

"Not much!" echoed Perault, and in this feeling all emphatically agreed.

"Do you know where we can get such a man?" said the Superintendent, "such a prospector?" There was no answer. "I do not either. Now, what are you going to do?"

Then Sinclair spoke up.

"Do you mean, Doctor, to remove Mr. Macgregor from us? That would seem to be very hard upon this field."

"Well, perhaps not; but can you spare him for six months, at least?"

For some minutes no one made reply. Then Ike spoke.

"Well, I surmise we got a good deal from our Prospector. In fact, what we ain't got from him don't count much. And I rather opine that we can't be mean about this. It's a little like pullin' hair, but I reckon we'd better give him up."

"Thank you, sir," said the Superintendent, who had learned much from Ike throughout the day. "Your words are the best commentary I have ever heard upon a saying of our Lord's, that has inspired men to all unselfish living, 'Freely ye have received, freely give.'"

## THE NEW POLICY

IT was still early spring when Shock received a letter from Brown, a letter full of perplexity and love and wrath.

"Something has gone wrong," he wrote. "You have got to come down here and straighten it out. I can plainly see that Mrs. Fairbanks is at the bottom of it, but just what she is at I cannot discover. Helen I do not now see much. The changes in our life, you see, have been very great. I cannot bear to go to the house now. The associations are too much for me. Besides, Lloyd seems to have taken possession of the whole family. The old lady flatters and fondles him in a manner that makes my gorge rise. It is quite evident she wants him for her son-in-law, and more than evident that he entirely concurs.

"Just what Helen thinks of it I am at a loss to know, but I cannot believe she can stand Lloyd any more than I can. Up till recently she was very open with me and very loyal to you, but of late a change has taken place, and what in thunder is the matter, I cannot make out. Have you done or said anything? Have you been guilty of any high-falutin' nonsense of giving her up, and that sort of thing? I fear she is avoiding me just now, and I feel certain she has been misled in some way, so you must come down.

You really must. Of course you will say you cannot afford it, but this is too serious a thing for any excuse like that. Will not your confounded Highland pride let me lean you enough to bring you down. Anyway, come, if you have to walk."

It must be confessed that Brown's letter produced little effect upon Shock's mind. The bitterness of his surrender was past, so, at least, he thought. The happy dream he had cherished for a year was gone forever. He was quite certain that it was not Brown's but the Superintendent's letter that determined him to accept appointment as a delegate to the General Assembly.

"I have no right to command you in this," the Superintendent wrote. "I wish I had. But I need you, and for the sake of the men you and I know, I wish you to come down to the Assembly and meet the Committee."

It was undoubtedly the Superintendent's letter, and yet that sudden leap of his heart as he read his chief's entreaty startled him.

"Nonsense!" he said, shutting his jaws hard together. "That is all done with." And yet he knew that it would be a joy almost too great to endure to catch a glimpse of the face that still came to him night by night in his dreams, to hear her voice, and to be near her.

So Shock came down, and his coming brought very different feelings to different hearts, to Brown the very news of it brought mad, wild delight. He rushed to find Helen.

"He is coming down," he cried.

"Is he?" replied Helen, eagerly. "Who?"

"I have seen his chief," continued Brown, ignoring the question. "He has had a wire. He'll be here day after to-morrow. Oh, let me yell! The dear old beast! If we could only get him into a jersey, and see him bleed."

"Don't, Brownie," said Helen, using her pet name for her friend. They had grown to be much to each other during the experiences of the past year. "It suggests too much."

"I forgot," said Brown, penitently. "Forgive me. It will be hard for you."

"And for him. Poor Shock," said Helen. "Don't let him go to his home."

"Not if I can help it," replied Brown.

"And don't—don't—talk about me—much."

"Not if I can help it," replied Brown again, this time with a suspicion of a smile.

"Now, Brownie, I want you to help me," said Helen. "It is hard enough. There is nothing between us now. He wishes it to be so, and after all, I do too."

"You do? Look me in the face and say you do."

Helen looked him steadily in the face, and said, quietly, "Yes, I do. In all sincerity I believe it is far better so. Mother is quite determined, and she has only me. It is the only thing possible, so I want you to help me."

"And all that—that—that thing last spring was a farce—a mistake, I mean?"

"Yes, a mistake. An awful mistake. You see," explained Helen, hurriedly, "I was dreadfully excited, and—well, you know, I made a fool of myself. And so, Brownie, you must help me."

"Help you—how? To keep him off? That won't be hard. Tell him it was all a mistake last spring and that you regret it, and you won't need to do anything else, if I know him."

"I have—at least mother has told him."

