

The Redemption of David Corson

By CHARLES FREDERIC GOSS

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CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

To his own unbounded astonishment this young man who had long ago abandoned his faith in Christianity, began to plead like an apostle for the practice of its central and fundamental virtue.

"My friend," he said, with a new solemnity in his manner, you are on the threshold of another world; how dare you present yourself to the Judge of all the earth with a passion like this in your heart?"

In the momentary rest the beggar had recovered strength enough to reply: "It is I—true, I am—on the threshold of another world! I didn't use to b-b-believe there was one, but I do now. There must be! Would it b-b-be right for such d-d-devils as the one that wrecked my life to g-g-go unpunished? Not if I know anything! They get away from us here, but if eternity is as long as they s-s-say it is, I'll find D-D-Dave Corson if it t-t-takes the whole of it, and when I f-f-ind him—" He paused again, gasping and straggling.

"And so you really mean to die without bestowing your pardon upon those who have wronged you?"

"I swear it!"

With a heavy heart, Mantel left him and hurried home to report the interview to David. He found him just returning from his work, and conveyed his message by the gloom of his countenance.

"Has anything gone wrong?" David inquired, anxiously, as they entered their room.

Casting himself heavily into a seat and answering abstractedly, Mantel replied: "Each new day of life renders it more inexplicable. A man no sooner forms a theory than he is compelled to abandon it. I fear it is a labyrinth from which we shall none of us escape."

"Do not speak in parables," David exclaimed, impatiently. "If anything of the matter, tell me at once. Do not leave me in suspense. I cannot endure it. Is he worse? Is he dying?"

"He is both, and more," Mantel answered, still unable to escape from the gloom which enveloped him. "I have at last drawn from him a brief but terrible allusion to the tragedy of your lives."

"What did he say? Quick, tell me!"

"He said that he had been wronged by those whom he had benefited, and that he would spend eternity in revenging his wrongs."

"Horrible!" cried David, sinking into a chair. "Did he show no mercy? Was there no sign of pardon?"

"None! Granite is softer than his heart. Ice is warmer."

David rose and paced the floor. Pausing before Mantel, he said, pitifully, "Perhaps he will relent when Pepeeta comes!"

"Perhaps! Have you heard from her?"

"No, but her answer cannot be much longer delayed, for I have written again and again."

"Something may have happened," said Mantel, who had lost all heart and hope.

"Do not say it," David exclaimed, beseechingly. "It is a long distance. She may have changed her residence. She may never go to the postoffice. She may be sick."

"Or dead!" said Mantel, giving expression in two words to the fullness of his despair.

"Impossible!" exclaimed David, his face blanching at his sudden articulation of the dread he had been struggling so hard to repress.

They passed out into the night together and hurried away to the beggar's room. Each was too burdened for talk and they walked in silence. Arriving at the house, they ascended the stairs on tiptoe and paused to listen at the door. "I will leave it ajar, so you may hear what he says, and then you can judge if I am right," said Mantel, entering quietly.

He approached the table and turned up the lamp which he had left burning dimly. By its pale light David could see the great head lying on the pillow, the chin elevated, the mouth partially open, the breast heaving with the painful efforts to catch a few last fluttering inspirations. Nestling close to the ashen face and licking the cheek now and then with his little red tongue, was the terrier.

Mantel's footfall, quiet as it was, disturbed the sleeper, who moved, turned his head toward the sound and asked in a husky and but half-audible voice, "Who is there?"

"It is I. How are you now? A little better?" said Mantel, laying his soft, wool hand upon the broad forehead, wet already with the death-damp.

"I am getting weaker. It won't—last—long," he answered painfully.

"I do not want to bother you, but I cannot bear to have you die without talking to you again about your future; I must try once more to persuade you not to die without sending some kind word to the people who have wronged you."

The expression of the white face underwent a hideous transformation.

"If you do not feel like talking to me about a matter so sacred and personal, would you not like to have me send for some minister or priest?"

The head moved slowly back and forth in a firm negation.

"In every age, and among all men, it has seemed fitting that those who were about to die should make some preparation to meet their God. Have you no desire to do this? If there absolutely no word of pardon or of kindness which you wish to send to those who have injured you, as a sort of legacy from the grave?"

"None!" he whispered fiercely.

