

for as she forgave and took you to her pure heart again without fear or shrinking, so God forgives us. And, Don, it is not worth while, in the face of so great a forgiveness, to do anything else but forgive, and it is a cruel thing, and a wicked thing, to keep at a distance such love as that."

"No, no," said The Don, "it is not worth while. It is wicked, and it is folly. I will go back. I will forgive."

THE REGIONS BEYOND

THE visit of the Superintendent to a mission field varied according to the nature of the field and the character of the work done, between an inquisitorial process and a triumphal march. Nothing escaped his keen eye. It needed no questioning on his part to become possessed of almost all the facts necessary to his full information about the field, the work, the financial condition, and the general efficiency of the missionary. One or two points he was sure to make inquiry about. One of these was the care the missionary had taken of the outlying points. He had the eye of an explorer, which always rests on the horizon. The results of his investigations could easily be read in his joy or his grief, his hope or his disappointment, his genuine pride in his missionary or his blazing, scorching rebuke. The one consideration with the Superintendent was the progress of the work. The work first, the work last, the work always.

The announcement to Shock through his Convener, that the Superintendent purposed making a visit in the spring, filled him with more or less anxiety. He remembered only too well his failure at the Fort; he thought of that postscript in the Superintendent's

letter to his Convener; he knew that even in Loon Lake and in the Pass his church organization was not anything to boast of; and altogether he considered that the results he had to show for his year's labour were few and meagre.

The winter had been long and severe. In the Pass there had been a great deal of sickness, both among the miners and among the lumbermen. The terrible sufferings these men had to endure from the cold and exposure, for which they were all too inadequately prepared, brought not only physical evils upon them, but reacted in orgies unspeakably degrading.

The hospital was full. Nell had been retained by The Don as nurse, and although for a time this meant constant humiliation and trial to her, she bore herself with such gentle humility, and did her work with such sweet and untiring patience, that the men began to regard her with that entire respect and courteous consideration that men of their class never fail to give to pure and high-minded women.

The Don was full of work. He visited the camps, treated the sick and wounded there, and brought down to the hospital such as needed to be moved thither, and gradually won his way into the confidence of all who came into touch with him. Even Ike, after long hesitation and somewhat careful observation, gave him once more his respect and his friendship.

The doctor was kept busy by an epidemic of diphtheric croup that had broken out among the children of the Loon Lake district, and began to take once more pride in his work, and to regain his self-respect

and self-control. He took especial pride and joy in the work of The Don at the Pass, and did all he could to make the hospital and the club room accomplish all the good that Shock had hoped for them.

But though the hospital and club room had done much for the men of the Pass, there was still the ancient warfare between the forces that make for manhood and those that make for its destruction. Hickey still ran his saloon, and his gang still aided him in all his nefarious work. Men were still "run" into the saloon or the red-light houses, there to be "rolled," and thence to be kicked out, fit candidates for the hospital. The hospital door was ever open for them, and whatever the history, the physical or moral condition of the patient, he was received, and with gentle, loving ministrations tended back to health, and sent out again to camp or mine, often only to return for another plunge into the abyss of lust and consequent misery; sometimes, however, to set his feet upon the upward trail that led to pure and noble manhood. For The Don, while he never preached, took pains to make clear to all who came under his charge the results of their folly and their sin to body and to mind, as well as to soul, and he had the trick of forcing them to take upon themselves the full responsibility for their destiny, whether it was to be strength, soundness of mind, happiness, heaven, or disease, insanity, misery, hell. It was heart-breaking work, for the disappointments were many and bitter, but with now and then an achievement of such splendid victory as gave hope and courage to keep up the fight.

At Loon Lake during the winter Shock had devoted himself to the perfecting of his church organization. A *Communion Roll* had been formed and on it names entered of men and women whose last church connection reached back for ten or fifteen or twenty years, and along with those the names of some who had never before had a place in that mystic order of the saints of God. And, indeed, with some of these Shock had had his own difficulty, not in persuading them to offer themselves as candidates, but in persuading himself to assume the responsibility of accepting them. To Shock with his Highland training it was a terribly solemn step to "come forward." The responsibility assumed, bulked so largely in the opinion of those whom Shock had always regarded as peculiarly men of God, that it almost, if not altogether, obliterated the privilege gained.

