

The REFORMER

By CHARLES M. SHILDON.
Author of "In His Steps," "Robert Hardy's Seven Days," Etc.

Copyright, 1911, by Charles M. Sheldon



"Dear David!" he said and let the tears flow unrestrained. "Your hopeless love story. Hopeless? Did ever man love a woman like Grace Andrews without ennobling himself? And when a little later he went in and saw the cold, pale face he thought he could see there the triumph of love's great work in the glory which it always leaves behind it, for as long as the world shall stand, and men shall suffer, so long shall the true love of man for woman redeem the earth from its curse and give to both a place of honor with the divine."

CHAPTER VIII.



Gordon reads this letter with glancing eyes.

JOHN GORDON was reading the two letters that David Barton had received from the old lady, Mrs. Captain George Effingham. The funeral service had been held in obedience to Barton's request. Gordon, Harris, Williams and a small group of newspaper men had come up to the rooms. Palmouth read a simple service, and he and Gordon and Harris and Williams afterward went out to the cemetery. When it was all over, Gordon, in accordance with his friend's wishes, came back to the rooms. Barton's will left most of his personal effects to his friend. The furniture and books he gave to Hope House. A small sum of money was divided among a few of the Colorado people who had been helped by Barton and were still in need.

After Gordon had attended to these simple details, his heart still burning over the events that had become history after the fire, he at last came to Barton's desk and the disposal of its contents. There was "most no correspondence. A simple formal note addressed to Miss Andrews asked her to accept the furniture, pictures and books and use them in whatever way seemed best to her. As Gordon read the cold, formal statement he said to himself, "She will never know—I suppose it's all right—but oh, David, to think of dying of hunger!"

One of the letters from Mrs. Effingham had been opened. It was dated eight days earlier than the other, which had come to Barton on the day of his death, and still remained unopened. The first letter was written in a fine, close style, but remarkably legible and free from wavering or uncertain endings.

Mr. David Barton:
My Dear Sir:—The promise I made to your friend Mr. Gordon that I would write you after seeing my grandson is a promise I take pleasure in fulfilling herewith.

My grandson has recovered his health to a large degree, and he must remain in this climate or he will be in danger of a relapse. This is a disappointment to me personally, as I had hoped to take him back with me to Salem. The Lord and sometimes the physicians know better than we do, and I am resigned to the Lord's will and leave to the doctors unless this is a scheme on their part to make something out of my grandson's case. I shall stay here until I find out.

Mr. Barton, sir, words of mine cannot say to you the deep gratitude I feel for the great kindness you showed my poor child that night and put your hand on his shoulder and said a loving word to him, you saved him back with me to Salem. The Lord and sometimes the physicians know better than we do, and I am resigned to the Lord's will and leave to the doctors unless this is a scheme on their part to make something out of my grandson's case. I shall stay here until I find out.

Now, I realize, of course, that you are not one to desire reward other than that which comes to every brave soul that does its duty, but I am a rich old woman, with no relatives except this boy out here, and I would count it a great honor to be privileged to do something with a portion of my means in some way that you might suggest. In a city like yours there are, of course, very many causes that appeal to your humanity. What makes your heart ache the hardest? Let me know where a few thousand dollars will do the most good. I have looked into your face, sir, through you never saw mine, and I know full well that the time here with you is brief. Thank God, sir, it has been brave. When you and I meet on the other side, the fifty and five old years difference in our lives will not be any gulf between us, for my heart has never grown old, and I shall be rejoiced to count you among the noble friends who have made life worth while. Tell him I have not forgotten him, he looks and hope he has not changed overmuch. I am, sir, with great respect and gratitude, faithfully yours,
MRS. CAPT. GEORGE EFFINGHAM.

The allusion to the Effingham had Gordon smile a little. But his face regained its usual quiet seriousness as he took up the second letter and slowly opened and read it.

the letter, and he read something. The only emotion I made in a request that my name be put anywhere in connection with the gift. I don't want to see my name ever in a paper. The Mrs. Captain George Effingham, I thought, was a woman of some standing. I don't care what is done with the money, only I want to know how much will do something real well. I like the idea of putting it into something that will help children. Why on earth any one wants to live in a city if he can't get anywhere else in a position to do it, after they once get there I suppose we can't ask too many questions about it, at least asking the questions will not relieve the situation that has already been made. I am sure the captain will be pleased with the use made of the money. If he asks you any questions about it, tell him I have moved enough to bury my poor old body decently and left the house and furnishings to the East India Marine museum. He need not worry about anything!

