

MADGE MORRISON,

The Molalla Maid and Matron.

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CHAPTER IV.

Widows, bereft of their loved ones while in the hey-day of prosperity, who have time and inclination to bestow their thoughts upon intricate folds of bombazine and crape, may prolong to their hearts' content the acute luxury of active mourning. But one in Mrs. Morrison's condition must smother back her woe, and, facing the barest and sternest realities of life, go forth to do its battles as though no death-wound rankled in her bosom, no agony of bereavement or loneliness found lodgment in her heart.

November was fast giving way to on-coming and more rigorous December, and Mrs. Morrison and her family must have a better shelter than the precarious one provided by the tent.

The logs and boards and poles that Madge and the little boys had made ready were "snaked," as Madge had suggested, by the aid of oxen and log-chains, to the chosen building spot, a grassy mound sloping every way, with a small, solitary fir tree in the doorway, and a single cluster of oak bushes hard by. It was an easy matter to raise the pen-like building to a height of six feet, but Jason Andrews, strong and able-bodied as he was, could not, without the assistance of other men, of whom none were available, get it another round higher.

"Let's make steep rafters, and cover 'em with shakes," said Madge. "I've got plenty of nice poles peeled." "But we haven't any nails, child." "We've got augers." "What can we do with augers?" "Bore holes, of course." "And then what?" "Make pins, like they do in building bridges, and drive 'em in the auger holes."

"Strange I didn't think of that. Pity you weren't a boy, Madge." "I'm not a-grumbling!" was the gruff reply. "Guess God knows best what I ought to be."

"Well, I'll not argue the point." "Because you can't." "Shall we haul the poles?" "They're ready." The work progressed slowly but surely, and in a few days the house was up, a doorway cut, a roof on, and a square opening left for a fire-place, which was to be made of sticks and mud, and which Madge superintended, as though accustomed all her life to the work.

"Where did you learn your trade?" asked her co-worker, who had learned, in the little time he had toiled with her, to ask her opinion and rely upon her judgment in everything.

"I never learnt it. I just shut my eyes and see how it ought to be done, and then do it. That's all." "I believe she's the Witch of Endor, come back to earth again," thought Jason Andrews, as he watched her fortly.

"No, I ain't no witch," said Madge, as though she had overheard him.

Her companion hung his head, feeling guilty and frightened. The child took no further notice of him or his thoughts, and began her preparations for the mud fire-place and chimney, toiling away with an abstracted air, and giving orders now and then in a short, imperious tone of command, as though she did not expect any interference with her plans.

"Make the throat of the chimney arched and narrow, and the fire-place flaring—this way," saying actions to words, as with her sleeves rolled to her shoulders, and her hands, face, and clothing covered with mud, she toiled with all the skill and much more than the agility of a beaver. "The chimney will smoke if the throat isn't narrow," she continued, as Jason Andrews deviated somewhat from her well-laid plan.

"How do you know?" "It's got to have a draught, like that the auger holes make when we burn down trees. That's what the chimney's for, sir. I don't see how a man can live as long as you have and learn so little."

"Madge! Madge! Don't be saucy!" pleaded her mother.

"Beg pardon, ma'am. I didn't know it was being saucy to speak the truth," replied the child.

The work went on, and in a few days the rude log cabin was completed. A rude door, composed of the "shakes," was hung with hinges made from the east-off top of an old boat that had been Mark Morrison's property, and a white muslin cloth was tacked across the opening where window glass was not. Boards, thickly rived, and well smoothed with a cooper's drawing-knife, were made to do very fair duty as a floor; and bedsteads, which Madge dignified by the title of "stick-tights," were nailed against the mud-daubed walls, the said walls being lined over the mud plaster by means of "shakes," fastened to their place, with much labor, by auger holes and wooden pins, in

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lieu of nails, which were unobtainable. The raft, overhead, was also floored with the thick boards; and a rough ladder formed a rude stairway leading to a store-room, made by the steep pitch of the roof, which also served as a bed-chamber; for the two families were to find shelter here till another cabin could be built, and the closest economy of all available space was rendered doubly necessary.