"Suppose that your enemy should

"Yes," added David with a sigh, "and seemed to brush away and obliterate all traces of his sorrow and his sins."

They did not speak during their homeward journey, and when they reached their rooms David paced uneasily backward and forward until the shadows of evening had fallen. When he suddenly observed that it was dusk, he took his hat and went out into the streets. There was something so restless and unnatural about his movements as to excite the suspicion of his friend, who waited for a single moment and then hurried after him.

The night was calm and clear, the autumn stars were shining in a cloudless sky, and the tide of life which had surged through the busy streets all day was ebbing like the waters from the bays and estuaries along the shore of the ocean.

A few moments' walking brought David to a weird spectacle. A torch had been erected above a low platform on which stood a man of most unique and striking personality. He looked like a giant in the wavering light of the torch. He was dressed in the simple garb of a Quaker; his head was bare; great locks of reddish hair curled round his temples and fell down upon his shoulders. His massive countenance bespoke an extraordinary mind and beamed with rest and peace.

As he sang an old familiar hymn, he looked around upon his audience with an expression such as glowed, no doubt, from the countenance of the Christ when He spoke to the multitudes on the shores of Lake Genesareth.

Close to the small platform was a circle of street Arabs, awed into silence and respect by the charm of this remarkable personality. Next to them came a ring of women—some of them old and gray, with haggard and wrinkled countenances upon which Time, with his antique pen, had traced many illegible hieroglyphs; some of them young and bedizened with tinsel jewelry and flashy clothing; not a few of them middle-aged, wan, dispirited and bearing upon their hips bundles wrapped in faded shawls, from which came occasionally that most distressing of sounds, the wail of an ill-fed and unloved infant, crying in the night.

Outside of this zone of female misery and degradation, there was a belt of masculine stupidity and crime; with corpulent bodies, bull necks, double chins, pile-driving heads; men of shrunken frames, cadaverous cheeks, deep-set and beady eyes—vermin-covered, disease-drovered, hope-deserted. They clung around him, these concentric circles of humanity, like rings around a luminous planet, held by they knew not what resistless attraction.

The simple melody, borne upon the pinions of that resonant and cello-like voice, attained an almost supernatural influence over their perverted natures. When it ceased, an audible sigh arose, an involuntary tribute of adoration and of awe. As soon as he had finished his hymn, this consecrated apostle to the lost sheep of the great city opened a well-worn volume.

The influence which he exerted over the mind of David was as irresistible as it was inscrutable. His language had the charm of perfect familiarity. Every word and phrase had fallen from his own lips a hundred times in similar exhortations. In fact, they seemed to him strangely like the echo of his own voice coming back upon him from the dim and half-forgotten past.

(To be continued.)

Doubtful Identity.

Cricket is the national game of England, and it would no more help one to identify an Englishman by saying that he was a cricket player than it would to distinguish a college man in this country to say that he was devoted to baseball. In his book on the game, "Kings of Cricket," Richard Dault facts many amusing things of the sport and of men who have been connected with it. One of his stories is about two Nottingham players of a common family name with similar initials.

We had two players of the name of Johnson, one being John Johnson, for years the secretary of our county team, and the other Isaac Johnson.

As John Johnson's initials were nearly always written as an "I," confusion arose concerning the individuality of the two players.

Charles Thornton, a well-known supporter of cricket in Notts, once got into conversation with a stranger in a railway carriage. Cricket cropping up in the course of conversation, the stranger happened to say he knew a Mr. Johnson, who belonged to Nottinghamshire, who played cricket, and asked Mr. Thornton if he knew him.

Mr. Thornton replied that he knew two Mr. Johnsons who played.

"This one," said the stranger, "lives in Nottingham."

"They both live in Nottingham," was the reply.

"This one is Mr. I. Johnson."

"They are both I. Johnson."

"This one I mean plays with the Commercial."

"The one I mean is a fast bowler."

"They're both fast bowlers."

"The one I know is gray-headed."

"They're both gray-headed."

"The one I mean wears spectacles."

"They both wear spectacles."

The gentleman gave up in despair.

Missed His Only Chance.

There once lived a woman who never gave her husband a chance to say a word. The moment he opened his mouth she closed it with a torrent of words. It happened that he fell sick when his wife was out of town, and before she could get home death came and took him away.