"Your mother?" gasped Brown. "Then that settles it. Good-by. I did not expect this of you."

"Come back, Brownie. You know you are unkind, and you must not desert me."

"Well, what in heaven's name do you want me to do? Keep him off?"

"Oh, I do not know," said Helen, breaking through her calm. "I don't know. What can I do?"

"Do?" said Brown. "Let him tell you." He had great faith in Shock's powers.

But the next two days were days of miserable anxiety to Brown. If Shock would only do as he was told and act like an ordinary man, Brown had no doubt of the issue.

"Oh, if he'll only play up," he groaned to himself, in a moment of desperation. "If he'll only play up he'll take all that out of her in about three minutes."

The only question was, would he play. Brown could only trust that in some way kind Providence would come to his aid. On the afternoon of the second day, the day of Shock's arrival, his hope was

realized, and he could not but feel that Fortune had condescended to smile a little upon him.

Shock's train was late. The Superintendent had sought Brown out, and adjured him by all things sacred to produce his man at the committee meeting at the earliest possible moment, and this commission Brown had conscientiously fulfilled.

Toward evening he met Helen downtown, and was escorting her homeward when they fell in with Tommy Phillips, a reporter for the *Times*. He was evidently in a state of considerable excitement.

"I have just had a great experience," he exclaimed. "I was down this afternoon at your church committee, and I tell you I had a circus. There was a big chap there from the wild and woolly, and he made 'em sit up. Why, you know him, I guess. He's that 'Varsity football chap the fellows used to rave about."

"Oh, yes, I know," said Brown. "Macgregor. Shock, we used to call him."

"Yes, of course. I remember I saw him last year at the McGill match."

"Well, what was up?" said Brown, scenting something good. "Let us have it. Do the reporter act."

"Well, it's good copy, let me tell you, but I don't want to allow my professional zeal to obliterate my sense of the decencies of polite society."

"Go on," said Brown, "I want to hear. You know, I played quarter behind him for three years, and Miss Fairbanks is interested, I know."

"You did? Well, if he bucked up as he did this

afternoon, you must have had good hunting. Well, then, when that committee met you never saw a more solemn-looking bunch in your life. You would think they had all lost their mothers-in-law. And when they broke up they didn't know but they were standing on their heads."

"What was the matter?"

"Oh, there was a big deficit on, and they had to go up to your big council—conference—what do you call it in your pagan outfit? Assembly? Yes, that's it—and take their medicine. Twenty thousand dollars of a debt. Well, sir, on the back of all that didn't their Grand Mogul—archbishop—you know, from the West—no, not Macgregor—their chief pusher. Superintendent? Yes—come in and put an ice pack on them in the shape of a new scheme for exploration and extension in the Kootenay country, the Lord knows where, some place out of sight. Well, you ought to have heard him. He burned red fire, you bet. Pardon my broken English, Miss Fairbanks."

"Go on," said Helen, "I like it," and Brown gave himself a little hug.

"I am glad you do," continued Tommy, "for it is bad enough to write copy without having to speak it. Well, the war began, some in favour of the scheme, some against, but all hopeless in view of the present state of finances. Better wait a little, and that sort of talk. Then, let's see what happened. Oh, yes. The question of the man came up. Who was the man? The Superintendent was ready for 'em. It

was Macgregor of some place. Frog Lake? No, Loon Lake. Then the opposition thought they had him with a half-nelson. Old Dr. Macfarren jumped on to the chief with both feet. His man was no good, a flat failure in his field, no tact. Beg your pardon, Miss Fairbanks. What did you say?"

"Oh, never mind," said Helen. "Go on."

"He appealed for corroboration to his friend, the chap up at Park Church, you know, that sleek, kid-gloved fellow."

"Burns?" asked Brown, innocently, delighted in the reporter's description of Lloyd and desiring more of it.

"No. You know that orator chap, liquid eyes, mellifluous voice, and all the rest of it."

"Oh, Lloyd."

"Yes. Well, he took a whirl and backed up Macfarren. Evidently didn't think much of the Superintendent's choice. Remarked about his being a Highlander, a man of visions and that sort of thing."

"What else did he say?" inquired Brown, who was in a particularly happy mood.

"Oh, a lot of stuff, in his most lordly, patronizing tone. Macgregor was a very good, earnest fellow, but he should judge him to be lacking in tact or adaptability, fine sensibilities, and that sort of rot. But never mind. Didn't he catch it! Oh, no. My Sally Ann! Boiling lard and blue vitriol, and all in the chief's most sweet-scented lavender style, though all the time I could see the danger lights burning

through his port-holes. I tell you I've had my diminished moments, but I don't think I was ever reduced to such a shade as the Park Church chap when the Superintendent was through with him. Serve him right, too."

