warfare, had been gradually softened by peace and religion. In such a sequestered region books and papers were scarce, and he had access only to a few volumes written by quietists and mystics, and to that great mine of sacred literature, the Holy Bible. The seeds of knowledge sown by these books in the rich soil of this young heart were fertilized by the society of noble men, virtuous women, and natural surroundings of exquisite beauty.

None of these reflections disturbed the mind of the barefooted boy. Having suppressed his laughter, he tickled the sunburnt neck again. Once more the hand rose automatically, and once more the boy was almost strangled with delight. The dreamer was hard to awaken, but his tormentor had not yet exhausted his resources. No genuine boy is ever without that fundamental necessity of childhood, a pin, and finding one somewhere about his clothing, he thrust it into the leg of the plowman. The sudden sting brought the soaring saint from heaven to earth. In an instant the mystic was a man, and a strong one, too. He seized the unsanctified young reprobate with one hand and hoisted him at arm's length above his head.

"Oh, Uncle Dave, I'll never do it again! Never! Never! Let me down." Still holding him aloft as a hunter would hold a falcon, the reincarnated "spirit" laughed long, loud and merrily, the echoes of his laughter ringing up the valley like a peal from a chime of bells. The child's fear was needless, for the heart and hands that dealt with him were as gentle as a woman's. The youth, resembling some old Norse god as he stood there in the gathering gloom, lowered the child slowly, and printing a kiss on his cheek, said: "Thee little pest, thee has no reverence! Thee should never disturb a child at his play, a bird on his nest nor a man at his prayers."

"But thee was not praying, Uncle Dave," the boy replied. "Thee was only in another of thy tantrums. The supper has grown cold, the horses are tired and Shep and I have walked a mile to call thee. Grandmother said thee had a trance. Tell me what thee has seen in thy visions, Uncle Dave?"

"God and His angels," said the young mystic softly, falling again into the mood from which he had been so rudely awakened.

"Angels!" scoffed the young materialist. "If thee was thinking of any angel at all, I will bet thee it was Dorothy Fraser."

"Tush, child, do not be silly," replied the convicted culprit. For it was easier than he would care to admit to mingle visions of beauty with those of holiness.

"I am not silly. Thee would not dare say thee was not thinking of her. She thinks of thee."

"How does thee know?"

"Because she gives me bread and jam if I so much as mention thy name. Uncle Dave, was it really up this very valley that Mad Anthony Wayne marched with his brave soldiers?"

"This very valley."

"I wish I could have been with him." "It is an evil wish. Thee is a child of peace. Thy father and thy father's fathers have denied the right of men to war. Thee ought to be like them, and love the things that make for peace."

"Well, if I can not wish for war, I will wish that a runaway slave would dash up this valley with a pack of bloodhounds at his heels. Oh, Uncle Dave, tell me that story about thy hiding a negro in the haystack, and choking the bloodhounds with thine own hands!"

"I have told thee a hundred times." "But I want to hear it again."

"Use thy memory and thy imagination."

The child, bounding forward, the tired procession entered the barnyard. The plowman fed his horses, and stopped to listen for a moment to their deep-drawn sighs of contentment, and to the musical grinding of the oats in their teeth. His imaginative mind read his own thoughts into everything, and he believed that he could distinguish in these inarticulate sounds the words, "Good-night. Good-night."

"Good-night," he said, and stroking their great flanks with his kind hand, left them to their well-earned repose. On his way to the house he stopped to bathe his face in the waters of a spring brook that ran across the yard, and then entered the kitchen where supper was spread.

"Thee is late," said the woman who had watched and waited, her fine face radiant with a smile of love and welcome.

"Forgive me, mother," he replied. "I have had another vision."

"I thought as much. Thee must remember what thee has seen, my son," she said, "for all that thee beholds with the outer eye shall pass away, while what thee sees with the inner eye abides forever. And had thee a message, too?"

"It was delivered to me that on the holy Sabbath day I should go to the camp in Baxter's clearing and preach to the lumbermen."

"Then thee must go, my son."

"I will," he answered, taking her hand affectionately, but with Quaker restraint, and leading her to the table. The family, consisting of the mother, an adopted daughter, Dorothea, the daughter's husband Jacob and son Stephen, sat down to a simple but bountiful supper, during which and late into the evening the young mystic pondered the vision which he believed himself to have seen, and the message which he believed himself to have heard. In his musings there was not a tremor or a doubt; he would have as soon questioned the reality of the old farm-house and the faces of the family gathered about the table. He was a credulous and unsophisticated youth, dwelling in a realm of imagination rather than in a realm of reality and law. He had much to learn. His education was about to begin, and to begin as does all true and effective education, in a spiritual temptation. The Ghebers said that when their great prophet Ahiraman was thrown into the fire by the order of Nimrod, the flames into which he fell turned into a bed of roses, upon which he peacefully reclined. This innocent Quaker youth had been reclining upon a bed of roses which now began to turn into a couch of flames.

(To be continued.)

Telling Cocoa from Chocolate.

