

The Redemption of David Corson

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CHAPTER III.

True to his determination, the doctor devoted the night following his advent into the little frontier village to the investigation of the Quaker preacher's fitness for his use. He took Peepeta with him, the older habitues of the tavern standing on the porch and smiling ironically as they started. The meeting house was one of those conventional weather-boarded buildings with which all travelers in the Western States are familiar. The rays of the tallow candles by which it was lighted were streaming feebly into the night. The doors were open, and through them were passing meek-faced, soft-voiced and plain-robed worshippers.

Keeping close together, Peepeta light and graceful, the doctor heavy and awkward, both of them thoroughly embarrassed, they ascended the steps as a bear and gazelle might have walked the gang-plank into the ark. They entered unobserved save by a few of the younger people who were staring vacantly about the room, and took their seats on the last bench. The Quaker maidens who caught sight of Peepeta were visibly excited and began to preen themselves as turtle doves might have done if a bird of paradise had suddenly flashed among them. One of them happened to be seated next her. She was dressed in quiet drabs and grays. Her face and person were pervaded and adorned by simplicity, meekness, devotion; and the contrast between the two was so striking as to render them both self-conscious and uneasy in each other's presence.

The visitors did not know at all what to expect in this unfamiliar place, but could not have been astonished or awed by anything else half so much as by the inexplicable silence which prevailed. If the whole assemblage had been dancing or turning comersaults, they would not have been surprised, but the few moments in which they thus sat looking stupidly at the people and then at each other seemed to them like a small eternity. Peepeta's sensitive nature could hardly endure such a strain, and she became nervous.

"Take me away," she implored, whispering to the doctor, who sat by her side, ignorant of the custom which separated the sexes.

He tried to encourage her in a few half-suppressed words, took her trembling hand in his great paw, pressed it reassuringly, winked humorously, and then looked about him with a sardonic grin.

To Peepeta's relief, the silence was at last broken by an old man who rose from his seat, reverently folded his hands, lifted his face to heaven, closed his eyes and began to speak. She had never until this moment listened to a prayer, and this address to an invisible Being wrought in her already agitated mind a confused and exciting effect; but the prayer was long, and gave her time to recover her self-control. The silence which followed its close was less painful because less strange than the other, and she permitted herself to glance about the room and to wonder what would happen next. Her curiosity was soon satisfied. David Corson, the young mystic, rose to his feet. He was dressed with exquisite neatness in that simple garb which lends to a noble person a peculiar and serious dignity. Standing for a moment before he began his address, he looked over the audience with the self-possession of an accomplished orator. The attention of every person in the room was at once arrested. They all recalled their wandering or preoccupied thoughts, lifted their bowed heads and fixed their eyes upon the commanding figure before them.

This general movement caused Peepeta to turn, and she observed a sudden transformation on the countenance of the dove-like Quaker maiden. A flush mantled her pale cheek and a radiance beamed in her mild blue eyes. It was a tell-tale look, and Peepeta, who divined its meaning, smiled sympathetically.

But the first word which fell from the lips of the speaker withdrew her attention from every other object, for his voice possessed a quality with which she was entirely unfamiliar. It would have charmed and fascinated the hearer, even if it had uttered incoherent words. For Peepeta, it had another and a more mysterious value. It was the voice of her destiny, and rang in her soul like a bell. The speech of the young Quaker was a simple and unadorned message of the love of God to men, and of their power to respond to the Divine call.

Each sentence had fallen into the sensitive soul of the fortune teller like a pebble into a deep well. She was gazing at him in astonishment. Her lips were parted, her eyes were suffused and she was leaning forward breathlessly.

When at length David stopped speaking, it seemed to Peepeta as if a sudden end had come to everything; as if rivers had ceased to run and stars to rise and set. She drew a long, deep breath, sighed and sank back in her seat, exhausted by the nervous tension to which she had been subjected.

The effect upon the quack was hardly less remarkable. He, too, had listened with breathless attention. He tried to analyze and then to resist this mesmeristic power, but gradually succumbed. He felt as if chained to his seat, and it was only by a great effort that he pulled himself together, took Peepeta by the arm and drew her out into the open air.

For a few moments they walked in silence, and then the doctor exclaimed: "P-p-peeta, I have found him at last!"

"Found whom?" she asked sharply.

Irritated by the voice which offered such a rasping contrast to the one still echoing in her ears.

