His Brother's Keeper;

Or,

Christian Stewardship.

BY CHARLES M. SHELDON,

Author of "In His Steps," "The Crucifixion of Philip Strong," "Robert Hardy's Seven Days," "Malcom Kirk," Etc.

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Continued from First Page.

CHORUS.

Get out, Mephisto!
I have no use for you,
I'm a soldier in the army,
And to Jesus I'll be true.
I'm fighting 'neath the colors,
The yellow, red and blue.
Get out, old devil, get out!

There were five verses, the last one concluding the second or final chorus as follows:

A word about the collection,
For we want a good one sure;
The devil often tells me
That to give I am too poor,
Which makes me go down deeper
When the timbrel comes my way,
And my action brings a blessing sure
And helps me when I say:

SECOND CHORUS.

Get out, old devil!
I've lost my love for you,
I'm a soldier in the army,
And to Jesus I'll be true.
I'm fighting 'neath the colors,
The yellow, red and blue.
Get out, old devil, get out!

It would be impossible to describe the effect of this song on the audience. The Cornish people were great lovers of music. Before the stalwart soloist had finished two verses of the song nearly every foot in the audience, and there was not a light foot in it, was beating time on the hard board floor, and at the conclusion of the third verse nearly every person in the hall was roaring out the words of the chorus with the army, although they had not been invited to sing on this particular selection.

The army did not seem in the least disturbed, however. It would take more than a slight incident like that to disturb the Salvation Army of Champion. At the conclusion of song everybody on the platform kneeled down.

Rhena Dwight was in the center of the little group. The audience was as quiet now as it had been noisy before. There was a smoky kerosene lamp just over her head, and as she kneeled there in the midst of those rough surroundings Stuart could not crowd back the thought of what this girl had been and what she was now. The refinement of her face was remarkable. It had seen a great trouble, but withal it was a face that had seen a great victory. She prayed very much as she had the first time Stuart heard her. The army broke in frequently with "Amen!" and "Hallelujah!" but not noisily or in a way really to interrupt. Stuart glanced through the crowd and saw here and there tears running over rough cheeks of men and women. Then he bowed his own head, and when the prayer was finished and he lifted up his face again something like tears wet his own eyelashes.

Immediately after Rhena's prayer half a dozen short prayers were offered by different members of the army. Then they rose to their feet again, and one of the hallelujah lasses came forward to the front of the platform and sang with a tambourine accompaniment, while two other members went down into the aisle with their instruments, which they passed around as collection boxes. A meager contribution of pennies rattled on the parchment covers of the tambourines while the song and chorus rose loud and determined:

Oh, I'm glad I am converted
In the army of the Lord!
Oh, I'm glad I am converted
In the army.

CHORUS.

Reign, oh, reign, my Saviour!
Reign, oh, reign, my Lord!
Send the sanctifying power
In the army of the Lord,
Send the sanctifying power
In the army.

He will give you grace to conquer
In the army of the Lord;
He will give you grace to conquer
In the army.

He will fill you with his spirit
In the army of the Lord;
He will fill you with his spirit
In the army.

Oh, I feel the power is coming
In the Army of the Lord,
Oh, I feel the power is coming
In the Army!

It was at the close of the collection that Rhena spoke. As long as he lived Stuart will never forget the feeling with which he listened nor the impression made upon the rough, uncultured audience. Where had this young woman, reared in the hothouse atmosphere of society, trained to its artificial politeness and refinement, caught the spirit which knows how to speak to the people of the street and the mine and the coarse toil of humble homes? Certain it was she had caught it, and the old storage room, with its audience of stolid, hardened, rough men and women, was the scene of a strange victory of spirit over spirit. Rhena's voice was a wonderful help. It was very clear and strong for such a little body. It penetrated into the souls of the people. But it was what she said that held them bound like captives to her will. She spoke simply, lovingly, with true enthusiasm, of the great love of God in sending his Son into the world. It was not preaching; it was a message of one saved soul to others who were still in peril. She spoke only a few minutes, and as she closed she asked those who were under conviction to come forward and kneel by the platform.

At once an old man stumbled out into the aisle. He was partly under the influence of liquor, and if it had not been for the friendly pushes of the people on either side of the aisle as he tumbled up first against one, then against another, it is doubtful if he would have succeeded in getting as far as the platform. He did reach it, however, and kneeled down after a fashion, resting his head and arms on the platform at Rhena's feet. Instantly, in a voice that thrilled every ear in the room, Rhena started the song:

Return, O wanderer, return,
And seek your Father's face!
Those new desires that in you burn
Were kindled by his grace.

