

The Redemption of David Corson

By CHARLES FREDERIC GOSS

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CHAPTER XV.

During several months of loneliness and sorrow a great change had been taking place in the mind of Pepeeta, of which she was only vaguely conscious. The strain which she had been undergoing began at last to exhaust her physically.

Her vital force became depleted, her step grew feeble, the light died out of her eyes, she drooped and crept feebly about her room. The determination which she had so resolutely maintained to live apart slowly ebbed away. She was, after all, a woman, not a disembodied spirit, and her woman's heart yearned unquenchably for the touch of her lover's hand, for the kisses of his lips, for the comfort of his presence.

This longing increased with every passing hour. Fatigue, weariness, loneliness, steadily undermined her still struggling resistance to those surroundings which never left her, till at last, when the falling resources of her nature were at their lowest point, all her remaining strength was concentrated into a single passionate desire to look once more upon the face which glowed forever before her inner eye, or at least to discover what had befallen in his sin and wretchedness.

It was a long and tedious journey from New Orleans to Cincinnati in those days, and it told terribly upon the weakened constitution of the wayfarer. Her heart beat too violently in her bosom; a fierce fever began to burn in her veins; she trembled with terror lest her strength fail her before she reached her journey's end. It was not of death himself that she was afraid; but that he should overtake her before she had seen her lover!

Husbanding her strength as shipwrecked sailors save their bread and water, she counted the days and the hours to the journey's end, and having arrived at the wharf of the Queen City, the pale young traveler who had excited the compassion of the passengers, but who would neither communicate the secret of her sorrow nor accept of any aid, took her little bundle in her thin hand and started off on the last stage of her weary pilgrimage. It was the hardest of all, for her money was exhausted and there was nothing for her to do but walk.

It was a cold December day. Gray clouds lowered, wintry winds began to moan, and she had proceeded but a little way when light flakes of snow began to fall. The chill penetrated her thin clothing and shook her fragile form. She moved more like a wraith than a living woman. Her tired feet left such slight impressions in the snow that the feathery flakes obliterated one almost before she had made another, and she was haunted by the thought that every trace of her passage through life was thus to disappear!

Ignorant of the distance or the exact direction, and stopping occasionally to inquire the way, she plodded on, the exhaustion of hunger and weariness becoming more and more unendurable. All that she did now was done by the sheer force of will; but yield she would not. She would die cheerfully when she had attained her object, but not before. The winds became more wild and boisterous; they loosened and tossed her black hair about her wan face; they beat against her person and drove her back. Every step seemed the last one possible; but suddenly, just as she descended the slope of a steep hill, she saw the twinkling lights of the village and the feeble rays shot new courage into her heart. Under this accession of power she pushed forward and made her way toward the old Quaker homestead.

The night had now deepened around her; but every foot of the landscape had been indelibly impressed upon her memory, and even in the gathering gloom she chose the road unerringly. There were only a few steps more, and reeling toward the door yard fence she felt her way to the gate, opened it, staggered forward up the path in the rays of light that struggled out into the darkness, and with one final effort fell fainting upon the threshold.

The scene within the house presented a striking contrast to that without. In a great open fireplace the flames of the beech logs were wavering up the chimney. Seated in the radiance of their light, on a low stool, was a young boy with his elbows upon his knees and his cheeks in the palms of his hands. His mother sat by his side stroking his hair and gazing at him in fond, brooding love. The father was bending over a Bible lying open on the table, and had just articulated in slow and reverent tones the words of Jesus, "I was a stranger and ye took me in," when they heard a sound at the door.

Father, mother and son sprang to their feet and, hurrying towards the door, flung it open and beheld a woman's limp form lying on the threshold. It was but a child's weight to the stalwart Quaker who picked it up in his great arms and carried it into the radiance of the great fireplace, and in an instant he and Dorothea his wife were pushing forward the work of restoration. The little boy stood gazing wonderingly at her from a distance. The calm features of the Quaker were agitated with emotion. His wife knelt by the side of the pale sleeper, and her tears dropped silently on the hand which she pressed to her lips.