"Found whom? As if you didn't know! I mean the man of d-d-destiny! He is a snake charmer, Peepeta! He just fairly b-b-bamboozled you! I was laughing in my sleeve and saying to myself, 'He's bamboozled Peepeta; but he can't b-b-bamboozle me!' When he up and did it! Tee-totally did it! And if he can bamboozle me, he can bamboozle anybody."

"Did you understand what he said?" Peepeta asked.

"Understand? Well, I should say not! But between you and me and the town p-p-pump it's all the better, for if he can fool the people with that kind of g-g-gibberish, he can certainly f-f-fool them with the Balm of the B-Blessed Islands! First time was ever b-b-bamboozled in my life. Peepeta, our fortune's made. P-p-peepeta!"

His triumph and excitement were so great that he did not notice the silence and abstraction of his wife. His ardent mind invariably excavated a channel into which it poured its thoughts, digging its bed so deep as to flow on unconscious of everything else. Exulting in the prospect of attaching to himself a companion so gifted, never doubting for a moment that he could do so, reveling in the dreams of wealth to be gathered from the increased sales of his patent medicine, he entered the hotel and made straight for the bar-room, where he told his story with the most unbounded delight.

Peepeta retired at once to her room, but her mind was too much excited and her heart too much agitated for slumber. She moved restlessly about for a long time and then sat down at the open window and looked into the night. For the first time in her life, the mystery of existence really dawned upon her. She gazed with a new awe at the starry sky. She thought of that Being of whom David had spoken. Questions which had never before occurred to her knocked at the door of her mind and imperatively demanded an answer. "Who am I? Whence did I come? For what was I created? Whither did I come? For what was I created? Whither am I going?" she asked herself again and again with profound astonishment at the newness of these questions and her inability to answer them.

For a long time she sat in the light of the moon, and reflected on these mysteries with all the power of her untutored mind. But that power was soon exhausted, and vague, chaotic, abstract conceptions gave place to a definite image which had been eternally impressed upon her inward eyes. It was the figure of the young Quaker, idealized by the imagination of an ardent and emotional woman whose heart had been thrilled for the first time.

She began timidly to ask herself what was the meaning of those feelings which this stranger had awakened in her bosom. She knew that they were different from those which her husband inspired; but how different, she did not know. They filled her with a sort of ecstasy, and she gave herself up to them. Exhausted at last by these vivid thoughts and emotions, she rested her head upon her arms across the window sill and fell asleep. It must have been that the young Quaker followed her into the land of dreams, for when her husband aroused her at midnight a faint flush could be seen by the light of the moon on those rounded cheeks.

CHAPTER IV.

On the following morning the preacher-ploverman was afield at break of day. The horses, refreshed and rested by food and sleep, dragged the gleaming plowshare through the heavy sod as if it were light snow, and the farmer exulted behind them.

David tied the reins to the plow handles and strode across the fresh furrows. Vaulting the fence and leaping the brook which formed the boundary line of the farm, he ascended the bank and approached a carriage from which a man had hailed him. As he did so the occupants got out and came to meet him. To his astonishment he saw the strangers whom he had noticed the night before. The man advanced with a bold, free demeanor, the woman timidly and with downcast eyes.

"Good morning," said the doctor. David returned his greeting with the customary dignity of the Quakers.

"My name is Dr. Aesculapius."

"The is welcome."

"I was over to the m-m-meeting house last night, and heard your s-s-speech. Didn't understand a w-w-word, but saw that you c-c-can talk like a United States Senator."

David bowed and blushed.

"I came over to make you a proposition. Want you to yoke up with me, and help me sell the B-B-Balm of the Blessed Islands? You can do the t-t-talking and I'll run the b-b-business; see? What do you s-s-say?"

Gravely, placidly, the young Quaker answered: "I thank thee, friend, for what thou evidently means as a kindness, but I must decline thy offer."

"Decline my offer? Are you c-c-crazy? Why do you d-d-decline my offer?"

"Because I have no wish to leave my home and work."

Although his answer was addressed to the man, his eyes were directed to the woman. His reply, simple and natural enough, astounded the quack.

"What!" he exclaimed. "Do you mean that you p-p-prefer to stay in this p-p-pigstye of a town to becoming a citizen of the g-g-great world?"

"I do."

"But listen; I will pay you more money in a single month than you can earn by d-d-driving your plow through that b-b-black mud for a whole year."

"I have no need and no desire for more money than I can earn by daily toil."

"No need and no desire for money! B-b-bah! You are not talking to sniveling old women and crack-b-b-brained old men; but to a f-f-feller who can see through a two-inch plank, and you can't p-p-pass off any of your religious d-d-drive on him, either."

