

SUPPLEMENT

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IN HIS STEPS.

"What Would Jesus Do?"

By CHARLES M. SHELDON.

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CHAPTER VI.

For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love even as Christ also loved you.

When Virginia left the carriage and went to Loreen, she had no definite idea as to what she would do or what the result of her action would be. She simply saw a soul that had tasted of the joy of a better life slipping back again into its old hell of shame and death, and before she had touched the drunken girl's arm she had asked only one question, "What would Jesus do?" That question was becoming with her, as with many others, a habit of life.

She looked around now as she stood close by Loreen, and the whole scene was cruelly vivid to her. She thought first of the girls in the carriage.

"Drive on. Don't wait for me. I am going to see my friend here home," she said, calmly enough.

The girl with the red parasol seemed to gasp at the word "friend" when Virginia spoke it. She did not say anything. The other girls seemed speechless.

"Go on. I cannot go back with you," said Virginia.

The driver started the horses slowly. One of the girls leaned a little out of the carriage.

"Can't we—that is—do you want our help? Couldn't we?"

"No, no!" exclaimed Virginia. "You cannot be of any use to me."

The carriage moved on, and Virginia was alone with her charge.

She looked up and around. Many faces in the crowd were sympathetic. They were not all cruel or brutal. The Holy Spirit had softened a good deal of the Rectangle.

"Where does she live?" asked Virginia.

No one answered. It occurred to Virginia afterward, when she had time to think it over, that the Rectangle showed a delicacy in its sad silence that would have done credit to the boulevard.

For the first time it flashed upon her that the immortal being who was flung like wreckage upon the shore of this earthly hell called the saloon had no place that could be called home.

The girl suddenly wrenched her arm from Virginia's grasp. In doing it she nearly threw Virginia down.

"You shall not touch me! Leave me! Let me go to hell! That's where I belong! The devil is waiting for me! See him!" she exclaimed hoarsely. She turned and pointed with a shaking finger at the saloon keeper. The crowd laughed.

Virginia stepped up to her and put her arm about her.

"Loreen," she said firmly, "come with me. You do not belong to hell. You belong to Jesus, and he will save you. Come."

The girl suddenly burst into tears. She was only partly sobered by the shock of meeting Virginia.

Virginia looked around again. "Where does Mr. Gray live?" she asked. She knew the evangelist boarded somewhere near that tent.

A number of voices gave her the direction.

"Come, Loreen. I want you to go with me to Mrs. Gray's," she said, still keeping her hold of the swaying, trembling creature, who still moaned and sobbed and now clung to Virginia as before she had repulsed her.

So the two moved on through the Rectangle toward the evangelist's lodging place. The sight seemed to impress

the Rectangle seriously. It never took itself seriously when it was drunk, but this was different. The fact that one of the most beautifully dressed girls in Raymond was taking care of one of the Rectangle's most notorious characters, who reeled along under the influence of liquor, was a fact astonishing enough to throw more or less dignity and importance about Loreen herself. The crowd of Loreen stumbling through the gutter dead drunk always made the Rectangle laugh and jest, but Loreen staggering along with a young lady from the society circles up town supporting her was another thing. The Rectangle viewed it with soberness and more or less wondering admiration.

When they reached Mr. Gray's boarding place, the woman who answered Virginia's knock said that both Mr. and Mrs. Gray were out somewhere and would not be back until 6 o'clock.

Virginia had not planned anything further than a possible appeal to the Grays either to take charge of Loreen for awhile or find some safe place for her until she was sober again. She stood now at the lodging after the woman had spoken, and she was really at a loss to know what to do. Loreen sank down stupidly on the steps and buried her face in her arms. Virginia eyed the miserable figure with a feeling that she was fearful would grow into disgust.

Finally a thought possessed Virginia that she could not resist. What was to hinder Loreen from going home with her? Why should not this homeless, wretched creature, reeking with the fumes of liquor, be cared for in Virginia's own home, instead of being consigned to strangers in some hospital or house of charity? Virginia really knew very little about any such places of refuge. As a matter of fact, there were two or three such institutions in Raymond, but it is doubtful if any of them would have taken a person like Loreen in her present condition. But that was not the question with Virginia just now. "What would Jesus do with Loreen?" was what Virginia faced, and she finally answered it by touching Loreen again.

"Loreen, come! You are going home with me. We will take the car here at the corner."

Loreen staggered to her feet and, to Virginia's relief, made no trouble. She had expected resistance or a stubborn refusal to move. When they reached the corner and took the car, it was nearly full of people going up town. Virginia was painfully conscious of the stare that greeted her and her companion as they entered, but her thought was directed more and more to the approaching scene with her grandmother. What would Mme. Page say when she saw Loreen?

Loreen was nearly sober now, but she was lapsing into a state of stupor. Virginia was obliged to hold fast to her arm. Several times she lurched heavily against Virginia, and as the two went up the avenue a curious crowd of people turned and gazed at them. When she mounted the steps of the handsome house, Virginia breathed a sigh of relief, even in the face of the interview with her grandmother, and when the door shut and she was in the wide hall with her homeless outcast she felt equal to anything that might now come.

Mme. Page was in the library. Hearing Virginia come in, she came into the hall. Virginia stood there supporting Loreen, who stared stupidly at the rich magnificence of the furnishings around her.

"Grandmother"—Virginia spoke without hesitation and very clearly—"I have brought one of my friends from the Rectangle. She is in trouble and has no home. I am going to care for her a little while."

Mme. Page glanced from her granddaughter to Loreen in astonishment.

"Did you say she was one of your friends?" she asked in a cold, sneering voice that hurt Virginia more than anything she had yet felt.