The weather, which for many weeks had been excessively lowering and blustery, cleared off with the approach of Christmas, and the air became as balmy and the sunshine as beautiful and invigorating as in early April.

Mrs. Morrison and Mr. Andrews decided to lay claim to certain lands, prescribed by certain decided boundaries; and it was thought best for the one grown man in the community to turn his attention to improving a few acres, with a view to providing for spring-time cultivation, before sparing time to erect a second habitation.

Madge proved as ready in her conception of fence-building and other farm work as she had been adept in the art of constructing a dwelling. She and the twin boys became the constant companions of Jason Andrews in his labors, and the work went on with dispatch.

Luckily game was abundant in the adjacent woods, and savory venison and delicious wild birds graced their humble board daily, though the lack of bread and vegetables, sugar, coffee, and other luxuries, to which the immigrants had always been accustomed, was especially trying to the invalid mother of the Andrews family, who daily grew weaker and more dependant and homesick.

"Why under heaven any woman can't be contented when she's got nothing to do but set in the corner and eat her victuals when they're brought to her is past my comprehension!" said her tired husband, with the air of a long-suffering martyr, as he saw her turn, with a motion of nausea, from a savory soup, and lean back against a great dry-goods box which had been stationed behind the hard stool upon which she sat to form a rest to her back, and drop her thin hands listlessly upon her lap, while great round tears rolled down her sunken and transparent cheeks.

"I didn't complain, Jason," said the poor woman, striving hard to overcome her falling tears.

"If you don't call it complainin' to turn your nose up against such food as the rest of us that work for it are glad to get, and if it ain't the very worst kind of complainin', I've lost my reckonin'." was the querulous reply.

"Help me to bed, please," said the invalid, in a choking voice, turning to Mrs. Morrison as she spoke.

"That's what's the matter. She lies abed too much!" growled the husband. "No woman ever gets her strength till she gets about on her feet pretty constant."

"Don't scold me, Jason. I can't bear it," sobbed the wife. "It's only a few years since I ran away from my poor mother, to spend my life in your service. The task has been harder than I bargained for, and I'm most dead, but I don't complain. I only beg that you won't scold me."

"That's always the way. A woman's always a martyr. No man ever has a hard time of it. No chance!" grumbled the husband, as he strove to dry his water-soaked clothes before the great fire, while his joints ached, and his rough, weather-beaten, and work-marred hands grew yet more rough and ruddy as he warmed and rubbed them in the roaring blaze.

"It's the women that do all the complainin'," said Madge, as, coming in from the milking pen, she sat her pail upon a shelf, and began a vigorous cleaning of her hands and face in the family washing bowl. "The fact is," she continued, while her fierce eyes snapped, and her coarse, black tresses shook or seemed to shake themselves defiantly around her square, weather-bronzed features, "the women ought all to go dead. Think how they abuse the poor men! Mrs. Andrews has had the audacity to inflict six children upon her uncomplaining and meek-tongued husband; and yet the poor man-martyr doesn't say a word! And she has the strange perversity, too, to get sick over such a trifle as a child or two, that will come under difficulties. And then, it's such a sin when she can't eat, and make herself well again! Poor Mr. Andrews, how he is to be pitted!" and Madge mischievously flashed her great eyes at the crest-fallen grumbler, who, merely hung his head, and changed from rubbing his rough, red hands to a vigorous attack upon his stiff, mud-soaked socks, that had become nearly dry in the ruddy heat.

Mrs. Morrison tucked the invalid snugly in the white, hand-woven blankets, brought from the far-off home of her childhood, and doubly cherished because of both utility and olden associations, and stooping, kissed her fair forehead tenderly.

Mrs. Andrews gave utterance to a choking little sob.

"Do you think I'm very impatient, and hard to get along with?" she asked, eagerly.

"Of course not, Mrs. Andrews. Don't mind what your husband says. It's

only his way. He'll be all right when he gets rested."