This coarse insult went straight to the soul of the youth. His blood tingled in his veins. There was a tightening around his heart of something which was out of place in the bosom of a Quaker. A hot reply sprang to his lips, but died away as he glanced at the woman, and saw her face mantled with an angry flush.

Calmed by her silent sympathy, he quietly replied: "Friend, I have no desire to annoy thee, but I have been taught that the love of money is the root of all evil, and believing as I do I could not answer thee otherwise than I did."

"Well, well, reckon you are more to be pitied than b-b-blamed. Fault of early education! Talk like a p-p-parrot! What can a young fellow like you know about life, shut up here in this seven-by-nine valley, like a man in a b-b-barrel looking out of the b-b-bung-hole?"

Offended and disgusted, the Quaker was about to turn upon his heel; but he saw in the face of the man's beautiful companion a look which said plainly as spoken words, "I, too, desire that you should go with us."

This look changed his purpose, and he paused.

"Listen to me now," continued the doctor, observing his irresolution. "You think you know what life is; but you d-d-don't! Do you know what g-g-great cities are? Do you know what it is to p-p-possess and to spend the money which you d-d-despise? Do you know what it is to wear fine clothes, to see great sights, to go where you want to and to do what you p-p-please?"

"I do not, nor do I wish to. And thee must abandon these follies and sins, if thee would enter the Kingdom of God," David replied, fixing his eyes sternly upon the face of the blasphemer.

"Good-bye, d-d-dead man! I have always hated c-c-corpses! I am going where men have red b-b-blood in their veins."

With these words he turned on his heel and started toward the carriage, leaving David and Peepeta alone. Neither of them moved. The gypsy nervously plucked the petals from a daisy and the Quaker gazed at her face. During these few moments nature had not been idle. In air and earth and tree top, following blind instincts, her myriad children were seeking their mates. And here, in the odorous sunshine of the May morning, these two young, impressionable and ardent beings, yielding themselves unconsciously to the same mysterious attraction which was uniting other happy couples, were drawn together in a union which time could not dissolve and eternity, perhaps, cannot annul.

(To be continued.)

DOGS AS PASSENGERS.

Hard Problem Considered by Interstate-Commerce Commission.

Tribulations are besetting the dog. As a traveler, while he is not an outcast, he and his owner are subject, on many steam and electric railways, to regulations that amount to cruelties, a Washington correspondent of the New York Evening Telegram says.

It is not unlikely that the interstate commerce commission in the near future may be called upon to provide uniform regulations for the carrying of dogs on interstate trains. The rules governing the transportation of dogs are merely what each individual line proposes to make them and a movement has been begun to bring about reform regulations that will be fair to passengers and just to the dogs.

Some railroads charge a specified fare for a dog; others transport the dog as baggage, and yet others make no charge, although they differentiate between little dogs and big ones. A few lines permit the owners of "small dogs" to take them into the passenger cars with them; other lines relegate all dogs to the baggage cars, where they are in danger of being crushed by falling trunks; and in some instances the roads require that a dog shall be crated, whether placed in the baggage car or carried by the owner. In practically every case a permit must be obtained.

Commissioner Prouty of the interstate commerce commission, in a letter replying to a recent inquiry as to whether the regulation of the Pullman company that dogs shall not occupy the car is a just and reasonable one, said:

"I am inclined to think it is and that the company is not obliged to distinguish between a small dog and a large one, for the reason that it would be impossible to draw the line if any dogs were permitted in the car. 'The writer has a dog of his own, which is small and inoffensive and which he transports every year from Washington to Newport, Vt. While I am certain this little dog would inconvenience nobody, I have always thought best to submit to the regulation of which you complain.'"

Crime.

She-I can't blind myself until I'm sure. Give me time to decide, and if, six months hence, I feel as I do now, I will be yours.

Ardent Adorer—I could never wait that long, darling. Besides, the courts have decided that dealing in futures, without the actual delivery of the goods, is gambling pure and simple.—Puck.

You cannot dream yourself into a character; you must hammer and forge yourself one.—Carlyle.

WEATHER BUREAU'S VALUE DESCRIBED BY ITS CHIEF.



SINCE the year 1895 Willis L. Moore has been at the head of the United States weather bureau, the greatest institution of its kind in the world.