The consumer often wonders what is the difference between cocoa and chocolate. Both are manufactured from the identical bean, but in cocoa the butter has been extracted and chocolate has other substances mixed with it. Cocoa is thus more easily digested, but not so rich and alluring. The butter when extracted is sold to druggists for various purposes, chiefly that of a skin-food.

The first process in the manufacture of chocolate or cocoa is cracking the bean, which is done by machinery and air. The blast of air blows the shells out, as they are lighter than the meat, and thus, after cracking, the separation of the fragile shell from the nutritive nut is absolute.

The bean is roasted and ground into a paste by hot machinery. This is the only "cooking" the chocolate gets. At this point the differentiation takes place between cocoa and chocolate. The latter consists of cocoa-meat, vanilla and sugar. Various machines (steam-power, not electric) crush up the vanilla bean with the cocoa bean and sugar.

Chinese Graduate at West Point.

Among those who this year receive diplomas of graduation at West Point Military Academy are two Chinese youths—the first of their race to win the honor.

During their four years' course they mastered English, Spanish and French in addition to the ordinary military and educational courses. The young men entered the academy through a special arrangement with the government, their home government paying all expenses.

During the year 1908 no fewer than 9,254 different books were published in the United States. This number is 366 less than during the preceding year.

Editorials

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

THE BLACK HAND.

A MORE systematic method in crime, a broader organization, have been revealed in the Black Hand than police authorities have ever before been ready to believe. The type of criminal who employs the Black Hand ways, in spite of the terror he is enabled to create, is of a low order. His intelligence is often seemingly more bestial than human. The discipline of a large band of workers, the secrecy necessary, and, above all, the division of spoils—these call for an understanding and a singleness of purpose that the ordinary Sicilian and Calabrian rogue does not possess.

Because of the recent revelations the alarming suggestion has been made that native American criminals, confidence men and cracksmen of superior wit and resourcefulness have entered the field. This would account for the organization discovered. It would explain the apparent subservience to a leading intelligence and it would satisfy questions the police ask as to the existence of a central fund and a working arrangement common to several sections of the country. The American criminals would naturally hide themselves under aliases of Italian names, and, too, they would have all arrangements so that the foreigners and not themselves should suffer in case of discovery.

The Black Hand is probably no worse than other forms of blackmail except in so far that it causes a greater fear among its victims and a more general uneasiness among the police. The methods used in the attempt to break it up have proved of little avail. A penalty as severe as that for kidnaping might tend to crush it. It is worth trying.—Toledo Blade.

MRS. THAW'S BOOK.

MRS. THAW, the mother of Harry Thaw, has written and published a book in which she makes a bitter attack upon those whose duty it is to administer justice in the courts of New York. She makes District Attorney Jerome an especial target, declaring that he has gone outside of his jurisdiction several times to persecute her son. The public will hardly be led to take any different view of the Thaw case by the publication of this book than it already entertains. It will, however, be disposed toward charity and excuse the foolish fulmination upon the ground that it is the case of a mother fighting for her son.

Money was the greatest curse which ever fell upon the Thaw family. If the mother had taken a different course when her son was young; if she had limited the amount of his spending money, and if she had insisted that he be put to work when not in school, the later years of her life might not have been clouded with this great sorrow. Because the Thaw family was rolling in wealth, it was considered ridiculous that Harry should be other than a gentleman of leisure. There was never a more tragic illustration of sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind. To-day he is a



THE NEW KID.

Chester bustled in with an air of great importance. Taking off his hat he reached up and hung it on its hook instead of giving it the careless twirl by means of which it customarily attained that position.

"Say, Dave," he began, "there's a new kid comin' to-day and we better—"

"Well, don't I know it?" interrupted David. "Think you're tellin' me a secret?"

"Aw, g'wan!" exclaimed Chester. "You never knew a thing about it till I just told you."

"I did, too," retorted David. He added, chuckling: "You kin learn a lot if you git down early enough."

"Well, anyhow," pursued Chester, "it's a good thing for the boss that he made up his mind to get in another helper. I tell you I wasn't goin' to stand for it much longer. It's a fright, the way we had to work and me havin' so much responsibility an' all. Just between me and you I was figurin' on lookin' for another—"

Chester's voice died away as the office manager appeared with a red-haired boy in tow.

"Good morning, boys," said the manager. "I've brought you an assistant. This is—"

"John Fitzgerald, sir," supplied the youth, promptly.

"Well, John, hang up your hat and the boys will tell you about the work." The manager walked away.

"Well, John," began Chester, taking possession of the floor with an imitation of the manager's manner. "I might as well begin to put you wise to the job. There's a lot to learn in this department. We have to copy all the letters and index the letter-books and sort out the mail, and answer the switchboard and run the buzzer calls and chase out on errands. I gen'ly run the switchboard myself becuz Mr. Selden's awful particular 'bout the phone calls, and I guess David better do most of the indexin' and copyin' for awhile and you kin run the errands and answer buzzers at first, till you get kinder used to the work."