If you are not able to answer this, turn the whole matter over to your friend. I shall wait a letter from him or from Miss Andrews. The Lord bless you, sir, and may he protect you and your family ever. With respect and affection, your friend,
MRS. CAPT. GEORGE EFFINGHAM.

John Gordon read this letter with glancing eyes. The hand of David Barton seemed to reach out of the shadows and grasp his own with his old hearty benignant cheerfulness. "God bless you, David!" Gordon said reverently as he put the letters in his pocket and hastened down to Hope House to show them to Grace Andrews.

As she read her blue eyes grew thoughtful. It seemed at last as if some part of her desire for the people was going to be gratified.

"She does not say how much she wants to give," Miss Andrews remarked as she finished reading.

"No, only she says, 'I want to know how much will do something real well.'"

"We could use almost any amount," the words were uttered softly and the gaze of the blue eyes was on the scene visible from the library windows.

The district burned over was about three blocks on one side of Hope House and two blocks on the other. Compared with the entire tenement district it was only a black speck on the city map. The people who were burned out were now crowded into the other tenements. If conditions of overcrowding before the fire were indescribable, they were now beyond endurance even to the wretches who had before endured the indescribable. The city had begun the work of clearing away the debris in Bowen street, but progress was slow. Carts were going by filled with rubbish. Hope House itself contained still many victims whose condition was so precarious that they could not yet be removed to the hospitals. The resources of the building had been taxed to its extreme limit. But the outside scene was what Miss Andrews saw now with some gleam of promise shining out of those letters. Groups of children gathered over the burned area, poking in the ashes or among the bricks and lime for trifles that were eagerly treasured as souvenirs of the tragedy. The whole dreary, dismal, melancholy wretchedness of the scene had not one ray of comfort anywhere, except that which lay in the two letters in her lap. And even with that what could be done?

If that desert of ashes could be transformed into a park, Miss Andrews, Gordon suggested. They had both reached the same conclusion at the same time.

"Parks and playgrounds, the two sweet 'ifs' of my life," she said wistfully, "but it would cost."

"How much do you suppose Mrs. Captain George Effingham is worth?"

"I have no idea, have you?"

"Not the least. Why not write and give her a frank account of the facts? If the old lady wants to add some of the spicy fragrance of life to children, here is her opportunity. Let Ford send her photographs of the burned district, including the swarms of children like those out there now, and let us leave it to her to give what she will."

"That is good. Will you write the letter?"

"No; you write it. She knows you by reputation. I am a nobody to her."

"Very well. I will write the letter. You and Mr. Ford secure the photographs."

Gordon and Ford went out that afternoon and secured several photographs taken by newspaper men at the time of the fire itself. In two days the group was made up, and together with Miss Andrews' letter, sent on to Mrs. Captain George Effingham, as strong a plea for parks and playgrounds as human language and the camera ever presented. Gordon read the letter and marveled at it. It set his heart a-fire. It made him long for millions to give, to buy up city deserts and transform them into paradise. It was the reading of this letter that caused him to wonder with increased amazement at the extravagant and heartless wickedness of a luxurious civilization that spends more on the things it esteems that are unnecessary in one day than it gives to feed starved childhood in a year. If Jesus were here on the earth, again, would he not say to the rich men and women in the cities: "Woe unto you, hypocrites! Calling yourselves, many of you, by my name, yet living in needless luxury, pampering your bodies, seeking pleasure and ease, while the blood of little children spatters the wheels of your carriages as you drive haughtily through the streets! And ye cry: 'Lord, Lord, have I not gone to church? Have I not paid the highest pew rent and attended divine service regularly in my own church and given something annually to support missions? Yea, verily, you have done these things, but for every dollar to religion and charitable work you have spent a hundredfold on your own self-satisfied existence. Verily ye have received your reward. But the time is coming when there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when

you see little ones who have departed entering into the kingdom of heaven and you yourselves shut out and hear me say: 'Depart from me. I never knew you!'