"I would feel better about it," she is still saying between her sobs, "if I could have been with John when he died. There must have been some last words he wanted to say to me."—*Atchison Globe.*

FARMERS' CORNER.

Keeping the Soil Fertile.

According to Prof. Whitney of the Bureau of Soil, United States Department of Agriculture, a soil to be fertile must contain a sufficient quantity of the ash ingredients of the plants to be cultivated, and these must be in such soluble condition as to be taken up by the growing plants. Soils once fertile are said to be exhausted when deprived of such food as is required for plant nutrition, but rest and meliorating treatment will, in time, restore such soils to a fertile condition.

Until past the year 1750 no just ideas upon the rotation of crops seemed to have been formed in any part of England.

The rotation of crops affords time for the disintegrating action of the atmosphere, rain and frost to prepare new material from the rock particles in the soil and get it in a form to be used by the plant. One crop may use up the available food of a particular kind faster than it can be prepared by these natural agencies. When properly managed it enables one plant to prepare food for another.

All plants exhaust the soil, though in an unequal degree; plants of different kinds do not exhaust the soil in the same manner; all plants do not restore to the soil a like quantity or quality of manure, and all plants are not equally favorable to the growth of weeds. Upon the above principles is based a regular succession of crops.

Though the system of rotation is adapted to every soil, no particular rotation can be assigned to any one description of soil which will answer at all times, and on the demand for different kinds of produce. On clayey soils, beans and clover, with rye grass are generally alternated with grain crops, and on dry loams or sandy ground turnips, beets, potatoes and clover. On rich soils this system of alternate husbandry is most conducive to the plentiful production of food, both for men and animals. One portion of a farm would thus be always under grain crops, while the other portion was growing roots or cultivated grasses; but, as the major part of arable lands can not be preserved in a state of fertility with even this kind of management, it is requisite that the portion of the farm which is under cultivated grasses should be pastured for two or three years, in order to give it time to recruit. The following is a good rotation of crops: First year, clover; second, clover; third, corn; fourth, oats; fifth, wheat. The clover does well with oats, and after an early mowing can be very well prepared for wheat.

Modern Farming.

The use of the most modern methods in farming is by no means restricted to the huge ranches of this country. In nearly every locality in the state farmers are using traction engines with steam or gasoline for power to plow and harrow their land. We know one ranch of 650 acres—not large for this state—on which the plowing and harrowing is done with a 20 horse-power gasoline engine. This maula four 14-inch gang plows and a 2-horse harrow—the equivalent of the work of twenty horses. The distance traversed over tough soil is from two to two and a half miles an hour. One harrow is placed off to the side so that the result is a double harrowing of the tract. It was considered too small an area to warrant the initial expense for the machine, but the owners of the ranch are satisfied that it will save its cost in a few years. The time is coming when the tedium of farm work will be laid upon machinery.

The Sand Pear.

The sand pear is the only pear that is practically free from blight. It is a very rapid and continuous grower. It is a prolific bearer and requires less attention and will stand more abuse than any other fruit tree known. The sand pear comes into bearing at an early age, and at 10 years old ordinary trees will yield from 10 to 20 bushels of pears. The trees usually begin to bear at five years of age. The sixth year each tree will net 25 cents, the seventh year 50 cents, and

the eighth year \$1, the ninth year \$3 and tenth year \$4 per tree. By planting 24 feet apart 75 trees can be set to the acre. This would give a net return of \$300 an acre the tenth year, which would be equal to a \$5,000 investment at 6 per cent. This is a very conservative estimate. We have seen ten-year-old trees at different places which yielded from 10 to 20 bushels, and large trees which yielded from 30 to 50 bushels.

Ten acres of the sand pears at the above conservative estimate would bring \$3,000 income, or equal to a \$50,000 investment, at 6 per cent.

Orchard Pests.

Whether there is a good or poor fruit crop it will pay to keep the fruit trees as free from disease and injurious insects as possible. The healthy and uninjured tree is more liable to bear and prove profitable than the one full of disease and injury. The orchard will last longer if it is kept clean and healthy.