Under his direction the work of supplying forecasts of the weather has expanded until it now employs 200 men in different parts of the United States, who send twice a day to the national capital the principal facts about the weather—velocity of the wind, temperature, rainfall, barometric readings and other details, at a cost of \$1,500,000 a year. In an interview with James B. Morrow, published in the New York Tribune, Professor Moore, after deprecating popular superstitions concerning weather forecasts by such means as the goose bone, the thick neck of hawks on corn and the singing of catbirds, tells of his work. The interview in part follows:

"Do sailors and ship owners rely on your forecasts?"

"Absolutely, on the Great Lakes; also on the rivers and very generally along the oceans by mariners engaged



WILLIS L. MOORE.

in coastwise business. The captains of ships on the northern lakes depend on us to a larger degree than do other sailors, because we can more accurately predict the velocity of the wind than we can foretell a storm of rain, which occasionally changes its path and goes somewhere else. Remember, that where the pressure of the air is greatest upon the earth it will flow to where the pressure is the least—precisely like water going down stream. Our instruments of measurement are so perfect that we can figure out the velocity of the wind at certain places several hours in advance—knowing the high pressure in one region and the low pressure elsewhere. We foretell wind storms on the lakes, while along the Atlantic Coast we give warnings about West Indian hurricanes.

"On two occasions, after warnings of severe storms had been given, our men saw all the customs officers on the seaboard, from Maine to Florida. We found that ships valued at \$50,000,000, taking no account of the cargoes, had remained in the various ports until the storms were over. Authorities outside of the bureau have estimated

that a West Indian hurricane—which, by the way, is the most dangerous general storm we ever have—sweeping the Atlantic Coast without warning would destroy property to the value of from \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000. I send ten men to different points in the West Indies each year just before the hurricane season opens, where they remain until all danger is over. They report to us daily by telegraph. At the end of the season they nail up their stations and come home.

"While we are on the subject," Professor Moore continued, "I would like to say, in order to clear up the confusion of the public mind which leads to an absurd mixing of terms, that a cyclone has an area of 1,000 miles, a hurricane an area from 100 to 300 miles and a tornado, which invariably occurs in the southeast quarter of a cyclone and is an incident of the cyclone, an area of from 1,000 feet to 1,000 yards. The velocity of the wind during a cyclone is from fifteen to twenty-five miles an hour, during a hurricane it varies from fifty to 100 miles an hour, while it is so great during a tornado that no instrument can measure it. In all three kinds of storms the wind, of course, is rotary, or twisting, as it is commonly described.

"But the weather bureau," Professor Moore went on to say, "is not alone of value to people in the matter of wind storms, but is of tremendous service in foretelling periods of flood. Twice we forecast the height of the Mississippi River at New Orleans—beating the flood five days in one instance and a week in the other. On both occasions our mathematics covered a tremendous area of the United States."

"Is your bureau of any practical service to farmers?"

"By means of the system of rural free delivery of mail our forecasts go each day into the homes of 1,000,000 farmers. As many more farmers get our forecasts by telephone. As a matter of fact, thousands of farmers put telephones into their homes for no other reason than to be informed about the weather—our forecasts, you understand, being for the day on which they are made and practically for the day following. We have been of great service to the cranberry growers of Wisconsin, the cane growers of Louisiana and the orange growers of Florida in giving warnings against frost. Cranberry marshes are flooded, cane is quickly cut and piled in windrows and smudges are started in orange groves as effective measures of protection. Let me add," Professor Moore went on to say, "that the train dispatchers of all the railroads in the country get our morning and evening forecasts, and thus are enabled to know about the coming cold waves in winter and each year to save millions of dollars' worth of perishable merchandise such as fruits, vegetables, certain kinds of chemicals and other manufactures."

A POPULAR SUPERSTITION.

Origin and Basis for Belief in Ill-Luck of Friday.

The bad luck supposed to attach to Friday is said to be traceable to the worship of the goddess Freya, the Venus of the north, who felt herself slighted if anyone began a journey or this, her festival. In punishment for the dishonor thus brought upon her Freya was wont to direct misfortune to assail the offender, so that it came to be thought that Friday was an unlucky time to embark on any enterprise, although most marriages in Scotland are said to take place on that day. In Walsh's "Curiosities of Popular Customs," is told the story of the brig, Friday, of Wilmington, whose builder defied superstition by giving her this whimsical name and launching her on Friday. He also sent her upon her first voyage upon the sixth day of the week, but on the succeeding Friday a home-bound vessel "saw the hull of the brig pitching heavily in the trough of the sea, while her crew ran about the deck, cutting loose the wreck of the masts that dragged and bumped alongside." This was the last of the "Friday," concerning whose fate the shipbuilder's wife merely said when she heard of it: "I told thee so, Isaac. This is all thy sixth-day doings! Now thee sees the consequences."