Before the letter to the old lady had gone its way to do its errand, while the settlement workers waited in suspense for its results, Miss Andrews received a letter by messenger. She read it and quietly placed it in John Gordon's hands. The letter was from Lucella.

My Dear Miss Andrews—I enclose a check for \$1,000, which may be of use to you in relieving some of the distress caused by the recent terrible disaster in Bowen street. I hope to be able soon to add to this. Will you kindly inform Mr. Gordon that my father returned this morning and is at his office? With best wishes, I am, dear lady, yours,
LUCELLA MARSH.

Gordon read the letter through without looking up. He knew that Miss Andrews had heard of his former relation to Lucella through the sensational accounts printed by the News.

He handed the letter back, simply saying: "The money will be useful just now."

In reality he regarded the gift as conscience money. Lucella was disturbed over her father's responsibility for the whole unnecessary horror. She sent a thousand dollars to ease her feelings. But would a hundred or even a million times a thousand dollars ever bring down to life the creatures that went down to death with the tenement? Would it ever restore to health and joy the scores of maimed and broken wreaths that lingered on in torture and lifelong dependence?

His heart was cold toward this woman, who had once been dearer than all the world to him. At the same time he knew that the sight of her beautiful face would appeal to the old feelings.

"I am going to see Mr. Marsh," he at last said briefly as if he felt the silence was becoming embarrassing.

"Can you persuade him to give us the site of the double decker for a part of our proposed park?" Miss Andrews asked calmly.

"I don't know. He has acted the coward in running away. I don't know how deep his feelings have been touched, whether they have worked down to his pocketbook or not, but I'll go and see him."

"You will not lose your temper?" The question came with a quiet tone of gentle caution that Gordon felt sounding in his ears as he entered Mr. Marsh's office. It guided him with unusual influence to check the indignant impulse that otherwise might have made him say or do the unnecessary thing.

Mr. Marsh greeted him with evident embarrassment. "Glad to see you, Gordon," he said, shaking hands cordially.

"Are you?" Gordon thought. But he simply said: "I don't need to tell you what my errand is, Mr. Marsh."

"That unfortunate fire; I—yes—of course—I know. Business interests called me out of town that morning or so."

The older man was speaking hastily, and his eye wandered uneasily. Gordon wanted to say "You lie!" but instead he replied:

"Very sorry you had to go away. For many reasons I wish you might have seen some things. There are sights that—"

"For God's sake, Gordon, don't torture me by enumerating them—what you? Just as if I had not seen them in my dreams every night since reading the account!" the man ejaculated. "Of course I had to go just now. I had no business to call me out of town. I simply ran away from the horror of the thing, that's all."

John Gordon rose up and his eyes gleamed; but it was with hope.

"Mr. Marsh, the past cannot be changed, but it can be atoned for. What will you do now?"

"I don't know; what can I do?"

"Give us the site of the old dumbbell tenement for a playground; or, better still, help us transform the whole of the burned district into a park."

"It will be very expensive"—Mr. Marsh faltered.

"It has already been very expensive in the cost of life. Was Lucella's death necessary? Were all those deaths?"

Gordon was beginning to grow excited when the thought of Miss Andrews stopped him. But he had been

When Gordon reached Hope House, he found waiting for him a note from Archie Penrose's aunt, Mrs. Constance Penrose.

Mr. Penrose was a society young man who had no visible means of support aside from the money his father, recently deceased, had left him. Archie Penrose had never made a cent of money by a stroke of labor of any kind, but that was nothing against him in the eyes of fond mothers with marriageable daughters. There were thousands of women in the city who would have counted themselves or their daughters as specially favored if Archie Penrose had come into the world as a millionaire. It made no difference to them that he had money, he was of a distinguished family, his manners were regarded as elegant, and he had an aunt who gave the most select receptions and entertainments in the city. In the sight of any man or woman of right definitions of manhood this young firebrand of an aristocratic family was simply one of the ciphers of civilization. He made nothing that added to humanity's comfort or knowledge. He contributed absolutely not one grain of helpfulness or comfort or hope to a suffering, struggling, needy world. He lived to get all the pleasure he could himself, much if not all of it

around Hope House was so absolutely thought out to John Gordon's mind that any slow, cautious, hesitating steps toward a conclusion seemed like cold blooded pharisaism.