Return, O wanderer, return!
He hears your humble sigh.
He sees your softened spirit mourn
When no one else is nigh.

Return, O wanderer, return!
Your Saviour bids you live;
Come to his cross, and you will learn
How freely he'll forgive.

Each time the army came in with the chorus:

Oh, you must be a lover of the Lord
Or you can't go to heaven when you die!

The contrast between the absolutely cultivated tone of the song in the verses and the noisy, drum accompanied rattle of the chorus was startling to Stuart. He winced at it every time. Rhena did not seem in the least disturbed. She smiled at the enthusiastic swing of the arm that beat the big drum and nodded her head in time to the rush of the chorus as it was also caught up by the audience.

Several persons went forward and knelt during this song. At its conclusion the major, who seemed in command this evening, called for testimonies. They came, brief and simple, from nearly every member of the army on the platform and were listened to in perfect silence, which was sometimes followed by a clapping of hands in the audience or by the rest of the army. The testimonies generally consisted of a brief statement, something like this:

"Two months ago I found Jesus right here in this room, praise be his name! He is very precious to my soul."

"The Lord spoke to me from the cross just three weeks ago tonight, and I gave him my heart. Hallelujah!"

"I was a drunken, worthless sinner a year ago. Now I am redeemed, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and I am not ashamed to testify of his salvation."

"Before I was converted and joined the army I was known as 'Scaly Joe, the whisky soak.' Now I'm a new man; haven't had a nip for more'n a month, and my name is Joseph now, and don't you forget it! Amen!"

One of the late converts among the women came forward, and in a trembling voice, with tears running down her cheeks, she said, while the laughter raised by "Scaly Joe's" testimony suddenly ceased:

"I was an outcast on God's earth only a short time ago. The army found me and told me of the love of Jesus. I'm redeemed and my sins all washed away in the precious blood. Glory be to his name!"

Now to Stuart, as he sat there listening to all this, a great torrent of feeling came. It rose in him like a

"Thank you, Mr. Duncan, for telling me," she said simply.

swelling tide, and he did not try to repress it. There was something very wonderful to him in the rude, rough, simple manner in which these men and women of the common people spoke of sins forgiven and a personal Saviour. It all coincided with his own experience of only a few days before. It was the last thing in the world he had expected to do when he came into the hall, but now it seemed the most natural and necessary thing, and, acting under what he believed to be a leading of the divine impulse, he rose, and, with all the people in the audience and on the platform looking at him and in the midst of silence that was painful, he said, "My friends, I want to say with these other saved souls that I have also lately felt God's hand and acknowledge Jesus Christ to be my personal Saviour, and by his help I mean to live as becomes his disciple."

It was a very simple, unaffected statement, entirely free from anything like cant or parade of one's conversion. But it produced a very marked effect upon every one in the hall. Rhena Dwight flushed, then paled again, and her lips parted as if she were offering a prayer. The members of the army remained motionless. The old miners who had known him as a boy stared at Stuart as if he were another person, as indeed he was now.

He was still standing where he had risen, and all eyes were upon him, when through the silence of the room came the sound of a host of marching feet. It was a measured, heavy sound, and instantly every man in the room had risen. Some one near the door shouted into the room: "There's been a fight down at De Mott! They's bringing soldiers up here!"

The next instant every man in the room was struggling for the door. Stuart was near the platform, and it seemed like the most natural thing in the world that in the confusion that attended the sudden and unceremonious exit of the audience he should be talking with Rhena Dwight.

And in the midst of all the noise of overturning chairs and the growing tumult just outside the door of the hall Stuart told her his experience of the morning, when he had for the first time felt the personal touch of the divine power and heard the call to his soul, "Follow me," as the living and risen Christ had spoken to him. Somehow it seemed altogether the most natural thing in the world that this part of his inner life should become known to this slight, earnest faced figure in the Salvation costume. Rhena clasped her hands together, and her eyes glistened with tears.

"Thank you, Mr. Duncan, for telling me," she said simply.

It all took a few minutes only, and Stuart, after speaking to some of the other members of the army and receiving a hearty "God bless you, sir!" from all of them, started to go out. When half way down the aisle he turned and went hurriedly back and said:

"Miss Dwight, I hope you will not risk your life in the crowd tonight. I don't know what the men are going to do, but you have dared enough already. I beg you will not venture among the miners tonight."