"What did the Superintendent say?" continued Brown, delighted to find somebody who would express his own sentiments with more force and fulness than he could command.

"Say! Well, I wish I could tell you. 'Mr. Lloyd says he is a Highlander. Yes, he is, thank God. So am I. He is a man of visions. Yes, he has vision beyond the limits of his own congregation and of his own native cross-roads, vision for what lies beyond the horizon, vision for those men in the mountains who are going to the devil.' A quotation, Miss Fairbanks, I assure you. 'These miners and lumbermen, forgotten by all but their mothers, and God.' Say, it was great. If I could reproduce it there would be a European trip in it. Then he turned on Dr. Macfarren. It seems that Macgregor somehow had to quit some place in the West on the plea that he was not adaptable, and that sort of thing. 'Dr. Macfarren says he was a failure,' went on the old chief, using at least five r's, 'Mr. Lloyd says he is not adaptable, he is lacking in fine sensibilities. It is true God did not make him with sleek hair'—which, by Jove, was true enough—and dainty fingers. And a good thing it was, else our church at Loon Lake, built by his own hands, the logs cut, shaped and set in place, sir, by his own hands, would never have

existed. He was a failure at the Fort, we are told. Why? I made inquiries concerning that. I was told by a gentleman who calls himself a Presbyterian—I need not mention his name—that he was not suitable to the peculiarly select and high-toned society of that place. No, sir, our missionary could not bow and scrape, he was a failure at tennis, he did not shine at card parties, and here you could smell things sizzling. 'He could not smile upon lust. No, thank God!' and the old chap's voice began to quiver and shake. 'In all this he was a failure, and would to God we had more of the same kind!' 'Amen,' 'Thank God,' 'That's true,' the men around the table cried. I thought I had struck a Methodist revival meeting."

"What else did he say?" said Brown, who could hardly contain himself for sheer delight.

"Well, he went on then to yarn about Macgregor's work—how a church and club house had been built in one place, and a hospital and all that sort of thing, in another, and then he told us stories of the different chaps who had been apparently snatched from the mouth of hell by Macgregor, and were ready to lie down and let him walk over them. It was great. There was an Irishman and a Frenchman, I remember, both Roman Catholics, but both ready to swallow the Confession of Faith if the Prospector ordered them. Yes, that was another point. Macgregor, it seems, was a regular fiend for hunting up fellows and rooting them out to church, and so they dubbed him 'the Prospector.' The old chief stuck that in, I tell

you. Then there was a doctor and, oh, a lot of chaps,—a cowboy fellow named Ike, who was particularly good copy if one could reproduce him. And then—” here Tommy hesitated—“well, it’s worth while telling. There was a girl who had gone wrong, and had been brought back. To hear the chief tell that yarn was pretty fine. I don’t turn the waterworks on without considerable pressure, but I tell you my tanks came pretty near overflowing when he talked about that poor girl. And then, at the most dramatic moment—that old chap knows his business—he brought on Macgregor, announcing him as ‘the Prospector of Frog Lake, no, Loon Lake.’ Well, he was not much to look at. His hair was not slick, and his beard looked a little like a paint brush, his pants ran up on his boots, and bagged at the knees.”

“He had just come off the train,” hastily interposed Brown, “He hadn’t a moment to dress himself.”

“Well, as I say, he wasn’t pretty to look at, and they gave him a kind of frosty reception, too.”

“Well, what happened?” inquired Brown, anxious to get over this part of the description.

“Well, they began firing questions at him hot and fast. He was a little rattled for a while, but after a bit he got into his stride, put down his map, laid out his country and began pouring in his facts, till when they let him out they looked for all the world like a lot of men who had been struck by a whirlwind and were trying to get back their breath and other belongings.”

“Well, what did they do then?”

“Oh, the thing passed, I guess. I left ’em and went after the man from the West. I thought I had struck oil. I had visions too.”

“Well, did you get him?”

“I did, but there was not any oil. It was rock, hard, cold Scotch granite. I’m something of a borer, but I tell you what, he turned my edge. It was no use. He wouldn’t talk.”

“Good by. Come around and see your man at my rooms,” said Brown heartily. “I’ll pump him for you, and you can catch the oil.”

“You will, eh? All right, set a mug for me.”

“Great boy, that Tommy,” said Brown, who was smitten with a sudden enthusiastic admiration for the reporter. “Clever chap. He’ll make his mark yet.”

Helen walked for some distance in silence.

“Is—is he—is Mr. Macgregor with you?” she inquired at length.