When a man like Sinclair, whose reputable character and steady life seemed to harmonize with such a step, he had little difficulty; and had the Kid, with his quick intelligence, his fineness of spirit and his winning disposition, applied for admission, Shock would have had no hesitation in receiving him. But the Kid, although a regular attendant on the services, and though he took especial delight in the Sabbath evening gatherings after service, had not applied, and Shock would not think of bringing him under pressure; and all the more because he had not failed to observe that the Kid's interest seemed to be more pronounced and more steadfast in those meetings in which Marion's singing was the feature. True, this pecul-

arity the Kid shared with many others of the young men in the district, to Shock's very considerable embarrassment, though to the girl's innocent and frank delight; and it is fair to say that the young men, whom Shock had put upon their honor in regard to one who was but a child, never by word or look failed in that manly and considerate courtesy that marks the noble nature in dealing with the weak and unprotected.

The truth about the Kid was that that gay young prince of broncho busters, with his devil-may-care manner and his debonair appearance, was so greatly sought after, so flattered and so fêted by the riotous and reckless company at the Fort, of which the Inspector and his wife were the moving spirits, that he was torn between the two sets of influences that played upon him, and he had not yet come to the point of final decision as to which kingdom he should seek.

It was with Ike and men like Ike, however, that Shock had his greatest difficulty, for when the earnest appeal was made for men to identify themselves with the cause that stood for all that was noblest in the history of the race, and to swear allegiance to Him who was at once the ideal and the Saviour of men, Ike without any sort of hesitation came forward and to Shock's amazement, and, indeed, to his dismay, offered himself. For Ike was regarded through all that south country as the most daringly reckless of all the cattlemen, and never had he been known to weaken either in "takin' his pizen," in "playin' the limit" in poker, or in "standin' up agin any man that thought

he could dust his pants." Of course he was "white." Everyone acknowledged that. But just how far this quality of whiteness fitted him as a candidate for the communion table Shock was at a loss to say.

He resolved to deal with Ike seriously, but the initial difficulty in this was that Ike seemed to be quite unperplexed about the whole matter, and entirely unafraid. Shock's difficulty and distress were sensibly increased when on taking Ike over the "marks" of the regenerate man, as he had heard them so fully and searchingly set forth in the "Question Meetings" in the congregation of his childhood, he discovered that Ike was apparently ignorant of all the deeper marks, and what was worse, seemed to be quite undisturbed by their absence.

While Shock was proceeding with his examination he was exceedingly anxious lest he should reveal to Ike any suspicion as to his unfitness for the step he proposed to take. At the same time, he was filled with anxiety lest through any unfaithfulness of his on account of friendship a mistake in so solemn a matter should be made. It was only when he observed that Ike was beginning to grow uneasy under his somewhat searching examination, and even offered to withdraw his name, that Shock decided to cast to the winds all his preconceived notions of what constituted fitness for enrollment in the Church of the living God, and proceeded to ask Ike some plain, common sense questions.

"You are sure you want to join this church, Ike?"

"That's what," said Ike.

"Why do you want to join?"

"Well, you gave us a clear invite, didn't you?"

"But I mean, is it for my sake? Because I asked you?"

"Why, sure. I want to stand at your back."

Shock was puzzled. He tried another line of approach.

"Do you know, Ike, what you are joining?"

"Well, it's your church, you said."

"Supposing I was not here at all, would you join?"

"Can't say. Guess not."

Shock felt himself blocked again.

"Ike, do you think you are really fit to do this?"

"Fit? Well, you didn't say anything about bein' fit. You said if anyone was willin' to take it up, to stay with the game, to come on."

"Yes, yes, I know, Ike. I did say that, and I meant that," said Shock. "But, Ike, you know that the Apostle calls those who belong to the church 'saints of God.'"

"Saints, eh? Well, I ain't no saint, I can tell you that. Guess I'm out of this combination. No, sir, I ain't no paradox—paragon, I mean." Ike remembered the Kid's correction.

His disappointment and perplexity were quite evident. After hearing Shock's invitation from the pulpit it had seemed so plain, so simple.

His answer rendered Shock desperate.

"Look here, Ike, I am going to be plain with you. You won't mind that?"

"Wade right in."

"Well, you sometimes swear, don't you?"

"Yes, that's so. But I've pretty much quit, unless there's some extraordinary occasion."

"Well, you drink, don't you?"

"Why, sure. When I can git it, and git it good, which ain't easy in this country now."