He did not wait to hear her reply. She looked surprised, and as he went out he wondered if he had spoken more like commanding than beseeching. But, once out in the street, he was absorbed in the sight that met him in the square which had lately been the scene of so much excitement.

As the facts grew upon him Stuart asked himself if the events of the strike were about to come to a climax with a tragedy that night. During the evening, while he had been at the Vaseplaines' and in the Salvation Army hall, the miners at De Mott had come in conflict with the troops, and in the fight that took place the troops had fired, killing two of the men and wounding several others. Before another volley was fired, however, the miners had fairly swarmed over the handful of troops, disarmed them, and after a brief but fiery debate they had resolved on a vengeance that to the mind of the north men was in keeping with the occasion. They had secured the officers and men of the two troops and placing them in the center of the crowd marched them over the range to Champion, there determined to give them a short trial by the public mob and then shoot the officers. They had marched over to Champion because the two miners who had been killed had lived there. The bodies were brought over with the crowd, carried into the square and placed at the foot of the band stand. The captured men and officers were massed directly in front of the dead bodies. The great crowd of miners filled the entire space outside and around the stand.

All this Stuart learned as he came out into the street. He was sick at heart as the truth grew on him. Never in all his life had he seen the Cornishmen, the Danes, the few Italians, the Norwegians, all so united and so possessed with the one thought of vengeance. The moon was fully up now, and it flooded the square with its mellow light. It was frosty, and not a breath of air was stirring. Never had Stuart imagined such a scene possible in the town of Champion. A dozen men had gone up in the band stand. The tragedy was about to begin by the public trial of the troops, to be followed by the predetermined shooting of at least half a dozen of them.

For a moment Stuart remained motionless, smitten with dumb hopelessness. The whole town was in the grasp of the mob. The handful of police was powerless. What could possibly resist the torrent that was about to be let loose, and where would it end? There was no hope of assistance from other troops nearer than Hancock, 100 miles away. Before they could arrive the tragedy would be acted out. Stuart groaned as he thought of Eric and his influence. Nevertheless he had himself just begun to spring into the crowd and raise his voice alone against the impending horror when some one pulled him over backward, nearly throwing him off his feet, and the voice of Dr. Saxon said:

"Two of the biggest fools on earth are out here tonight, and if you will be another we'll make a combination hard to beat!"

"What! How's that?" cried Stuart in amazement. And his surprise was doubled when the doctor, who had reached out from his buggy and caught Stuart, threw back the robe and disclosed Eric's deathly face as he reclined on the seat beside him.

"Eric! You here!" Stuart was like one seeing things in a dream.

"Quick! If anything is going to be done, do it with a streak of lightning under it to help it along!" cried the doctor. He spoke to Stuart rapidly. "I was at De Mott tonight when the trouble occurred. I drove back here and came around by the Beury road past the house. I stopped a minute to see Eric, and when I told him the men were marching into Champion with the troops he swore by all his old Anglo-Saxon gods that he must come down here and talk to the men. And here he is. It'll probably end him up, but he said if I didn't bring him down with me he'd get up and try to walk it anyway. If he dies, it's suicide and not a case of malpractice, but he may pull through all right, for it beats the Dutch what a lot of doctoring it takes to kill off one of these labor agitators. Here! Help him out, Stuart. Confound him if he doesn't want to get up there in the midst of the high priests of this strike till the last armed foe expires! Gently now! I'll wager $2 a day he'll faint away before he can open his mouth to say his little oration!"

All this from the doctor as with the utmost skill and tenderness he assisted Stuart to lift Eric out of the buggy and then helped bear him right into the crowd, where Eric, who was suffering the most awful pain, motioned the two to carry him.

After all, it was not surprising that Eric was here this night. Stuart realized what it might mean as he shouted to the miners around him to make room for Eric.

The men exclaimed at sight of these two men carrying the fainting form of their young leader, and they fell back, opening a path for their passage up to the band stand. When they reached that, Eric cried in a voice that gave Stuart more hope than he had yet dared to feel: "Right up the stairs! Quick! I'm able to speak to the men. Please God, they shall not do this great wrong tonight."

Some of the men in the stand came part way down the rude steps and helped Stuart and the doctor. After all, they did not know Eric's motive in coming out this way. And they were under his influence still and probably had no thought of resisting any attempt he might make to address the crowd.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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