For many days Pepeeta's life hung in the balance, her spirit hovering uncertainly along the border land of being, and it was only love that wooed it back to life.

When at length, through careful nursing, she really regained her con-

sciousness and came up from those unfathomable abysses where she had been wandering, she opened her eyes upon the walls of a little chamber that looked out through an alcove into the living room of the Quaker house.

The silence was suddenly broken by a voice feeble and tremulous, but very musical and sweet. It was Pepeeta, who gazed around her in bewilderment and asked in vague alarm, "Where am I?"

Dorothea was by her side in an instant, and taking the thin fingers in her strong hands, replied: "There is among friends."

Pepeeta looked long into the calm face above her, and gathered reassurance; but her memory did not at once return.

"Have I ever been in this place before? Have I ever seen your face? Has something dreadful happened? Tell me," she entreated, gazing with agitation into the calm eyes that looked down into hers.

"I cannot tell thee whether this has ever seen us before, but we have seen so much for a few days that we feel like old friends," said Dorothea, pressing the hand she held, and smiling.

Pepeeta's eyes wandered about the room restlessly for a moment, and then some dim remembrance of the past came back.

"Did I come here in a great storm?" she asked.

"There did, indeed. The night was wild and cold."

"Did I fall on the threshold?"

"Upon the very threshold, and let us thank God for that, because if thee had fallen at the gate or in the path we should never have heard thee."

Pepeeta struggled to a sitting posture as her memory clarified, fixed her wide open eyes upon Dorothea and asked, pathetically, "Where is he?"

"I do not know who thee means," said Dorothea, laying her hand on the invalid's shoulders and trying gently to push her back upon her pillow.

"David!" she exclaimed, "David! Tell me if you know, for it seems to me I shall die if I do not hear."

"I do not know, my love. It is a long time since we have heard from David. But thee must lie down. There is not strong enough to talk."

"Are we alone?"

"Yes, all alone."

"Well, then I will begin," Pepeeta said, and in a voice choked with emotion, the poor sufferer breathed out the tale of her sin and her sorrow.

She told all. She did not shield herself, and everywhere she could she softened the wrong done by David. It was a long story, and was interrupted only by the ticking of the great clock in the hall-way, telling off the moments with as little concern as when three years before it had listened to the story told to David by his mother. When the confession was ended the tender-hearted woman kissed the quivering lips.

"Have you forgiven me?" Pepeeta asked, seizing the face in her thin hands and looking almost despairingly into the great blue eyes.

"As I hope to be forgiven," Dorothea answered, kissing her again and again.

A look of almost perfect happiness diffused itself over the pale countenance.

"It is too much—too much. How can it be? It was such a great wrong!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, it was a great wrong. Thee has sinned much, but much shall be forgiven if thee is penitent, and I think thee is. No love nor pardon should be withheld from those who mourn their sins. Our God is love! And so we are ignorant and frail. It is a sad story, as thee says, but it is better to be led astray by our good passions than by our bad. I have noticed that it is sometimes by our holiest instincts that we are betrayed into our darkest sins! It was heaven's brightest light—the light of love—that led thee astray, my child, and even love may not be followed with closed eyes! But thee does not need to be preached to."

Astonished at such an almost divine insight and compassion, Pepeeta exclaimed, "How came you to know so much of the tragedy of human life, so much of the soul's weakness and guilt; you who have lived so quietly in this happy home?"

"By consulting my own heart, dear. We do not differ in ourselves so much as in our experiences and temptations. But thee has talked enough about thy troubles. Tell me thy name? What shall we call thee?"

"My name is Pepeeta."

"And mine is Dorothea."

"Oh! Dorothea," Pepeeta exclaimed, "do you think we shall ever see him again?"

"I cannot tell. We had made many inquiries and given up in despair. And now when we least expected news, there has come! We will cherish hope again. We were discouraged too easily."

"Oh! how strong you are—how comforting. Yes, we will cherish hope, and when I am well I will start out, and search for him everywhere. I shall find him. My heart tells me so."