Borers are among the most insidious pests of the apple orchard in some localities. On account of their habits they cannot be reached by poisonous sprays, and nostrums placed about the roots, as sometimes recommended, are utterly useless. The most efficient means of preventing damage from these pests is by annual inspection of the trees and removal of the grubs with a sharp pointed knife. Various protective measures are also used. One of the most effective is to paint the lower part of the stem in late winter or early spring with a fairly thick paint made from pure ready mixed paints for this purpose, since others may contain injurious substances. Wood veneer strips and wire gauze are sometimes used to prevent the eggs from being laid on the trunks of the trees, but white lead paint is simple and cheaper.

Black rot is a fungous disease which attacks the fruit, foliage, old bark and branches of apple and pear trees. The leaf spot form probably causes more damage than the other forms. Sometimes black rot cankers on the trunk, and the limbs develop so rapidly as to endanger the life of trees, but this is seldom the case except where spraying is wholly neglected. The fruit is rarely seriously injured, though outbreaks in this form may sometimes be quite severe.

Potatoes and Corn.

While there is much difference of opinion as to the rotation of crops on a medium heavy loam, we have had the best results from following corn with potatoes, always being careful to heavily manure the ground for the corn and not use any stable manure at all for the potato crop. By heavily manuring we mean giving the soil more than will be required by the corn and more than will be necessary to make good to the soil any reserve fertility the corn takes from it; in other words, so that there will be some of the virtue of the manure left for the benefit of the potatoes. For the latter crop we confine ourselves to an application of mixed fertilizer, consisting of sulphate ammonia, bone meal and sulphate of potash, applied at the rate of 800 pounds to the acre. There may be no objection to the use of stable manure for the potato crop, provided one can obtain it well rotted, but the fresh manure is a scab breeder and we never use it for potatoes.

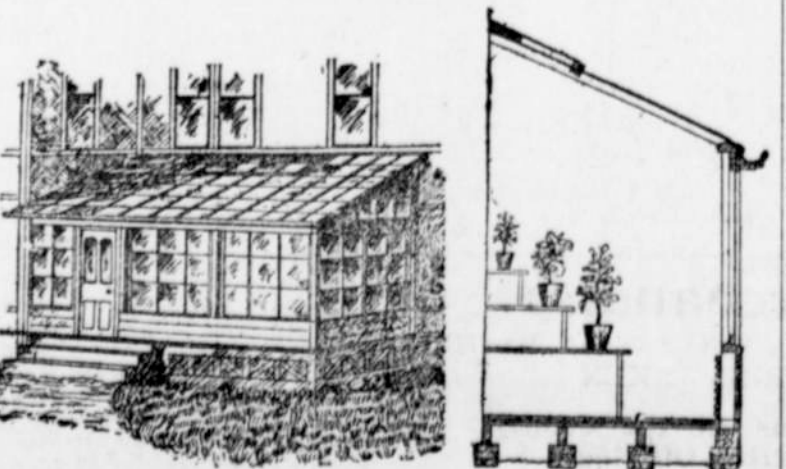
A Large Poultry Farm.

Isaac Wilbur of Little Compton, R. I., has the largest poultry farm in the world. He ships from 130,000 to 150,000 dozens of eggs a year. He keeps his fowls on the colony plan, housing about forty in a house 8x10 or 8x12 feet in size, these houses being about 150 feet apart, set out in long rows over the gently sloping fields. He has 100 of these houses scattered over three or four fields. The food is loaded into a low wagon, which is driven about to each house in turn, the attendant feeding as he goes; at the afternoon feeding the eggs are collected. The fowls are fed twice a day. The morning food is a mash of cooked vegetables and mixed meals; this mash is made up in the afternoon of the day before. The afternoon feed is whole corn the year round.

One Thing Yet to Learn.

We have learned how to telegraph without wires and fly without gas bags, but the antidote for a common ordinary cold still mocks the folled searchings of the human race.—*St. Louis Republic.*

A SMALL GREENHOUSE.



While most greenhouses are expensive to build and maintain, it is possible for an amateur to have one at small expense, as an addition to the dwelling. Hotbed sashes cost from \$3.25 to \$3.50 each, and measure 3x6 feet. If steam or hot water heating cannot be provided from the house, an oil stove will maintain a high enough temperature.

CASHES OF FUN.

"Going up to hear that lecture on appendicitis to-day?" "Naw; I'm tired of these organ recitals."

Bess—That's a quaint ring you are wearing. Is it an heirloom? Tess—Well, it dates from the Conquest.