"If he'd only be affectionate and bear with me kindly a little while maybe I'd get stronger. But I never will be any stronger. If I could only see my mother! Would you mind writing to her for me?"

"Alas, poor child! There's no post office nearer than The Falls; and the streams have no bridges. We couldn't send a letter."

"But you could write it. Maybe she'd get it sometime."

"Very well. Won't to-morrow do?" "I guess I'll have to wait."

"Now, you must go to sleep. I'll send the children to the loft to bed, and make 'em be still. Alice will keep your baby until Madge gets warm and rested, and you needn't worry about anything. Just go to sleep and dream that you're eating blackberry jam and calves' feet jelly, with wine sauce. I wish we had them for you, poor child."

"Will you be a mother to my baby when I die?" The abrupt question shocked Mrs. Morrison, and thrilled her strangely.

"You mustn't think about dying," she said, as cheerfully as she could speak.

"Why?" "Because we can't spare you."

"You must, though." "Don't talk that way, Mrs. Andrews. Madge has made you a cup of mountain tea. I'll bring you some with good sweet cream in it. Now, drink, whether you want it or not. It will nourish you and make you sleep."

The sick woman mechanically obeyed, and sank back in the bed again.

"You'll write that letter to-morrow, won't you?" "Yes, dear."

"Good-night." "Good-bless you!" "If Jason would only speak to me like that I might get well," thought the weak invalid, as she closed her eyes, expressing a pearly drop from each, that trickled down her transparent cheeks and fell upon her lonely pillow.

With the early light of morning, Madge and Jason Andrews departed to their field of labor. The two families, with their necessary bedding, food, clothing, kindling wood, table, and stools, made the one bed-and-living room so throng that Mrs. Morrison managed to get part of the numerous household up and fed and out of the way at their work before the others were allowed to come down from the loft-chamber, and Mr. Andrews left the house after breakfast, while yet his wife lay sleeping tranquilly.

"Chirk her up a bit, if you can," said Jason, in an undertone. "A puny, pulin' woman is poor stock in trade for a laborin' man."

"She's more badly off than you think, I fear," replied his friend.

"What makes you think so?" "She seems to have no interest in life, and that's a pretty bad symptom."

"Well, she ort to have interest. How a man's a-goin' to raise a family with a woman on his hands that won't try to rally when she's down is more than I can see through," and Jason trudged away to his work, and Madge, with an ax on her shoulder, stalked awkwardly beside him.

"I hope Mrs. Andrews will die!" she said, suddenly, her voice breaking upon the morning stillness with a strange abruptness.

"Why?" asked Jason, getting very red in the face in honest indignation.

"Because then she'd never trouble you with any more family, and maybe you wouldn't be so badly abused any more."

"I've had enough of that kind of sass, Miss Smarty."

"There's no sass about it! Nothing but sympathy," and Madge again flashed her wild, black eyes defiantly at him, as she vigorously attacked a young fir tree, and began chopping it into ten-foot lengths for rails.

As the day was warm and clear, Mrs. Morrison dispatched every child of each family who was old enough to gather sticks for fire-wood to the forest, for the two-fold purpose of ridding the house of noise for the invalid's sake and making ready for more rigorous winter weather than had yet visited them.

After a while, when all was quiet, and both babies were asleep in the rude trough that did double duty as a cradle, Mrs. Andrews was, with difficulty, persuaded to eat a few morsels of broiled venison, and drink, though sparingly, of Madge's mountain tea.

"Now, get pen and paper and write to my mother, please," she said, pitifully, and Mrs. Morrison made ready for the task. "Tell her," continued Mrs. Andrews, "that I died longing for her kiss of forgiveness, longing to tell her how deeply I repented that I had ever disobeyed her by running away to get married."

to grumbling, and he never would let me see my poor mother. But he can't help my sending her word when I'm gone, you know; and maybe she'll come out here and raise my children. I didn't know what I was talking about when I said it was none of her business, no matter whom I married. Now, she'll worry about my chicks, and she'll grieve because she never saw me after that dreadful night when I stole my clothes and slipped out at the back porch and ran down the lane, where Jason and another man were waiting for me under the cover of the paw-paw trees. Jason was kind to me then. He took me in his strong arms and called me his darling, and his words were so low and sweet, and I was so happy! I thought it would last. But, somehow, when men get the law and the power, and everything on their side, they don't seem to love women as they do before they've married 'em."

