## Edward Blake: College Student.

By Charles M. Sheldon.

Continued from last issue

"It is not absurd at all. Good God. Ned, don't you see how I am situated? I don't care for the old college. All the time I've been here I've been tempted by the fast set to do the things I've been doing. I'm no scholar. I hate what it's all for, I don't care a rap for the education. But I like business, and I know as well as anything that I can succeed with the opening my uncle has made for me. Now, if I can settle down in a home of my own I shall be In a fair way to make a man of myself. No other girl ever appealed to me like wour sister. I feel as if I could promise her anything and keep it, too, even as I haven't kept my promise to my own mother. Does that mean nothing to you? It means everything to me."

There was quite a silence in the groom. Then Edward spoke very slowly: "Then you want my sister to sacri-

tice herself to save you. Is that it?" "I don't ask her to sacrifice anything if she does not care for me," replied Willis proudly.

Edward did not reply to this, and after awhile Willis said: "I'm going to write to your mother and ask her if I may speak to Freeda. If she gives her consent, I suppose it's all right."

"I shall never give mine." "But she is of age. She can decide for herself."

"I mean that it will never be with my approval that you ask Freeda to marry you. I haven't any fears about the answer she will give you."

Nevertheless, he did have some fears, and Willis seemed to know that fact.

"It all rests with her, then. Will you promise me one thing, Ned? Will you promise not to say anything to her before I get word from your mother? After all, isn't a man to be allowed to choose for himself when he loves a person?"

Edward hesitated. He did not know fust\_what his mother would say. But what Willis said had a good deal of weight after all.

"Yes, I'll promise that," he said at last reluctantly.

"All right. Thank you," replied Wilills, and then, as by agreement, the conversation stopped.

A week later Willis showed Edward a letter from Mrs. Blake.

Edward read it through in some surprise. It was in answer to Willis' letter, in which he had evidently gone into a full account of the matter. He had put his case as strongly as possible, and Mrs. Blake had evidently aympathized with him to a degree. His proposal concerning Freeda had come as a great surprise, but she was willing that Freeda should decide her Inture. She had always given her great freedom and did not wish to coher feeling. At the same time s ventured to express her strong regret that Mr. Preston was not a Christian by profession and more than hinted her doubts concerning Freeda's acceptance of such a future on account of her religious home training. etc. The letter closed with a reluctant assent to Willis' appeal to be allowed to speak to Freeda.

"It's all right so far as your mother is concerned," said Willis, with some satisfaction, as Edward banded back

Edward did not answer.

"There's one more thing I want to ask of you, Ned, and that is that you let me speak to Freeda before you say anything to her against me. Will you?" 'I won't say anything to her. Let her settle it," replied Edward shortly.

This was about two weeks before commencement. Three days after, as Edward was going over to the library to get a book, he met Freeda coming from the ball. Her face bore marks of wreeping, and Edward knew at once what the reason was,

He went up to her and faced her with sympathy.

"Come, Freeda, take a walk with me out on the lower campus and tell me

what you can. I know about it." Freeda silently assented, and they went down to a seat under an old elm and sat down there after walking slowly around the wide path that encircled the campus.

"And I couldn't give him any other answer, Ned. could I?" asked Freeda as she continued her account of the unexpected interview she had had with Willis.

"No, I don't see how you could," replied Edward gravely. "And yet you say, dear, that you had begun to like him very much?"

"'Like' isn't the word to use, Ned. I'm afraid I think a great deal too much of him for my own happiness mow. And yet I felt as sure all the time he was asking me to marry him and looking so handsome and so brave"-here Freeda choked a little and Edward waited in sympathetic si-Bones for her to recover-"so brave, Ned, that I had hard work to say no. And yet I knew it was for the best. I gold him plainly that I feared for my Turne with him on account of his drinking especially. And he promised everything about giving it up for my sake. But I have no faith in his promses. Isn't it strange. Ned, even though I believe I have some now come to-to netually think more of him than of any one, I still knew, somehow, that after awhile he would begin to drink again, and our home would be ruined?

wo't it, Ned?" Relt certainly is done And you don't

believe you could keep him from it?" he asked, finding his sympathy for his sister softening his feeling toward Wil-

"No, I've no faith in that, Ned," replied Freeda sadly. "I don't believe in marrying a young man to reform him. A man has no right to ask a girl to do that. He ought to come to her as pure and free from vices as he expects her to be. Men are not expected to marry bad women to reform them. What right have they to expect a girl to do that for them?