A whirling of the switchboard drew Chester's attention aside for a moment. The new kid thereupon winked an impudent green eye at David, who responded by half-closing a round blue orb.

"Well," resumed Chester, turning again to the new kid, "let me see—oh, yes. They're awful particular

about bein' respectful to the heads of departments 'round here, too, so when you speak to me you'd better just call me 'sir.'"

Chester paused reflectively. The new kid, leaning against a table, crossed his knees, thrust his hands into his pockets and regarded Chester through partly shut eyelids.

"Aw, fade away, kid," he remarked, languidly. "Don't you try to work any of your answer-the-buzzer-tillyou-get-on-to-the-job games on me. I indexed more books and copied more letters than you ever seen in your life, and I kin run any old kind of a switchboard that ever was put in."

He drew one hand from his pocket and leveled a forefinger at Chester. "And, look here," he said, "you better not come round me with any of your fresh talk 'bout me callin' you 'sir,' unless you want to get pated one in the lamp. I ain't lookin' fer no scrap, but if they's goin' to be one it ain't me they'll be carryin' out feet first when it's all over. See!"

He straightened up in a leisurely manner, strolled over to the switchboard where Chester sat and gazed calmly down upon the enraged but speechless youth.

"Now," he observed, "if you're through throwin' bokays at yerself, an' one o' you kids'll put me wise to where you keep things in this little old joint and who belongs to the buzzers, I'll get to work."—Chicago Daily News.

TERRAPIN AND FROG FARM.

Scheme to Raise Delicacies on Long Island for New York Market.

There is an industry out on Long Island which is yet in the very earliest stages of infancy and about which its sponsors are exceedingly reticent. It is the rearing and marketing of terrapin and frogs, strictly according to the rules and regulations laid down by the Secretary of Agriculture.

So far the names of only three men interested in the prospective terrapin and frog farm have reached the public, but there is reason to believe that a number of others are considering the whys and wherefores of lending something more material than merely their moral backing.

Cuthbert M. Leveridge, of Boston, who is reputed to be an expert in matters appertaining to the domesticating and nurturing of terrapin in the South, has succeeded in enlisting the interest of two Brooklyn dentists. They are Dr. F. C. Royce, of 65 Greene avenue, who is not at all sure that he is willing to be mentioned in connection with this undertaking, and Dr. David S. Skinner, whose home is at 75, on the same street.

Dr. Skinner would have been willing to divulge the details of the

number and deserves life imprisonment, if no greater punishment. He has escaped prison on the flimsy plea of mental unsoundness. He ought to be thankful, as had the members of his family, that he has made so good an escape from the electric chair. However, the family is turning heaven and earth in an effort to have him proven sane. It is hardly conceivable that the courts of New York will permit so great a travesty in the name of justice. Meanwhile Mrs. Thaw's book will take its place among the curiosities of American literature.—Des Moines Capital.

HARD TIMES AND MATRIMONY.

THERE is probably not more than a fraction of 1 per cent of truth in that unpleasant old proverb, "When poverty comes in at the door love flies out of the window," but it is not to be denied that when poverty is the first to take possession, poor love has to sit on the doorstep and wait.

All through the year 1908 the little god has been shivering outside many homes where he had every expectation of spending a cozy and perfectly delightful twelvemonth. And during the year of hard times marriages fell off 20 per cent.

In Manhattan Borough alone nearly 20,000 persons are going about in single blessedness—or otherwise, as they take it—who ought, from the statistician's point of view, to have been married last year.

The statistician takes a cold-blooded view of it, merely marking it down as an interesting fact to be "footed up" with other interesting facts. He hasn't a word to say about love's young dream, and hope deferred, and all the furtive tears for which those 10,000 non-existent marriages are responsible. You can't make averages of such things as a young man's disappointment and a nice girl's heartache.

The results of hard times are always, first of all, fewer diamonds imported and fewer marriages recorded. Jewels and matrimony go hand in hand, as indications of a rising or falling in the barometer of prosperity.—New York Times.

WHY CORRUPT THE CLOCKS?

ALL the advantages derived from the Cincinnati "daylight" ordinance, and similar measures proposed elsewhere, could be obtained without making fars of the town clock and all other public and private timepieces. The principal advantage sought is an increase in the number of daylight hours available for recreation.

In the summer time, when the evenings are long, it is proposed to "knock off" an hour earlier than is now the custom, and so that this should not disorganize industry by reducing the number of working hours in shops and factories it would be necessary to begin work earlier in the morning. But why should the clocks be set an hour ahead? Cannot workmen be made to acquire the habit of early rising (an excellently good habit in the hot season) without making prevaricators of our clocks?—Philadelphia Record.

HORSEMANSHIP IN HEAVEN.

Little Kenneth and his mother were about to go for a drive.

"Who was God's father?" asked the boy.

"He had no father," replied the mother.

"Then," persisted Kenneth, thoughtfully, "who hitched up the horse for God's mother?"—Success Magazine.

What becomes of a man's respectability after death?