"I'll do something, of course; I'll do something," Mr. Marsh said apologetically.

"What? What?"

"I suppose—"

Gordon interrupted, not with excitement, but calmly: "This is your life opportunity, Mr. Marsh. Tell me frankly, if you were to donate to Hope House outright the property where No. 91 stood for park purposes would it seriously cripple your business?"

"No, I don't think it would cripple me."

"Then, will you give us that much?" Gordon asked boldly and almost bluntly. But he was not in any mood to wait or coax.

"Do you know how much that property is worth?"

"No."

"It cost me \$32,000 to buy the lot and put up the tenement," Mr. Marsh said imperiously.

"John Gordon was silent.

"So that you practically ask me to donate \$32,000 to Hope House?"

"Minus the insurance on No. 91," said John Gordon quietly.

"It was insured for \$50,000," Mr. Marsh said, while his face grew a little red.

Gordon made no remark, and Mr. Marsh digested in his chair and drummed with his fingers on the edge of the table.

"Why would it not be better to put up a model tenement on the lot?"

"A park would do more good."

"But the people who were burned out—"

"They must be cared for, that is true. The interest excited by the calamity may lead to the tearing down of other areas and the building of good tenements. But a park the size of the whole burned area would be of more value to Hope House than even such a model tenement as you might put up in place of No. 91."

There was silence again. Mr. Marsh got up and went into the bank. He was gone several minutes. Gordon never moved. When Marsh came back, he brought some papers.

"I'll have the property made over to Hope House," he said briefly.

"Thank you," Gordon answered simply, and again there was a silence.

"I want to make some statement," Marsh spoke slowly. "Do you think this will be so regarded?"

"Yes; it will be a great help to us."

Gordon rose, and Marsh held out his hand.

"I'll have the business attended to at once, and—and—I'll be down to Hope House some time this week."

"Thank you. We shall be glad to see you," Gordon spoke gravely, and after shaking hands he went out. As he went down the stairs he had a momentary glimpse of remorse at the thought of having done Marsh some injustice or of having accepted the gift of the property churlishly and in an ungracious spirit.

But as he came back to the scene of the fire he said to himself: "Is it a case for offensive thanks that this rich man takes a fraction of the wealth that belongs to God and reluctantly lets humanity get some pleasure out of it? He broke a dozen distinct ordinances relating to tenement house construction when he ordered No. 91 built. He put up a deathtrap and received money for its use. He cowardly absented himself from a knowledge of the human misery that his building housed, and when a disaster fell directly traceable to his criminal greed he ran away from the horrors for which his own hand was responsible. Was it, therefore, in order that he, John Gordon, and Hope House and the public should fall down at the feet of this man with effusive and extravagant praise for atoning in a small degree for a tremendous wrong?"

Yet that is what the public, through press and pulpit, did when it was known what Mr. Marsh had done. His act was lauded as "a most noble exhibition of philanthropy," "a splendid example to others," "a fine gift outright to Hope House." Mr. Philo H. Marsh donated \$25,000 worth of valuable property. Mr. Marsh's minister mentioned the gift from the pulpit and took occasion to use the incident to illustrate the growing habit on the part of rich men to give sums of money for philanthropic causes. At what time had pulpit ever spoken out against the lawless greed which characterized this philanthropist when he allowed his business methods to sink to the level of barter in flesh and blood because other men did the same and the breaking of ordinances was counted a trivial thing simply because everybody did it? Is it not true that the pulpit said something in condemnation of wicked and un-Christian ways of making money before it says much more in praise of those who give what they have never rightly earned? A philanthropist is not one who gives money to humanity that he has obtained by wrongdoing humanity. Such a man is simply a highwayman giving up a part of the plunder he has iniquitously stolen.

When Gordon reached Hope House, he found waiting for him a note from Archie Penrose's aunt, Mrs. Constance Penrose.