"You will not regret your decision, dear," at last Edward said. "I am very glad of it. I feel as you do about it. You would never be happy."

"No, I don't regret it." answered Freeda, pushing her foot nervously books, except novels. When I think over the cinders at the foot of the seat. And then, to Edward's surprise and distress, she clasped her hands in her lap, while the tears ran over her face as she said, "But I am very unhappy now, Ned, for I think I loved him very much."

That evening Willis did not come in until quite late, and Edward waited



You will not regret your decision, dear." for him. The minute he saw Willis' face he knew that he had taken his answer in a hard way.

"Of course you know all about it," he said, with a short laugh. "She's too good for me. I made her confess that she cared for me though. You said

Edward came very near getting angry again. Nothing but his sense of Willis' keen disappointment kept him from It.

"I'm going home this week," Willis continued shortly. "I'll skip examnations anyway."

Edward tried to persuade him to stay and finish out the work of the

"What's the use? I'm going to New York this summer anyhow. Your sister will have a good deal to answer for

If I go to the bad when I get to the city.'

At that Edward boiled over with righteous wrath.

"Look here, Willis! Don't you dare to charge your own miserable selfishness to my sister! It's all your own fault that she couldn't marry you. And if you go to the bad now it will be your own fault and no one's else, besides showing her that you never realy cared anything for her. If you did. you would make a man of yourself."

Willis sat down and leaned his elbow on the old table and put his head on his hand. Then he lifted a haggard face to Edward and said:

"You're right. I'm a poor, miserable, selfish fool, and I would wreck her life if she should put it into my keeping. I know as I sit here that I shall go to the devil through drink, no matter what happens. I've had the tortures of hell to fight all these weeks, Do you know when your sister told me finally that her refusal was absolute and that I had not the slightest hope I had a horrible feeling of something like relief to think that now I had an excuse to go to drinking again. Just as sure as I sit here, Ned, I'm certain that I shall drink myself crazy drunk in less than ten years. And yet grandfather always said drink never hurt him any. He was one of these personal liberty fellows. He never thought of the possibility that I might go to the devil even if he didn't. It's possible, though, that we shall meet in hell. Maybe in God's sight he's as much to blame as I am."

"Don't!" cried Edward, shocked at the reckless, savage manner in which Willis spoke. The sight of the miserable face and the thought of Willis' possible future haunted him all the rest of his college course,

"God keep you from knowing anything about this feeling," said Willis more gently, and then he rose suddenly

and came over to Edward. "Ned, old boy, I'm going away, and l may never see you again. I owe you lot for the way you've borne with me, and I'll never forget it. You and Freeda have prompted the best feelings I ever had. Don't think too hard of me, will you? I wish you'd write to me once in awhile. Don't give me up, even if I do seem to be past hope. Maybe Whenton's prayers will save me

Oh. Edward Blake, college student, when the judgment day reveals the secrets of the universe, will you see then what you missed because you were not a Christian? What might you have said or done at this time to save this poor soul if you had really had some higher standard of life than your cold, moral standard, that never warmed your heart or fired your soul to help save another soul? The Lord open your eyes to see not only the great opportunity you missed, but also the great sin of daring to live always with no better purpose than the one that has so far ruled you.

So he let Willis go, and go out of his life, at least for the time being, with It's an awful thing, the drink habit, a kindly and even a self reproachful feeling, that in time became a vague

sort of hope that he might not turn out quite so bad as he himself said he would. And yet if the clutch of his grandfather's sins was on him, how is it that even then you do not yet realize, either of you, that there is a power even greater than bereditary taint in the blood and that the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God can cleanse even that taint of that other blood? For he is able to save to the uttermost those that put their trust in him.