"I don't know what to write yet, Mrs. Andrews," said her friend.

"Oh, I forgot! Well, you may just put yourself in my place, and write just as you would if you were me. I'm weary, and must sleep."

[To be continued.]

RELIGION—IDEAL AND PRACTICAL, TRUE AND FALSE.

This is a subject which seldom fails to interest those engaged in the investigation of the various branches of science; and while so many profess to understand its import, yet comparatively few arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, and continue to the latest hour a restless search after what they still feel is so infinitely beyond their grasp.

It is asserted that the heart of man is naturally inclined to religious worship, and that it is ever ready to pay its devotions to the object considered worthy of adoration. However true this may be, it has not proved a sure guide to direct the inquiring minds of the multitudes who have sought for objects whereon to bestow their veneration.

In the examination of this subject, it will be absolutely necessary to a better understanding of our actual relations to a higher power that we should take at least a cursory glance—and the limits of this article will admit of nothing more—at the various attempts of the inhabitants of earth, as furnished us in the early records of history, both sacred and profane, to institute some order of worship, in which is exhibited the inclinations of the heart to obey the voice of God, or to follow the vagaries of perverted imaginations; and whether we seek to enter the portals of ancient heathen mythology, with its cruel superstitions, or search the annals of modern times, we need not wonder at the depths of their moral degradation, for it should not be expected that they would rise higher than the shrine at which they worshiped. An examination of the record of their wanderings amid the darkness that so densely enveloped the nations as well as the individuals who forgot their allegiance to the true God, will reveal to us the motives which governed their choice. The record of their temporal magnificence, contrasted as it occasionally appears on the historic page with the profound depths of their spiritual darkness, adorned indeed with occasional flashes of moral light, which only proves them the more worthy of condemnation—we may wisely conclude that their condition was of their own choosing, and turning thus of their own arrogant will from light to darkness, "became the scourgers of mankind."

If we content ourselves with looking only on the magnificent display of artistic and architectural triumphs so dazzlingly exhibited, we must confess their greatness. "Grandeur of empire, majesty of princes, the wisdom of legislators, and the learning of philosophers," all combine to cause us to forget their actual blemishes, but we are not to forget that these in the eyes of God are as nothing. It is doubtless both right and proper that we should esteem at its true worth all that is really admirable in the actions and maxims of the heathen; but we should be especially careful not to permit the delicate form and subtle influence of a false philosophy to blind our perceptions of right and wrong. When their histories are studied with judgment and mature thought, they lead us to these reflections, and make plain to the student the manner in which the Almighty is causing the reigns to become subservient to the empire of his Son. Certain it is that all their boasts of being governed by the light of reason and the dictates of philosophy have not availed them deliverance from the clouds of error and vile superstition which have marred the course of the heathen of either the past or the present. We shall find that they did not fall in religion or fervor of piety—such as it was—for they exhorted each other to pay the highest reverence to the gods, and not to undertake any enterprise without first calling upon and consulting them; and we shall, as we advance, see what the nature of these gods was, and what the character of their priests who ministered at the altars, receiving the oblations of those who preferred darkness to light, error to truth.

It will be impossible, within the limits allotted to these thoughts, to enter deeply into the various manifestations of theories evolved by those who have

sought by their own devices to create a system, or rather systems of religion, which have only resulted in widening and deepening that immeasurable chasm which lies ready to engulf those who willfully accept wrong in the place of right, falsehood instead of truth.

This subject loses none of its importance when we consider the reckless teachings of those, whether they be professed scientists or professed theologians, who have essayed to be leaders of thought, while they evince their unfitness for the responsible position, and so frequently illustrate the truth of the words so warningly uttered by our Savior, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." It was to blindness such as this that Jesus came to give sight, but "they will not."