"The world wipes its feet on me," said the doorman. "And every man's hand is against me," said the push-button.

She—You've seen Charley's wife. Would you call her pretty? He—I might if I were talking to Charley.

"If you had to choose between me and a million dollars which would you take?" "I'd take the million; after that you'd be easy."

"Nice car." "Yes." "Is it the latest thing in cars?" "I guess so; it has never gotten me anywhere on time yet."—*Houston Post.*

Church—Ever make any money on a Wall Street tip? Gotham—Yes; a fellow told me to keep away from there.—*Yonkers Statesman.*

She—He has a most extraordinary figure, hasn't he? He—That's so. I believe an umbrella is about the only thing he can buy ready-made!

"They say his wife was the inspiration of some of his best plays." "Yes, he produced them before he was married."—*Chicago Record-Herald.*

Visiting Relative—How aristocratic your father looks with all that gray hair. Naughty Son—Yes, and he's got me to thank for it, too!—*Puck.*

She—Confess, now, that you would like to see women voters at the polls. He—I should, indeed! Either of 'em, North or South.—*Illustrated Bits.*

Patience—You say she is a clever writer? Patience—Very. Why, I've known her to use a fountain pen without getting ink all over her fingers!

"What do you think of a man with a rip in his coat and only three buttons on his vest?" "He should either get married or divorced."—*Boston Transcript.*

Scott—Half the people in the world don't know what the other half are doing. Mott—No; that is because the other half are doing them.—*Boston Transcript.*

Missionary (a little nervously)—I do hope that we shall agree. Cannibal King—Oh, I don't think there is any doubt about that! My digestion is excellent.—*Illustrated Bits.*

Wiggs—At the first night of Scribner's new play I understand there was a big house. Wagg—Yes, but most of the audience left early to avoid the rush.—*Philadelphia Record.*

Football Coach (after the game)—Boys, are you all here? Quarterback—I'm not; I left an ear and part of a finger somewhere near the twenty-five yard line.—*Chicago Tribune.*

The Highwayman—Hands up! Give us your money, or I'll blow your brains out! The Victim—Blow away! You can live here without brains, but not without money.—*The Sketch.*

"I've often marveled at your brilliancy, your aptness as a parteeer, your—" "If it's more than five dollars, old man, I can't do a thing for you. I'm nearly broke myself."

Mr. Struckell—That there sculptor feller says he's goin' to make a bust of me. Mrs. Struckell—Henry, it's dreadful the way you talk. Say "burst," not "bust."—*Philadelphia Record.*

She—How far can your ancestry be traced? He—Well, when my grandfather resigned his position as cashier of a county bank they traced him as far as China, but he got away.—*Pittsburg Observer.*

Hiram Hutchins—Hope your foot Eph ain't on one uv them college boot-mech teams? Abijah Perkins—Not much; Eph got ketchd under a steam roller once an' he knows how it feels.—*Boston Herald.*

Mrs. A. (maliciously)—You were such a charming debutante, my dear, fifteen years ago. Mrs. B.—Was I? I only remember you made such a lovely chaperon for me when I came out.—*Boston Transcript.*

Mrs. Payne—Mrs. Blank certainly possesses tact? Mrs. Hyme—What is your definition of tact? Mrs. Payne—Tact is a woman's ability to make her husband believe he is having his own way.—*Lippincott's Magazine.*

"Is he what you would call a first-class newspaper man?" "I should say so. When the 'end-of-the-world' scare was at its height, he had two editorials written—one to publish if it did come off, the other if it didn't."—*Puck.*

Clancy—O'm after a ticket ter Chicago. Ticket Agent—Do you want an excursion ticket? One that will take you there and back? Clancy—Phat's the sinse of me payin' ter go there an' back whin O'm here alriddy?—*Hotel Register.*

"Before I married," said Mr. Henpeck, "I didn't know what it meant to support a wife." "I presume you know now?" "Yes, indeed. I looked up the word 'support' in the dictionary and discovered that one of its meanings is 'endure.'"—*Birmingham Age-Herald.*

"That widow is a good manager, isn't she?" "Manager? I should say so. She got that house of hers practically fixed up like now for nothing." "How did she manage it?" "She was engaged to the carpenter till all the woodwork was finished, and then she broke it off and married the plumber."—*Baltimore American.*