Another reason for the supposed unluckiness of Friday lies in the crucifixion of Jesus on that day. It is from a similar historical source, indeed, that the "thirteen" superstition is believed to have sprung; a natural distaste grew up for the number representing the circle of the disciples with the addition of Judas. Yet it seems as if by this time the world might be willing to forget its ancient superstitions and regard every day and every number with equal respect.—Providence Journal.

Playing Cards in Moscow.

In Moscow playing cards are sold only by the municipal government, and the vast income derived from that source is applied toward the maintenance of orphan asylums.

SAW GERMAN FARMERS WORK.

Congressman Says Harvesters There Never Get in a Hurry.

Congressman and Mrs. Hitchcock, accompanied by Miss Ruth Hitchcock and Miss Crouse, returned recently from a short trip to Europe, the Omaha World-Herald says.

Referring to the trip, Mr. Hitchcock said: "We were in Germany during the early harvest season and the work of whole families in the fields presented scenes of prosperity and contentment. The work would be hard if done in a hurry and rush, as we Americans do it, but it does not appear to be so in German harvest fields. Old, young and middle-aged of both sexes work away rather leisurely. They stop to rest and talk or take refreshments often, and as a rule appear to be having a good time. I understand that Germany has 18,000,000 people 'upon the land,' as the expression goes. That is a large proportion of her 65,000,000 people.

"The best part of Germany's factory life is that competition still remains. It has not been wiped out by the trusts, as in America. The factories are scattered all over the German empire. Every town of any size has its smoking factory chimneys." In fifteen years the wealth of Germany has increased 59 per cent. The only unfavorable symptom is the increase in living expenses. The increase is much greater in Germany than in England or France, but is less than in the United States.

"I visited the city of Rheims in France during the great international flying machine contests and saw three flying machines in the air at the same time traveling at railroad train speed under perfect control. I saw both the monoplane and the biplane in flight and had a chance to see the advantages of each type. The double plane has the greatest carrying capacity, but the single plane looks more like a bird, is simpler and more graceful.

"We timed our visit to Munich so as to attend the great Wagner festival, which is one of the musical treats that Europe offers each year. It is a strange sight to see people wearing their evening full-dress clothes at 3:30 in the afternoon and start for the opera. That custom, however, has its advantages. You get home by 10 o'clock without feeling the least bit tired, because you have two long intermissions which afford plenty of time for refreshments and a walk in the beautiful theater garden. We attended the four operas of the Nibelungen ring and were delighted with the splendid productions."

TALKS ON ADVERTISING

There's No Other Way.

The old adage that "Money makes the mare go," has a counterpart in the truism that advertising creates and builds business. What man of ordinary common sense engaged in business in this day and generation would think, or have the right to think, of success without liberal publicity through that best of all advertising mediums, the local paper? Sacred history records that "there is a time for all things," and when that truthful sentence was penned if it was not meant that advertising should be perennial there was a lack of foresight that his since been made manifest.

The smallest merchant in the smallest town, even though he may be the sole occupant of the field, will soon find there is no field whatever if the matter of spreading printer's ink is overlooked or ignored. Trade that by right should come to him will be diverted in the direction of a rival town, where the spirit of enterprise above and beyond all takes into consideration the power of the press as a distributor of information that the public desires to know before parting with their dollars, that they may be placed where they will do the most good.

Without advertising there is no sure thing to success. It has been demonstrated by piles of musty goods on dusty shelves, by out-of-date fabrics that nobody wants at any price, and culminates in a putting up of the blinds and a pulling down of the curtains, no more to be taken down or raised up.

If we are in business there are some things incurring expense and labor and effort that may be put aside temporarily if not permanently, but advertising, never! That must go on if we want to go on ourselves with successful business pursuits.—Exchange.

Long Lived Fish.

Fishes, especially the larger species, live a very long time. According to Bacon, eels live fifty years. Carp have been known to exist at least 150 years, while dolphins, sturgeons and sharks live more than a century and attain a huge size.

Nickel Steel.

At high temperatures the breaking strength of nickel steel is higher than that of welded iron, and this applies in a still greater degree to the elastic limit.

The Zuyder Zee.

The Zuyder Zee was formed by an inroad of the sea, which broke down the protecting sand dunes.