"But thee is not well enough, yet," Dorothea said, with a kind smile, "and until thee is thee must be at rest in thy soul and, abiding here with us, await the revelation of the divine will."

"Oh, may I stay a little while? It is so quiet and restful here. I feel like a tired bird that has found a refuge from a storm. But what will your husband say, when he hears this story?"

"Thee need not be troubled about that. His door and heart are ever

open to those who labor and are heavy laden. The Christ has found a faithful follower in him, Pepeeta. It was he who first divined thy story."

"Then you knew me?"

"We had conjectured."

"Then I will stay, oh, I will stay a little while, and perhaps, perhaps—who knows?" she clasped her hands, her soul looked out of her eyes, and a smile of genuine happiness lit up her sad face.

"Yes, who knows?" said Dorothea, gently, rearranging the pillows and bidding the invalid fall asleep again.

CHAPTER XVI.

In due time the vessel upon which David had embarked arrived at her destination, the city of New York, and the lonely traveler stepped forth unnoticed and unknown into the metropolis of the New World.

With an instinct common to all adventurers, he made his way to the Bowery. Amid its perpetual excitements and boundless opportunities for adventure, David resumed the habits formed during that period of life upon which the doors had now closed. His reputation had followed him, and the new scenes, the physical restoration during the long voyage, the necessity of maintaining his fame, all conspired to help him take a place in the front rank of the devotees of the gambling rooms.

He did his best to enter into this new life with enthusiasm, but it had no power to banish or even to allay his grief. He therefore spent most of his time in wandering about among the wonders of the swiftly-growing city, observing her busy streets, her crowded wharves, her libraries, museums and parks. This moving panorama temporarily diverted his thoughts from that channel into which they ever returned, and which they were constantly yearning deeper and deeper, and so helped him to accomplish the one aim of his wretched life, which was to become even for a single moment unconscious of himself and of his misery.

Among the many acquaintances he had made in that realm of life to which his vices and his crimes had consigned him, a single person had awakened in his bosom emotions of interest and regard. There was in that circle of silent, terrible, remorseless parasites of society, a young man whose classical face, exquisite manners and varied accomplishments set him apart from all the others. He moved among them like a ghost—mysterious, uncommunicative and unapproachable.

From the time of their first meeting he had treated David in an exceptional manner. In unobserved ways he had done him little kindnesses, and proffered many delicate advances of friendship, and not many months passed before the two lone, suspicious and ostracized men united their fortunes in a sort of informal partnership and were living in common apartments.

There was in Foster Mantel a sort of sardonic humor into which he was always withdrawing himself. In one of their infrequent conversations the two companions had grown unusually confidential and found themselves drifting a little too near that most dangerous of all shoals in the lives of such men—the past.

(To be continued.)

LET THE WEAKLINGS DIE!

Theory of an English Socialist Seemingly Indorsed by Figures.

G. C. Hill, an English "sociologist," announces that it is mathematically a mistake to suppose that human life is lengthening. He thinks that in the British Islands at least it can be proved mathematically that everything done to prevent sickly children from dying soon, cuts down the length of the "average lifetime" after 40. Writing in the Sociological Review he shows that in thirty years from 1870, the death rate among male infants under 5 years, was cut down from 75 to 58 in the thousand. The rate was cut down in one degree or another so that there were fewer deaths at all ages under 35. At 35 there was almost no change in thirty years. At 45 to 55 he shows the British death rate going up from 19.5 to 20.8 in the thousand. Between 55 and 65 years it rose from 33.9 to 38.9.

His argument agrees with that of a considerable school of "sociologists," who agree with the sociology of the American Indians. By putting their babies in the cold water of the nearest stream, the Indians learned easily which were too weak to make a success in life as fighters and hunters. On the other hand, the biographies of men who have done most to civilize the world by great discoveries and inventions show that as children they were often so weak that they were kept alive only by the greatest and most loving pains.