And now the commencement season was on, and Edward realized that he was through his junior year, and in a few days, as soon as the graduating class had received their diplomas, his own class would be entitled to the dignifled name of seniors. He was not so devoid of imagination as not to be quite deeply moved at the thought. He and Freeda were now classified together, for, although she had entered six months earlier, Edward had arranged his course so as to make up certain studies, and Freeda had dropped back a part of a year in order to be with him and take a special course in music. So they were glad to think of the comradeship still possible for them another year.

As they sat together that commencement day and heard the charge to the outgoing class they realized as never before the value of their college life. The president never said very much at commencement. Perhaps that is one reason why the class that graduated remembered a good many things and carried them away with them.

"It would not be fair nor true to say to you," continued the president after giving the diplomas, "that you had all done the very best you knew how during your entire college course. You yourselves know that you have negected many opportunities and wasted many important hours. You cannot now help this, and I am not going to use this occasion to blame you for not having made better use of your advantages.

"The question for you to ask now is, What can I do with what I have gained in Hope college? As you go out into the world you will find a great many temptations to use your intelligence selfishly. A college bred man or woman always is strongly tempted to be more or less exclusive, growing farther and farther from a knowledge of and sympathy for the people. Will you let me urge every one of you to use your powers developed here to get nearer the people who have not had your advantages? If education does not mean a brotherhood, if it does not mean the strong bearing the infirmities of the weak, then it is not Christian; it is pagan in its selfishness and narrow-

"There is just one other thing I want you to feel at this time, and that is the reat first thing in all life. I mean the hristian life. If every member of

this class in the course of the next ten years should forget every lesson he ever learned in mathematics or chemistry or astronomy, the loss might be great, but it would not necessarily be vital nor fatal to a life of great usefulness. But if every one of you ten years from now should forget and cease to practice all the lessons you have been taught in Christian character and the value of truth and purity and self denial and usefulness the loss would be not only terrible, but absolutely irreparable. All the things you have learned in the whole college course are not worth knowing without the knowledge of God. Paul said that if a man had all knowledge, but did not have love, it profited nothing; it



"I'm not going to apologize, Blake." was of no account. That is what I mean. If the main things you are taking out of this school into the world are facts concerning languages and science and art and music-if that is all you are taking with you, I am sorry for you and for the world. But if you window, hardly knowing whether to are taking with you a great desire to feel vexed at the interview or pleased make use of all this knowledge in such at Wheaton's interest in him. a way as to make human life happier

not in yourselves, not in your own cul- had forgotten to return it. ought to be done and do it not to your harder own glory, but to the glory of God. The Lord bless you and use you to his run back to the hall," he said. glory. Go out from here and do not "No, no. You go with me, Blake, your best, but his best, as he works Thank you I really own several dozen

above and within you." on this occasion was rainy, and the that other people own?"

class went into the chapel. As Edward was going in with the rest of his own class, which always sat together during the afternoon exercises, he was stopped a moment in the lower hall by Wheaton, who asked him if he would be in his room after the exercises or before the promenade concert in the

"Pardon me for asking or taking any of your time today, but I am obliged to leave for home on the 7 o'clock train on account of illness there, and I want just a word with you before I go."

Edward felt somewhat annoyed, for he guessed what Wheaton wanted to say, but he had come to feel more respect for him than he once felt, and so he answered quite pleasantly.

"Come up right after the exercises here, and I'll have a little time." "All right; thank you," said Wheaton

gratefully. When Edward went up to his room after the class exercises were over, he found Wheaton waiting for him in the They went in, and Wheaton somewhat awkwardly took the seat Edward

offered.