We shall not find it necessary to an appropriate examination of the subject to notice any of the idolatrous nations except those occupying the most exalted positions as to science and the arts. That profound historian and rhetorician, Rollin, justly remarks, "It little concerns us to know that there were once such men as Alexander, Cesar, Aristotle, or Cato, and that they lived in this or that period; that the empire of the Assyrians made way for that of the Babylonians, and the latter for that of the Medes and Persians, who were themselves subjected by the Macedonians, as they were afterward by the Romans."

The Assyrians are the most ancient people of whom profane history speaks with certainty. Nimrod, the founder of this mighty empire, "in the year of the world 1771, that is to say, 115 years after the deluge," was, we are informed in Genesis 10:9, a mighty hunter before the Lord, and we are told in verse 10 of the same chapter that "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel," afterward called Babylon. Profane history applies to him the appellation of Belus, who was afterward worshiped as a god under that name.

From the sacred record we find that Nimrod and Abraham were nearly contemporaneous—their births occurring 152 years apart—and placed before us in that position, they are a striking contrast of the results of wrong and right choosing. It is reasonable to suppose that the former, being the elder, had quite as good facilities for understanding "the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment," as did the latter, who won by his humble obedience the title of "faithful," while Nimrod did not hesitate to surround with high and strong walls the very work which God had shown, by confounding the speech of those engaged therein, to be displeasing to Him. The former an example of self-love and a desire for temporal advantages, carried even to the contumacious of the Deity; the latter, governed by exalted principle which manifested itself in acts of obedience and self-humiliation.

Babylon and Ninevah, towering in their massive strength, glittering in their gorgeous embellishments, the former with its quays and bridge; the lake, banks and canals made for the draining of the Euphrates; the palaces, hanging gardens and the temple of Belus; the latter "an exceeding great city of three days' journey," its walls a hundred feet high and of such thickness that three chariots might go abreast upon them with ease; this prodigious work fortified with fifteen hundred towers two hundred feet high, was the work of Nimrod and his successors. Besides the riches of the temple of Belus in Babylon in statues, tables, censers, cups, and other sacred vessels, all of massy gold, there was, among other images, one forty feet high which weighed a thousand Babylonian talents. The sum total of the riches contained in this temple amounted to above twenty-one millions sterling. All this treasure was devoted to the worship of a deceased mortal, while to Sardanapalus, the last prince of the first Assyrian empire, was erected a statue bearing this inscription, "Eat, drink, and be merry; everything else is as nothing."

The second Assyrian empire, arising from the relics of the first, grew in power and arrogance, as well as riches, until it assumed the right to dictate terms to those who acknowledged fealty to the God of Heaven. Sennacherib, essaying their destruction, being met by the invisible power of Jehovah, his vast army, in whose strength and appointments he exulted, of whom one hundred and eighty-five thousands perished by the sword of the destroying angel, was compelled to return to Ninevah in affliction and disgrace, God having, as the Scriptures express his condition, "Put a ring into his nose and a bit into his mouth," thus leading him through the very countries which had just witnessed his imperious bearing. His wickedness and cruelty were so great that he was slain by his sons while worshipping before his god, Nisroch. As we contemplate the record of these mighty empires, mighty in earthly acquisitions, from Nimrod to Belshazzar, we find nothing but the effects which always result from sin, until at last their sacrilegious impiety proved their ruin, and *Mene, Tekel, Upharsin* sealed their doom.

The Persians, who conquered the Assyrian-Babylonian empire, adored the sun, sacrificing oxen to this god, who was known among them by the name of

Mithrus. They likewise paid a particular veneration to fire—being in their opinion a representative of the sun—in trusting it to the care of the Magi, who jealously guarded it, lest it should by accident be extinguished. The Persians likewise honored water, the earth, and the winds, as so many deities, worshipping in the open air, erecting neither statues nor temples, offering their sacrifices on high places, and cruelly causing their children to pass through this venerated fire. The Chaldeans were governed in judicial affairs by astrological decisions. But their primary gods were Oromasdes and Arimanus; the former of whom they regarded the author of blessings; the latter the author of evil. Before a prince came to the throne he was compelled to receive instruction from the Magi, that he might learn from them both the art of reigning and that of worshipping the gods after the proper manner. Affairs of state were decided only with their advice and opinion.