Others who have minds as mathematical as that of Mr. Hill are now working out calculations showing that as the people of Europe get more to eat from the United States and South America they are growing taller and living longer for the same reason that natives of Missouri, Kansas and Texas measure half a foot taller than natives of Japan and China. Until a generation ago, sociologists of the highest Chinese education took the view taken now by Mr. Hill in England. They applied it chiefly against girl babies. It was a Chinese sociological custom to leave the undersized, superfluous girl exposed in the open air to starve to death.

Unprejudiced.

Mike McGinnis was being examined for jury duty in a murder trial.

"Mr. McGinnis," asked the judge, "have you formed or expressed an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the prisoner at the bar?"

"No, sir," replied Mike.

"Have you any conscientious scruples against capital punishment?"

"Not in this case, your honor," Mike replied.—Success.

Science AND Invention

The slipping of carbons in arc lamps which the subjected to the jarring of buildings may be prevented by suspending the lamps from coil springs.

An English woman has patented a jeweled sunburst in which one set of rays is made to revolve over another of clock-work inserted in the setting.

Every building in Kobe, Japan, is thoroughly cleaned, both inside and out, twice a year, under the supervision of the city's sanitary authorities.

A device that turns the lamps of automobiles with the wheels, so as to illuminate the path when rounding curves, has been patented by an Ohio man.

European engineers are said to be very appreciative of the value of cement grouting for repairing defective masonry, lining wells, and for making tunnel roofs water-tight. In Germany a well polluted by infiltrations was put into satisfactory condition by lowering into it a sheet-iron drum, filling the space between the drum and the walls of the well with Portland cement, and withdrawing the drum after the cement had set. The damaged masonry of a tunnel was repaired by injecting liquid cement under pressure. Air at a pressure of seventy-eight pounds per square inch sufficed to force the cement into place.

A substitute for the kitchen range as a source of supply for hot water has recently been introduced in England. An iron block, cast round a coil of pipe, is heated by a small electric heater placed in a chamber in its center. Outside the block is a circular tank containing the water, which in its course through the coil is heated. The electric current for the heater comes from the regular house supply for lighting. As the apparatus stores considerable heat, it may be cut off when the current is required for light without seriously affecting the supply of hot water. On the other hand, the heaters may be permanently connected with the electric main, independent of the light current.

A great deal of admiration has been expressed for the feat of the veteran Italian balloonist, Captain Spelterini, who has again crossed the range of the Alps with his balloon, Sirius. On this occasion, early in August, he started from Chamouilly with four companions, hoping to pass directly over Mont Blanc. But the wind bore the balloon eastward, across the Mer de Glace, round the Aiguille du Dru, over the Tour Noir, past the Zinal Rothorn, and by a sudden leap over the Weisshorn and above the valley of Zermatt. Then it passed over the gigantic Dom, skirted the towering Matterhorn, and descending on the Italian side, approached the Pizzo di Ruscada. Night was at hand and a storm approaching, so Captain Spelterini landed on the edge of a precipice, and the party, after passing the night on the mountain, made the best of their way down to Locarno. The balloon was saved.

Rather Quiet.

Apropos of divorce, Judge Simon L. Hughes of Denver said at a recent dinner:

"A marriage likely to end in divorce was celebrated last week in Circleville. A minister told me about it. 'An oldish man—70 or so—was led rather unwillingly to the altar by a widow of about 45.'

"He was a slow-witted old fellow, and the minister couldn't get him to repeat the responses properly. Finally, in despair, the minister said:

"'Look here, my friend, I really can't marry you unless you do what you are told.'

"But the aged bridegroom still remained stupid and silent, and the bride, losing all patience with him, shook him roughly by the arm and hissed:

"'Go on, you old fool! Say it after him just as if you were mocking him.'"

A Logical Deduction.

The tailor whose philosophy is recorded in Tit-Bits gave voice to a conclusion compounded equally of humor and wisdom.

"Mr. P., how is it you have not called on me for your account?"

"Oh, I never ask a gentleman for money."

"Indeed! How, then, do you get on if he doesn't pay?"

"Why, after a certain time I conclude he is not a gentleman, and then I ask him."

A Noncombatant.

"Why don't you play bridge whist?"