"I'm not going to apologize, Blake, for saying what I have in my mind at this time," began Wheaton, and all his awkwardness and embarrassment vanished as he began to speak. "I may not come back to Hope next year on account of matters at home, and I may not ever see you again. But I have been praying for you almost ever since you entered Hope, and I have carried a burden in my soul for you that you might accept Christ as a personal Savfour. Won't you give it a serious thought, Blake? Not because I ask you to, but because you owe it to Christ to be his disciple. You have great power

or good in this college. Your influwould be something wonderful if as positively Christian. Why don't surrender yourself to him, Blake? will never regret it as long as you

if you do." heaton paused, and Edward sat ing out of the window at the dripbranches of the big elm near by. was distinctly displeased with aton at first. "Confound the felhe was saying within himself Wheaton was speaking. "Why ild he pick out today of all days to ch his association religion to me?" n as Wheaton went on a curious age of feeling took place in Ed-

d's mind. Why should Wheaton anything about him anyway? at difference did it make to him ther Blake was a Christian or not? if he really was anxious about the are of his (Edward Blake's) soul iny reason whatever, what more to expected than that he would selze opportunity he could to speak on

Iward was silent so long as he t over this little monologue that saton thought he was perhaps givthe subject serious consideration.

He did not venture to break the silence, and Edward at last said slowly: "I'm much obliged to you, Wheaton, for your interest in me. I'm afraid I don't deserve it."

"That's not the question," began Wheaton eagerly. "I believe you don't realize all you are missing as you go on with your college course. A Christian faith in your own life would make a

"Am I so bad as all that?" asked Edward, with a slight laugh, beginning to feel rise in himself suddenly that unreasoning anger that he had felt before when Wheaton had spoken to him.

"No, you don't understand. But there is a great difference in the life that has put Christ into everything and the life that does not call him Lord. I wish you could see it clearly." Edward was slient again, and Wheaton looked and evidently felt disappointed. As Edward made no sign of saying anything. Wheaton rose.

"I'm sorry if I've intruded on you. Blake, or said something I ought not. Some day perhaps you'll understand my motive. I pray the Holy Spirit may move your heart and bring you into the kingdom."

He walked over to Edward simply and held out his hand. Edward felt ashamed of himself, because he knew he had treated Wheaten rudely. He tried to offer a word of spology.

"I don't question your interest in me. Whenton, even if I don't understand it. And of course I don't forget what I owe you for your kindness during my sickness. I'll always remember that with the greatest gratitude. I hope you will be back in the fall."

"Thank you. I hardly think I shall, I shall not be satisfied, Blake, until I hear that you have given yourself to

Christ." He shook hands seriously and went away, leaving Edward standing by the

It was still raining quite hard, and and the kingdom of God on earth more there was an hour yet before supper. real, because you love with supreme So he stood nimlessly by the window love God and your fellow men, then I for a few moments more after Wheatam glad for you and the world that on had gone. As he stood there lookyou have learned here in this college ing out he saw Professor Clark come the secret of all true education, which out of the chapel and start down the is the fitting of men and women to steps toward his house, which was serve God and one another more pow- three or four blocks farther down the hill. The professor was very absent-"I am rejoiced as I read your class minded, and if he brought an umbrella motto, 'Vires Nobis Desuper,' If you with him he had probably forgotten realize this truth that your strength is it or handed it to some one else who

tured morality, not in your acquired | Edward caught up his own umbrella, learning, not in your superior training. put on his hat and ran down the stairs but is in that power above us who also and across the way. He overtook the abides within us, then you can go out professor just as he went out of the and do good work in the world as it college gates. It had begun to rain

"Take the umbrella, sir, and I will

umbrellas somewhere, but other peo-In the afternoon of commencement ple are probably carrying them when it day at Hope it was customary to have rains. Which should you say was class day exercises under an elm on worse, owning umbrellas that other the upper campus. But the afternoon people carry or carrying umbrellas

"I should question the political ecoaomy of either." replied Edward, laugh-He had come to have a genuine ing. liking for Professor Clark and did not

stand at all in awe of him. "It certainly is worse for me to own so many umbrellas and never have one when it rains. If thoughtful people like you didn't look after me, I expect I should buy even more umbrellas than I do. Thank you very much. Won't you come in a minute, Blake?" he asked when they reached the house, and Edward went in for a moment.

He sat and chatted easily with the professor a few minutes and then rose to go. The professor went out into the hallway with him.