“Yes, Mr. Macgregor is with me,” mimicked Brown. “Will you send him a card?”

“Now, Brownie, stop,” said Helen in distress. “He has not been home yet, has he?”

“No. Why?”

“Could you keep him away till about eleven tomorrow?”

“Yes, I suppose I might. He has got to get some clothes and get some of the wool off him. But why do you ask?”

“Well, I thought I would just run in and dust, and

put some flowers up, and, you know, make it a little more homelike."

"Helen, you're a brick. I had decided to drop you because I didn't love you, but I am changing my mind."

"Well, do not let him go before eleven. Everything will be right by that time."

"Good!" said Brown, with an ebullition of rapture, which he immediately suppressed as Helen's eyes were turned inquiringly upon him. "You see," he explained hurriedly, "he has been in the West and will need to get a lot of things, and that will give you plenty of time. There's my car. Good-by. We have had a happy afternoon, eh?"

"Oh, yes, very happy, thank you," said Helen, but she could not quite suppress a little sigh.

"Well, good-by," said Brown, and he went off jubilant to his car.

He sat down in a corner, and thought hard till he came to his street. "If he'll only play up we'll win, sure thing. But will he, confound him, will he? Well, the kick-off will be to-morrow."

He found Shock waiting in his rooms, with a face so grave and so sad that Brown's heart grew sore for him.

"Come on, old chap, we'll go to grub. But first I am going to groom you a bit. We'll take a foot or two off your hair since the football season is over; and I think," examining him critically, "we can spare that beard, unless you are very fond of it."

Shock protested that he had no particular love for

his beard; it was better for the cold weather, and it was not always convenient for him to shave.

When the barber had finished with Shock, Brown regarded him with admiration.

"You are all right, old chap. I say, you've got thin, haven't you?"

"No, I am pretty much in my playing form."

"Well, there is something different." And there was. The boyish lines of his face had given place to those that come to men with the cares and griefs and responsibilities of life. And as Brown looked over Shock's hard, lean face, he said again, with emphasis, "You'll do."

After dinner Shock wandered about the rooms uneasily for a time, and finally said, "I say, Brown, I would like to go up home, if you don't mind." They had not yet spoken of what each knew was uppermost in the other's mind.

"All right, Shock. But wouldn't it be better in the morning?"

"I want to go to-night," said Shock.

"Well, if you are bound to, we will go up in an hour or two. There's a lot of things I want to talk about, and some things to arrange," replied Brown, hoping that in the meantime something might turn up to postpone the visit till the morning.

For a second time that day Fortune smiled upon Brown, for hardly had they settled down for a talk when the Superintendent appeared.

"I am glad to find you in," he said, giving Shock's hand a vigorous shake. "I came to offer you my

congratulations upon your appearance this afternoon, and also to tell you that the Committee have appointed you to address the Assembly on Home Mission night."

"Hooray!" cried Brown. "Your Committee, Doctor, is composed of men who evidently know a good thing when they see it."

"Sometimes, Mr. Brown, sometimes," said the Superintendent, shrewdly.

But Shock refused utterly and absolutely.

"I am no speaker," he said. "I am a failure as a speaker."

"Well, Mr. Macgregor, I will not take your refusal to-night. It is the Committee's request, and you ought to hesitate before refusing it."

"A man can do no more than his best," said Shock, "and I know I cannot speak."

"Well, think it over," said the Superintendent, preparing to go.

"Oh, sit down, sit down," cried Brown. "You must want to have a talk with Shock here, and I want to hear all about this afternoon."

"Well," said the Superintendent, seating himself, "it is not often I have a chance to talk with a Prospector, so I will accept your invitation." And by the time the talk was done it was too late for Shock to think of visiting his home, and Brown went asleep with the happy expectation of what he called the "kick-off" next day.

## THE WAITING GAME

**B**ROWN was early astir. He knew that he could not keep Shock so fully employed as to prevent his going home long before ten o'clock, and it was part of his plan that Shock's first meeting with Helen should take place in his own mother's house.

"The first thing we must do," he announced, "is to see a tailor. If you are going to address the General Assembly you have got to get proper togs. And anyway, you may as well get a suit before you go West again. I know a splendid tailor—cheap, too."

"Well, he will need to be cheap," said Shock, "for I cannot afford much for clothes."

"Well, I will see about that," said Brown. So he did, for after some private conversation with the tailor, the prices quoted to Shock were quite within even his small means.

It was half-past nine before they reached Shock's home. Brown took the key out of his pocket, opened the door, and allowed Shock to enter, waiting outside for a few moments.

When he followed Shock in he found him still standing in the centre of the little room, looking about