Egypt was the land of wonders and of the renowned sect of learning and science; where Thebes—the Hecateopolis—spread its "august" proportions to the wondering gaze of the ancients, whose praises of its magnificence in paintings and palaces were celebrated in both poetry and history. The Egyptians, through their works of art and scientific achievements, proved their elevation in those respects, but these must all be passed with slight allusion, that more attention may be devoted to their religious rites and doctrines. "The Egyptians pretend to be the first institutors of festivals and processions in honor of the gods."

It is affirmed that it was from the Egyptians that Pythagoras imbibed his ideas of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls. The Egyptians believed that the souls of those who had lived viciously were imprisoned, at death, in the bodies of unclean beasts to expiate their past sins, and that after the lapse of centuries, they again animated human forms. Sphinxes were placed at the entrance of all temples, implying silence. The priests alone were the depositors of the mysteries of worship, which were commonly involved in symbols and enigmas. They, like the Persians, were supposed to worship the sun and moon under the names of Osiris and Isis. The ox, the wolf, the dog, the hawk, the crocodile, the ibis, and the cat, were objects of veneration with the Egyptians. For the latter animal they entertained a peculiar superstitious reverence, which was possessed in such degree that in times of extreme famine they preferred to eat one another, rather than partake of their imagined deities.

"Of all these animals the bull Apis, called Epaphus by the Greeks, was the most famous. Magnificent temples were erected to him; extraordinary honors were paid him while he lived, and still greater after his death. Egypt went into a general mourning. His obsequies were solemnized with such pomp as is hardly credible. In the reign of Ptolemy Sages, the bull Apis, dying of old age, the funeral pomp, besides the ordinary expenses, amounted to upwards of fifty-five thousand dollars."

The golden calf set up near Sinai by the Israelites, while Moses was absent, was in imitation of those seen in the land of their bondage. Even vegetation came in for a share of their religious veneration, and it seems to those imbued with a more exalted faith, impossible that a nation claiming so vast a superiority over other nations as regards wisdom and learning, should have abandoned itself to the veneration of objects so gross and ridiculous. Plutarch, in his treatise, says: "Philosophers honor the image of God wherever they find it, even in inanimate beings, and consequently more in those which have life." But we are to suppose that Plutarch believed that the worship thus expressed could be pleasing to the "Great Architect of the universe?" With all his philosophy and analytic reasoning, he leaves his admirers where he finds them, wandering in moral darkness and uncertainty. Paul gives us reason clearly expressed, concerning the course of idolaters. "Because that when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in the imagination, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator."—Rom. 1: 21, 25. O. E. M.

[To be continued.]

Let youth beware of the first false step. The beginning of a matter may appear trivial, but its end may be ruinous. When once a concealment or deceit has been practiced, in matters where all should be plain and open as the day, reputation and character are gone, and gone forever. There is then no retrieving the matter. On the other hand, where an individual is known for his strict adherence to veracity, his success in life is certain.

It is said that there are more lies told in the sentence, "I am glad to see you," than in any other six words in the English language.

Correspondents writing over assumed signatures must make known their names to the Editor, or no attention will be given to their communications.

A SIGN-BOARD.

I will paint you a sign, rum-seller, And hang it above your door— A truer and better sign than that That ever you had before. I will paint it with the skill of a master, And make the glass to see it. This wonderful piece of painting, So like the reality.

I will paint yourself, rum-seller, As you wait for that fair young boy. Just in the noon of merriment, A mother's pride and joy. He has not the glass for drinking, But you greet him with a smile, And you seem so blithe and friendly That he passes to and fro.