"I expect to leave for the east tomorrow and probably shall not see you again before next fall, Blake. There is one thing I have been wanting to say to you ever since the meetings last winter. You ought to be a Christian man, Blake, and throw all your influence on the side of the best things in Hope. Perhaps I'm wrong in taking



"Take the umbrella, sir!" for granted that you are not a Chris-

tian. Am I?" "No, sir; I don't call myself a Christian," replied Edward awkwardly. "Better decide it, then; the sooner the

better. God bless you, Blake. Good-

"Goodby, sir," and Edward put up his umbrella and marched up the hill through the rain which was now pouring down steadily.

He went up to his room for a few moments before supper, thinking about Professor Clark's last words. They had been very few; but, coming so soon after Wheaton's, they affected him more. He had great respect for Professor Clark and believed in the sincerity of his Christian life. He could not help wondering if he spoke to other students as he had twice spoken to him. It was or had been such

in unusual custom for the professors ever to say anything about Christianity to the students in Hope college that Edward may be pardoned if he had some feeling of wonder over the incident in his own experience.

After supper he went over to the ladies' hall to take Freeda to the promenade concert. This was usually held on the campus, but when it rained as it did that night the concert was transferred to the chapel halls and became nore like a reception.

Miss Seton had a bad headache and rould not go. Edward felt much disappointed at first, for he had been looking forward to the evening and anticipating her company with Freeda.

As he and Freeda went along together toward she chapel Freeda said. when they were in the middle of the walk by the library:

"Ned, do you remember what I said about Ida and-and Willis once?"

"Yes," replied Edward, wondering. "Of course there was nothing in that. It was the nearest to a lie that I ever came. Only at the time I was trying to get the better of my own feelings, I know that Ida never cared for him." Then she added as they drew near the chapel: "I know your secret, Ned. Is that the reason you understood my trouble so weil?"

"Yes," said Edward simply as they

went up the steps. The president was holding an animated though informal reception in the lower ball, and after chatting with the other professors and students Edward came up and shook hands. The crowd was very nolsy, laughing and talking very loud, and the president was standing very close to Edward as he said a

few simple words of greeting. "You're going home this summer, I understand, Blake? ies, sir. I've sold my route and ex-

pect to buy another one in the fall. Mother needs me on the farm this summer." He moved away as another group

was coming up, and the president leaned his tall form over and said in a low tone that only Edward could hear: "My boy, I have been praying for you all this year that you might be Christ's man. I want to see you start

Goodby, and God bless you." Edward moved on and spent the rest of the evening with the other students. About 10 o'clock he went out with Freeda, and as it had cleared up they strelled around the familiar walk past the library and out upon the middle campus. Freeda had refused several other invitations from the students to go with a group down on the hill walk.

She preferred being with Edward on this last day of the term. They walked quite a long way without speaking, and then Freeda began to talk about their three years in college. Edward was more silent than usual at first, but afterward became quite talkative. He grew confidential and told Freeda something about his feelings for Miss Seton. Freeda could not give him much consolation, although she said she thought Ida admir-

ed Edward greatly.

"What was the president saying to you?" Freeda asked as they finally turned back to the library walk and went on toward the ladies' hall.

"He asked me about my summer plans. You know I've sold the route to Rawlins in order to get Barnes' route. It's nearer college and prac-

tically as good as the avenue route." "I mean what he was saying to you as he leaned over and spoke to you all alone? I was just coming up and had

to wait a minute." "He spoke to me about being a Christian. That's the third person who has spoken to me about that today."

Freeda was silent a moment, and then she said quietly: "Let me be the fourth person. Ned. Why aren't you a Christian? I've had a good many anxlous thoughts about you this year. Mother would be so glad too. Sometimes I think it's the only thing you need to make you perfect."

"'One thing thou lackest,' eh?" said Edward, with unaccustomed levity, and then he lapsed into silence, which was unbroken until they reached the ladies' hall.

As he said good night to Freeda he added, "I don't want to disappoint you and mother, Freeda."

"I hope you won't, Ned," she replied gently as she went up the steps.