"And you sometimes fight?"

"Well," in a tone almost of disappointment, "there ain't nobody wantin' to experiment with me in these parts any longer."

"And you gamble? Play poker for money, I mean?"

"Oh, well, I don't profess to be the real thing," replied Ike modestly, as if disclaiming an excellence he could hardly hope to attain, "but I generally kin stay some with the game."

"Now, Ike, listen to me. I'm going to give it to you straight."

Ike faced his minister squarely, looking him fair in the eyes.

"You have been doing pretty much as you like all along. Now, if you join the church you are swearing solemnly to do only what Jesus Christ likes. You give your word you will do only what you think He wants. You see? He is to be your Master."

"Yes," said Ike. "Yes, that's so. That's right."

"In everything, remember."

"Why, sure." That seemed quite simple to Ike.

"Swearing, drinking, fighting, gambling," Shock continued.

Ike hesitated.

"Why, you don't suppose He would mind a little thing like a smile with the boys now and then, or a quiet game of poker, do you?"

"What I say, Ike, is this—if you thought He did mind, would you quit?"

"Why, sure. You just bet! I said so."

"Well, Ike, supposing some one of those chaps from the Pass, say Hickey, should walk up and hit you in the face, what would you do?"

"What? Proceed to eddicate him. Preject him into next week. That is, if there was anything left."

Shock opened his Bible and read, "'But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also.' That is what Jesus Christ says, Ike."

"He does, eh? Does it mean just that?" Ike felt that this was a serious difficulty.

"Yes, it means just that."

"Are all you fellers like that?"

This wrought in Shock sudden confusion.

"Well, Ike, I am afraid not, but we ought to be, and we aim to be."

"Well," said Ike slowly, "I guess I ain't made that way."

Then Shock turned the leaves of his Bible, and read the story of the cruel bruising of the Son of Man, and on to the words, "Father, forgive them." Ike had heard this story before, but he had never seen its bearing upon practical life.

"I say," he said, with reverent admiration in his voice, "He did it, didn't He? That's what I call

pretty high jumpin', ain't it? Well," he continued, "I can't make no promises, but I tell you what, I'll aim at it. I will, honest. And when you see me weaken, you'll jack me up, won't you? You'll have to stay with me, for it's a mighty hard proposition."

Then Shock took his hands. "Ike, you are a better man than I am, but I promise you I will stay all I can with you. But there will be days when you will be all alone except that He will be with you. Now listen," and Shock, turning over the leaves of his Bible, read, "Lo, I am with you always," and a little further over and read again, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me."

"That is His solemn promise, Ike. He has promised to save us from our sins. Do you think you can trust Him to do that?"

"Why, sure," said Ike, as if nothing else was possible. "That's His game, ain't it? I guess He'll stay with it. He said so, didn't He?"

"Yes," said Shock, with a sudden exaltation of faith, "He said so, and He will stay with it. Don't you be afraid, Ike. He will see you through."

The Communion Roll when it was completed numbered some eighteen names, and of these eighteen none were more sorely pressed to the wall in God's battle than Ike, and none more loyally than he stayed with the game.

Owing to miscarriage in arrangements, when the Superintendent arrived at the Fort he was surprised to find no one to meet him. This had an appearance of carelessness or mismanagement that unfavorably

impressed the Superintendent as to the business capacity of his missionary. He was too experienced a traveller, however, in the remote and unformed districts of the West, to be at all disconcerted at almost any misadventure.

He inquired for Mr. Macfarren, and found him in Simmons' store, redolent of bad tobacco and worse whiskey, but quite master of his mental and physical powers. The Superintendent had business with Mr. Macfarren, and proceeded forthwith to transact it.

After his first salutation he began, "When I saw you last, Mr. Macfarren, you professed yourself keenly desirous of having services established by our church here."

"Yes."

"Why this sudden change, represented by your letter to the Committee, and the petition, which I judge was promoted by yourself? I placed a man here, with every expectation of success. How can you explain this change in you and in the people you represent?"

The Superintendent's bodily presence was anything but weak, and men who could oppose him when at a distance, when confronted with him found it difficult to support their opposition. Macfarren found it so. He began in an apologetic manner, "Well, Doctor, circumstances have changed. Times have been none too good. In fact, we are suffering from financial stringency at present."

"Mr. Macfarren, be specific as to your reasons. Your letter and your petition were instrumental in