"Yes; I said so." Virginia's face flushed, but she seemed to recall the verse that Mr. Gray had used for one of his recent sermons, "A friend of publicans and sinners." Surely Jesus would do this that she was doing.

"Do you know what this girl is?" asked Mme. Page in an angry whisper, stepping near Virginia.

"I know very well. She is an outcast. You need not tell me, grandmother. I know it even better than you do. She is drunk at this minute. But she is also a child of God. I have seen her on her knees repentant, and I have seen hell reach out its horrible fingers after her again, and, by the grace of

Christ, I feel that the least I can do is to rescue her from such peril. Grandmother, we call ourselves Christians. Here is a poor, lost human creature without a home, slipping into a possible eternal loss, and we have more than enough. I have brought her here and shall keep her."

Mme. Page glared at Virginia and clinched her hands. All this was contrary to her social code of conduct.

How could society excuse such familiarity with the scum of the streets? What would Virginia's actions cost the family in the way of criticism and the loss of standing and all that long list of necessary relations which people of wealth and position must sustain to the leaders of society? To Mme. Page society represented more than the church or any other institution. It was a power to be feared and obeyed. The loss of its good will was a loss more to be dreaded than anything, except the loss of wealth itself.

She stood erect and stern and confronted Virginia, fully roused and determined. Virginia placed her arm about Loreen and calmly looked her grandmother in the face.

"You shall not do this, Virginia. You can send her to the asylum for helpless women. We can pay all the expenses. We cannot afford, for the sake of our reputations, to shelter such a person."

"Grandmother, I do not wish to do anything that is displeasing to you, but I am going to keep Loreen here tonight and longer if I think it is best."

"Then you can answer for the consequences. I do not stay in the same house with a miserable"—Mme. Page lost her self control. Virginia stopped her before she could speak the next word.

"Grandmother, this house is mine. It is your home with me as long as you choose to remain, but in this matter I shall act as I fully believe Jesus would in my place. I am willing to bear all that society may say or do. Society is not my God. By the side of this poor, lost soul I do not count the verdict of society as of any value."

"I shall not remain here, then," said Mme. Page. She turned suddenly and walked to the end of the hall. She then came back and said, with an emphasis that revealed her intense excitement and passion:

"You can always remember that you have driven your grandmother out of your house in favor of a drunken woman." Then, without waiting for Virginia to reply, she turned again and went up stairs.

Virginia called for a servant and soon had Loreen cared for. She was fast lapsing into a wretched condition. During the brief scene in the hall she had clung to Virginia so hard that Virginia's arm was sore from the clutch of the girl's fingers.

Virginia did not know whether her grandmother would leave the house or not. She had abundant means of her own, was perfectly well and vigorous and capable of caring for herself. She had sisters and brothers living in the south and was in the habit of spending several weeks in the year with them. Virginia was not anxious about her welfare, so far as that went, but the interview had been a painful one to her. Going over it, as she did in her room before she went down to tea, she found little cause for regret, however. "What would Jesus do?" There was no question in Virginia's mind that she had done the right thing. If she had made a mistake, it was one of the judgment and not of the heart. When the bell rang for tea, she went down, and her grandmother did not appear. She sent a servant to her room, and the servant brought back word that Mme. Page was not there. A few minutes later Rollin came in. He brought word that his grandmother had taken the evening train for the south. He had been at the station to see some friends off and had by chance met his grandmother as he was coming out. She told him her reason for going.

Virginia and Rollin confronted each other at the table with earnest, sad faces.

"Rollin," said Virginia, and for the first time almost since his conversion she realized what a wonderful thing her brother's change of life meant to her, "do you blame me? Am I wrong?"

"No, dear; I cannot believe you are. This is very painful for us, but if you think this poor creature owes her safety and salvation to your personal care it was the only thing for you to do. Oh, Virginia, to think that we have all these years enjoyed our beautiful home

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County Treasurer's Notice.

I now have money to pay road warrants endorsed prior to August 11, 1901. Interest will cease on the warrants included in this call on the date hereof. Oregon City, May 17, 1901.

A. LUELLING,
Treasurer of Clackamas County, Ore.

We have been asked which route is the best to take to get to the Buffalo exposition. We would recommend the northern route on account of absence from heat and dust. Take Northern Pacific from Portland to St. Paul and the Milwaukee from there to Chicago and then by the Wabash direct to Buffalo.

and all these luxuries selfishly, forgetful of the multitude like this woman! Surely Jesus in our places would do what you have done."

And so Rollin comforted Virginia and counseled with her that evening, and of all the wonderful changes that Virginia was henceforth to know on account of her great pledge nothing affected her so powerfully as the thought of Rollin's change in life. Truly, this man in Christ was a new creature. Old things were passed away. Behold, all things in him had become new!

Dr. West came that evening at Virginia's summons and did everything necessary for the outcast. She had drunk herself almost into delirium. The best that could be done for her now were quiet nursing and careful watching and personal love. So in a beautiful room, with a picture of Christ walking by the sea hanging on the wall, where her bewildered eyes caught daily something more of its hidden meaning, Loreen lay, tossed she hardly knew how into this haven, and Virginia crept nearer the Master than she had ever been as her heart went out toward this wreck which had thus been flung torn and beaten at her feet.

Meanwhile the Rectangle waited the issue of the election with more than usual interest, and Gray and his wife wept over the pitiable creatures who, after a struggle with surroundings that daily tempted them, too often wearied of the struggle, and, like Loreen, threw up their arms and went whirling into the boiling abyss of their previous condition.

To be continued.