"Because I want to be popular. If you play badly you lose and people wish you were out of the game. And if you play well you win and people wish you were out of the game just the same."—Washington Star.

Wealthy Artisan.

"That fellow has just cleaned up a million bones."

"A newly rich, eh?"

"No; he prepares the skeletons of the Roosevelt game for mounting in the museum."—Kansas City Times.

When a business man is shiftless, and doesn't get along, we have noticed that he often tries to lay the blame for failure on railroad rates.

Any discussion in which you are not interested seems very trivial to you.

FARM NOTES

Short Cornstalks.

Every farmer who feeds corn fodder knows how difficult it is to pitch the manure from the stables in which the stalks have been used for bedding. When the fork is thrust into the compact manure the long stalks run so far in every direction and hold so tightly that the man at the fork begins to think that he will be compelled to lift the entire bottom out of the stall with the first forkful. The long stalks make both loading and unloading of the manure very difficult.

A Missouri farmer has just given his way, which we think is a good way, of feeding corn fodder to make better bedding of the refuse stalks and to make the handling of the manure easier. He ties his corn fodder, or corn stover, in bundles after husking, for storage. At feeding times he takes these bundles and cuts them with an ax across a large wooden block into three or four shorter lengths. These short lengths are then placed in the mangers for the cows and horses to pick over and are then thrown into the stables and stalls for bedding. He claims that stover cut into shorter lengths is easier for the stock to pick over, that it helps to keep the stalls neater, and that it is better in many ways. Where these short lengths of corn stalks are used in the bedding the handling of the manure is easy.

Corn stalks are a valuable by-product of the corn crop when used in the right way, and there are many good ways of using them. Dry corn stalks are porous, spongy, and are good absorbers of liquids. They are bulky and fill up fast, hence aid in keeping the stall floors fully covered and the animals dry. Wheat, oat or rye straw mixed with the dry corn stalk bedding makes an almost complete absorber of the liquids and saves all of the rich fertilizers.—Exchange.

Education and the Soil.

One of the popular fallacies that is rapidly losing ground is the idea that any one with no previous training or experience can be a successful farmer, and one of the chief agencies of enlightenment is the Government Bureau of Soils. This useful adjunct of the Department of Agriculture is rapidly completing its investigations of the actual values and needs of the earth in various parts of the West, and its reports will constitute a valuable compendium for those already engaged in agriculture to embark in it.

The government has risen to the need of demonstrating that the day of haphazard and scratching of the surface of the earth is passed, and that for most successful results practical training, if not thorough scientific education, is needed. It is the aim of the Bureau of Soils to establish accurately the nutrition values of the earth in varying sections for producing the greatest abundance of suitable crops, and with such a definite basis to help the husbandman proceed with greater certainty toward his goal of achievement. This sort of official knowledge is sure to enable man to make many blades of grass or grain grow where few or none grew before, for its natural development will be the intelligent cultivation of every arable acre of land that can be made to yield a profitable crop.—Twentieth Century Farmer.

Hens That Will Lay in Winter.

The latest characteristic which the poultry raiser is endeavoring to establish in the several egg-laying strains of hens is the early maturity of pullets, with the consequent laying, during the season when eggs are scarcest and bring the highest prices.

A Maine breeder reports a lot of twenty-nine April-hatched pullets which were selected because they had begun to lay in the latter part of August.

From September 1 until the end of April these birds laid on an average of 115 eggs each, at a calculated profit of over \$3 per bird. If such profits could be realized on the majority of the hens kept for laying, the elusive fancy profits of the poultry business would be realized.

The breeding of poultry to type is now so generally accomplished that the suggestion to breed a race of birds which will be winter egg-producers warrants the belief in its early achievement.

Resting Land.

Many farmers believe that cultivated land should be given a "rest" every few years in order to recuperate from its exhaustion in the production of crops. In some cases the land may be benefited somewhat, but, as a rule, where a tract is permitted to lie fallow for many months it becomes a veritable hotbed for weeds. These flourish and sap its best qualities, leaving it poor and impoverished for future crops. The soil is filled with weed seeds and the task of cultivating it is rendered all the harder. Reasoning from cause to effect, it would appear that the more ground is cultivated the shorter its life as good productive soil, but this doesn't work out in practice. Weeds do more harm to land than any other crop.—Agricultural Epitomist.