He walked slowly back to his room and went in and for a few minutes sat down by his window in darkness, thinking over the events of the day. Then he got up and lighted his lamp. As he turned from the table he happened to think of his letter box that he had not looked into since noon.

He went over to the door and found one letter there. He was glad it was from his mother. He sat down at the table at once and opened the letter. His mother did not write to him very often. She was not a college bred woman and had lived a life of hard physical labor, but there was no one in all the world who had more influence over Edward, and be always read her letters with a reverence and respect

that he never felt for any other person. The letter contained a short account of affairs on the farm, then went on to speak of Edward's uncle and aunt and finally referred to Edward's and Free-

da's college course: It has been a joy to me, Edward, to think of you and Freeda receiving an education. In your last letter you spoke of a fee ing of regret on your part that I was slaving so hard on the farm, while you and your sister were having such an easy time in college, but you ought to know, dear son, that I count no hardshift of any account by the side of the love I have for you. You may be wondering why I am writing this letter now, so near your home coming and at a time while you must be so husy, at compensation time, but two nights ago as I be awake, twared morning. I had an experience that prompass this letter. I had an experience that prompted this letter, seemed to hear a voice say to not "Your Edward is a good boy, true this towest are in most things, free free received to a not a professed disciple of the same not joined a church nor tax of a One thing he lacks, and that all. He needs to repent and be saved."

You know I am not am patter in the least and I simply believe that what I heard was the shift speaking to me in your behalf. And I could not resist the feeling that I ought to write you and urge you to give yourself to Christ. Why should you stand outside the kingdom, my son, looking on at the struggle of the ages and possibly criticising it because you feel as good as any looking on at the struggle of the ages and years oly criticising it because you feel as good as any one? Give your heart to him who gave us all. Enter the kingdom like a little child, Edward. You have a great work to do in God's world, it he shall spare you. You wrote in your last letter that you might decide to give up being a doctor ing. It makes little difference to me what par-ticular thing you do in the world, but it makes all the difference in the world whether you are a fhristian or not. That is the main thing, after ill. Seek first the kingdom, my son. If you succeed in all worldly affairs and know all knowl-

edge and do not know and love God supremely, it dge and do not know any sill not profit you snything. You do not doubt my love for you, do you? Why should you doubt the love of God for you? Why should you doubt the love of God for you? the gave his own Son for your salvation. Why sould you be careless in the face of that great atonement? He died for you. Ned, the same as for me. Oh, my dear son, your mother is grow-ing older and more feeble every year! I shall soon pass over to the other side. But it will be the best day of my whole life when you tell me that you have decided to give your heart to God and believe in his redemption through Christ. May the Holy Spirit as he pleads with you be allowed to enter your heart and will and lead you by his almighty power to the feet of Jesus. Your

Edward finished the letter and let it lle open on the table. First Wheaton and then Professor Clark, then the president and Freeda, and now this culminating letter from his mother. And all these appeals on one subject, as if all the persons making them had

been consulting together.

Why was he not a Christian? He believed in everything that was good and true and pure. Why did he not believe in Christ? The question drove all the other memories out of his mind. He had thought a good deal during the first part of the day about Willis, wondering what his future would be. He had thought about Miss Seton and wondered if he would ever gather up courage enough to tell her what he felt. He had thought of his own future and had more than once speculated on the ambition he was beginning to have for authorship and the public, platform. But now, near the close of the day, near the midnight hour, alone in his room, with that sacred appeal of his mother's lying before him, he could not shut out this one thought, Why was keeping him back? Was this right next fall. Better begin tonight. question of the age, "What think ye of the Christ?" going to face him continually? What difference would it make with his future? All the difference in the world be bimself knew well enough. Did Wheaton and Clark and the president and Freeda and his mother really believe that he would be lost if he did not believe in Christ? Evidently they did. But would he? Was he not moral and truthful and honest? What more was required? 'Yet one thing thou lackest." young man who asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life was moral. What did he lack? Acknowledgment of Jesus as master of his whole life. Was he, Edward, ready to do that? Or did he shrink from that absolute following of the divine Peas-

ant of Galliee because it would change (Continued on page 7.)