Mr. Penrose was a society young man who had no visible means of support aside from the money his father, recently deceased, had left him. Archie Penrose had never made a cent of money by a stroke of labor of any kind, but that was nothing against him in the eyes of fond mothers with marriageable daughters. There were thousands of women in the city who would have counted themselves or their daughters as specially favored if Archie Penrose had come into the world as a millionaire. It made no difference to them that he had money, he was of a distinguished family, his manners were regarded as elegant, and he had an aunt who gave the most select receptions and entertainments in the city. In the sight of any man or woman of right definitions of manhood this young firebrand of an aristocratic family was simply one of the ciphers of civilization. He made nothing that added to humanity's comfort or knowledge. He contributed absolutely not one grain of helpfulness or comfort or hope to a suffering, struggling, needy world. He lived to get all the pleasure he could himself, much if not all of it

gained with a total disregard for any one else's pleasure, and yet he moved through what is called the best society, courted, admired, fawned on, eagerly invited out to an endless round of social functions which a certain class of rich people in America make the most important business of their lives.

Mrs. Constance Penrose was a person of more value than her distinguished nephew. She was rich, but not given over altogether to society and its shallow enthusiasms. There were other things in which she was genuinely interested, and among them was the career of John Gordon. She had known him as a boy, had watched him through his college course and his trip abroad, and, being a woman of very decided and individual opinions, she had more than once expressed her interest in the experiment Gordon was making. More than once she had compared him to her nephew, to that young man's great disadvantage.

The note which Gordon found at Hope House was an invitation to an evening at the Penrose mansion in Park avenue.

Why have you cut yourself off from all of your former friends? Do you owe nothing to us rich friends, as well as to the poor ones? Come and reform the boulevard if you are really in the reform business, for we need it as much as the poor. Why are there no social settlements among us? It strikes me that people like you Miss Andrews are living at the wrong end of the problem. If we could only be saved, we have the means and ability to save the other end; but I want you to come and see me and tell me about Miss Andrews' plan. Have you fallen in love with her? And how about Lucella? Young man, come and give an account of yourself. Lucella will be here, and Mary and the Lovells and the Cranstons and that graceless nephew of mine, who, by the way, now that you are out of the way, is paying court to Lucella. You have neglected us all shamefully. We will forgive you if you appear among us again. It will not be a large company—about twenty. Surely you have not cut us all out of your acquaintance forever. If you don't care for the rest, come to satisfy my curiosity about your future. You know I was one of your best friends when you were a boy in the university. I have a real interest in your future, and I am not all frivolous. Give me up to the what of the world, as I hope you know. Hoping to see you, I am your friend and well wisher,
CONSTANCE PENROSE.

Gordon thoughtfully considered the invitation and finally accepted it. When the evening named by Mrs. Penrose came, he went up on the boulevard. There was nothing particularly unusual in the situation, and yet in some unexplained manner he entered the Penrose mansion he was conscious of a strange excitement, as if before the evening was over events would occur that would make serious history for more than one of the guests.

Mrs. Penrose met him with a genuine friendliness.

"Ah, welcome, Mr. Reformer! I appreciate your coming out of your social dungeon to see us. You cannot always be living on heroics. There must be some comedy to relieve the tragedy, eh?"

"Some kinds of tragedy cannot be relieved by any kind of comedy," Gordon replied grimly. "But I'll promise you to talk shop unless I am drawn into it. You didn't ask me to come for that, did you?"

"Didn't I? You are the lion of the occasion. Everybody is talking about you."

"Let us change the subject then."

"And talk of Miss Andrews?"

"No," Gordon said coldly.

"No? That forbidden ground?" She spoke seriously. "I am actually interested in her and in all you are doing. Some time you must tell me. Will you?"

"Yes," he answered earnestly, a little ashamed of his reticence. "Of course I believe in it all, only I don't wish to seem to lug it in on this occasion."

"I understand," Mrs. Penrose answered brightly, and as Gordon passed on she introduced him to Professor Emory of the university.

Gordon had heard of Professor Emory and had read two of his books. The man was a scholar and had read everything in his own line of sociology. Without meaning to do so Gordon soon found himself deep in a discussion with the professor over one phase of the social question, which one of the professor's books had touched on—"The Personal Element of Responsibility for Relief of Unjust Social Conditions."

Gordon disagreed totally with the professor's conclusions and frankly told him so. The professor blandly smiled and laid down another proposition to which Gordon found himself totally opposed. The professor again smiled in such an exasperating manner that Gordon almost lost his temper. He pulled up just in time, however. He was so near it that he asked a question that otherwise he would not have asked.

"What you say is good theory, professor, but have you ever lived among the people and studied them at first hand to see if your theory will work?"