Irrigation of Alfalfa.

The importance of alfalfa to western farmers cannot well be overestimated. A single ton of alfalfa may save the lives of many head of stock by providing feed during short periods of cold, stormy weather. Alfalfa cannot be excelled as a preparatory crop on soils that have long been unproductive. Likewise it maintains the fertility of soils naturally rich in plant food, and if used as a base of rotation makes possible abundant crop yields of various kinds.

Notwithstanding its present importance and great value in irrigation farming, the profits on the area now in alfalfa can be greatly increased if more care and skill are exercised in growing it.

Perhaps the most essential conditions for the production of alfalfa are abundant sunshine, a high summer temperature, sufficient moisture, and a rich, deep, well drained soil. All of these essentials, save moisture, exist naturally in the arid region of the United States, and when water is supplied it makes the conditions ideal. Although alfalfa can be successfully grown under a wide range of soil conditions, yet all Western lands are not equally well adapted to its growth.

How to determine the suitability of land for growing alfalfa under irrigation, as well as how to prepare the land, is told in Farmers' Bulletin 373, "Irrigation of Alfalfa," recently issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The bulletin discusses the various methods of irrigating the crop and gives much useful information in connection therewith.

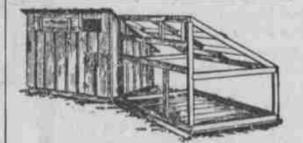
Three Ladders in One.

Not every family has a long and a short ladder about the house and it often happens that where one of these will not suit the other will.

A Canadian has invented a ladder that answers both purposes and when folded (for it does fold) takes up less room than even the old style small ladder. This invention consists of a ladder made in three sections, one on the other and hinged together on one side and in the back. On the SECTIONAL LADDER other side are pins to keep it in place when it is extended to its full length. Either in its extended or its short form this ladder is a safe one, but it has no back support and must be leaned against the wall. After the top section has been bent down on one side it folds back and when the second section is down the three fold together like a three-part screen. When the ladder is not in use it can be stowed away behind a door or in any corner as it does not take up as much room as a chair.

Small Hog Cot.

The hog cot illustrated here is 6 ft. wide, 8 ft. long and 6 ft. 2 in. high in front and 3 ft. high in the rear. The floor is built with 2 in. x 4 in.



stringers, and the frame is held on the floor by blocks at each corner. Lumber required will be: 12 pieces, 2 in. x 4 in., 16 ft. long for frame; 4 pieces, 1 in. x 12 in., 16 ft. long for floor; 13 pieces, 1 in. x 2 in., 16 ft. long for roof and ends; 10 battens, 16 ft. long for sealing crack between boards. Total cost about \$12.50.

The Hired Man.

There are great differences in the qualifications of the hired man. One is worth all and more than he receives, while another, who is apparently equally as intelligent, is not worth anything, and the employer is a loser in the long run by having him around. The best hired man is one who is intelligent and active. A good one should receive the best of treatment from his employer and should never tire of what is to be done on the ranch, regardless of the lateness of the hour or the inclemency of the weather, if loss is likely to accrue in case he should fail to work at that particular time. Of all farmhands the most despicable is the liar who tells you that he has done such and such work when he has not. Next to this one comes the lazy man.—Denver Field and Farm.

Conditioner for Hogs.

This is the government's conditioner for hogs, excellent for "corn cholera," or other digestive derangements of hogs. Wood or cob charcoal, 1 pound; sulphur, 2 pounds; sodium bicarbonate (baking soda), 2 pounds; Glauber salts, 1 pound; sodium chloride (common salt), 2 pounds (or Epsom salts, 2 pounds); antimony sulphide, 1 pound.

Pulverize each of the ingredients well and mix them thoroughly. The dose is a tablespoonful for each 200 pounds weight of the hogs, given twice a day in shorts or bran slop feed.