I will paint you again, rum-seller, I will paint you as you stand With a foaming glass of liquor Holding the glass to see it. He waves, but you urge him: "Drink! I pledge me just this one!" And he takes the glass to drink it, And the hellish work is done.

And I next will paint a drunkard; Only a year has flown, But into the land of sin and sorrow The fair young boy has grown. The work was quick and rapid; I will paint him as he lies In a torpid, drunken slumber, Under the wintry skies.

I will paint the form of the mother As she kneels at her darling's side— Her beautiful boy that was dearer Than all the world beside. I will paint the ghostly coffin Labeled with one word—"Lost!" I will paint all this, rum-seller, I will paint it all, so beware!

The sin, and the shame, and sorrow, The crime, and the woe, That are born there in your rumshop, No man can notice or know. But I'll paint you a sign, rum-seller, And many shall pause to view This wonderful exhibition-board, So terribly, so truly true.

Mrs. Van Cott's Latest Exploit.

Mrs. Van Cott has been spending a portion of the last month in earnest efforts for the Christianizing of sundry towns and villages in Pennsylvania. Among these places is the village of Freedom, in York county, where she met with marked success, and held enthusiastic meetings. One evening, while canvassing the house for repentant sinners, she noticed a middle-aged man, the stolid expression of whose face attracted her attention and excited her feminine curiosity; so, in her usual magnetic manner, she approached him and asked him if he would not like to follow in the footsteps of the righteous. He answered that she gain, and, with an audible prayer of "May God drive the dumb devil out of you, my brother," she passed on to interview more impressive subjects.

Two nights passed, and the stranger again appeared at the church; but this time his eyes were lighted up with an almost maniacal glitter, and his features seemed the play-ground of the liveliest emotions. Quickly approaching the altar, he knelt among the sobbing and shouting sinners, and, in a prayerless drawl near he asked her if she knew him. "Why, you're the man that had the dumb devil the other night," she replied. He then begged her the privilege of saying a few words, and the request being granted, he arose, and deliberately drawing a revolver from his breast, held it aloft in a thrilling, dramatic manner, while he told the history of his life to the eager listeners. He was a resident of Chicago, where he had for many years followed the profession of photographer. For the last four years he had strayed far from the path of right and virtuous living, and as a consequence of his dissipation and debauchery, his wife had deserted him and returned to his friends in Pennsylvania, taking his three children with her. Driven to frenzy by this, he sank still lower and lower, until, as if the feebleness of hell itself possessed him, he had purchased this weapon of death and started for the East, determined to murder his wife and children, and then put an end to his own miserable existence. Only two nights before he sat in that church looking for his wife, and gloating over the fiendish plot. The words then spoken to him aroused his almost lost manhood, and he, following on his knees, he begged Mrs. Van Cott to pray for him. She spoke at once, extending her hand toward him, "Child, give me that," and with the sleekness of a child he handed her the weapon, and then feeling in his pockets produced a box of cartridges, and, after she had placed in her hand. The strange sight was then presented of the woman revivalist holding in one hand a seven-shooter, and in the other a box of death-dealing missiles, while she offered to Heaven her own name, particular tyrants. When a husband deserts his wife, the latter has the custody of her children. If the husband stays out of the State a year, and does nothing to support the wife during that time, or if he is imprisoned in the next century, the wife can, upon obtaining an order from a court of record, manage his property absolutely. The wife is not at all liable for the husband's debts incurred before marriage, and only in exceptional circumstances for those incurred after it. She can manage any business independently, except in case of a partnership, which she cannot enter without her husband's consent. A wife's earnings cannot be touched by a husband or his creditors. A married woman can acquire, possess, and sell, real and personal property as freely as a married man can. This list of abilities is expected to be largely increased in the present year—so as to include suffrage and other incidents.

There are enrolled in the public schools of the United States 8,000,000 children. In the last fiscal year the average daily attendance was 5,500,000. Thirty-seven States and eleven Territories report an increase in public school income of \$1,232,000, and attendance of children 164,000. The total sum raised during the year by taxation was \$82,000,000, and the cost of public education was about \$74,000,000.