The professor changed color and lost his bland and condescending manner.

"No, sir; I do not consider that a necessity to the proper discussion of the facts. I understand perfectly well what you mean. Nearly all social settlement residents make the same mistake. They think personal contact is necessary to a clear comprehension of situations. I do not so regard it. Not that I deprecate the service you are rendering," he added hastily, "but you exaggerate the importance of your contribution to the solution of the problem."

Gordon was spared the temptation of a reply by a voice near by and a hand laid on his shoulder.

"John, must I introduce myself? Why have you neglected us all so shamefully?"

It was his sister Mary who had just come in. Gordon was really delighted to see her. "The swift and eventful current of events that flowed around Hope House had carried him along so tumultuously that he had let the old relations with his home drift, and yet, in spite of all that had to be counted into a swift receding past, he could not deny the strength of the blood relationship."

He turned from the professor with a feeling of relief and began to chat with his sister.

She was the same careless, thoughtless, superficial creature she had always been, and yet she had an affection for her brother that John Gordon felt was very real. It touched him, even while he was wounded by many things she carelessly uttered about his own choice of life.

"Father is not very well," she said in reply to a question. "He fell one

CASTORIA

The Kind You Have Always Bought, and which has been in use for over 30 years, has borne the signature of *Dr. J. C. Ayer* and has been made under his personal supervision since its infancy. Allow no one to deceive you in this. All Counterfeits, Imitations, and "Just-as-good" are but experiments that trifle with and endanger the health of Infants and Children—Experience against Experiment.

What is CASTORIA

Castoria is a harmless substitute for Castor Oil, Paregoric, Drops and Soothing Syrups. It is Pleasant. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. Its age is its guarantee. It destroys Worms and allays Feverishness. It cures Diarrhoea and Wind Colic. It relieves Teething troubles, cures Constipation and Flatulency. It assimilates the Food, regulates the Stomach and Bowels, giving healthy and natural sleep. The Children's Panacea—The Mother's Friend.

GENUINE CASTORIA ALWAYS

Bears the Signature of

Dr. J. C. Ayer

The Kind You Have Always Bought

In Use For Over 30 Years.

THE CASTORIA COMPANY, 27 MURRAY STREET, NEW YORK CITY.



INTERESTING FACTS

When people are contemplating a trip whether on business or pleasure, they naturally want the best service obtainable in speed, comfort and safety in connection with the Wisconsin Central Lines. The Wisconsin Central Lines are paid to serve the public and our trains operated so as to make close connection with diverging lines at all junction points.

Pullman Palace Sleeping and Chair Cars on through trains.

Dining Car service unexcelled. Meals served a la Carte.

In order to obtain this first class service ask the ticket agent to sell you a ticket over

THE WISCONSIN CENTRAL LINES.

Direct connections at Chicago and Milwaukee for all Eastern points.

For full information call on your nearest ticket agent, or write
Jas. C. Posen, or Jas. A. Clark, Gen. Pass. Agt., General Agent, Milwaukee, Wis. 246 State



Gift, aimed to a species of social genius. Mrs. Penrose possessed, and the dinner was progressing finely, seasoned with just that right degree of conversational interest which at times included every one at the table and then broke up into little groups of talk between two or four.

John Gordon talked with Miss Cranston on a variety of topics, but did not introduce any mention of his own work. Mrs. Penrose, who sat at his right, once or twice alluded to Gordon's residence at Hope House, but he answered briefly and at once reverted to something else. Evidently he did not intend to be drawn into any discussion or description of his work. Mrs. Penrose was too shrewd as well as too courteous to insist in asking questions she plainly saw were not agreeable.

"Very well, she said good naturedly. 'As the lion of the occasion, if you will not roar in the presence of this audience will you favor me some time with what I am dying to know? It is not little curiosity,' she added in a lower tone. 'I really am interested in your plans. I want to help.'"

Gordon looked up at her quickly. The thought of what this woman, with her wealth and social influence, might do if she would to bring life and light into the dead, dark places of the city kindled his imagination. It was another ray of hope to place alongside Mrs. Effingham's letters.

To be Continued.

E. W. Howe

This signature is on every box of the genuine Laxative Bromo-Quinine Tablets. The remedy that cures a cold in one day.