## Undoing of the Devil THOMAS

in the little Baptist church in a certain cotton mill village in South Caralina. Just a few yards away was a handsome school building with a committed some act of indiscretion? How wretched he had gone some far various purposes. On this particular night the Devil had it rented and had made great preparations for a fashionable days.

who so faithfully attended the little guilty? If so, God pity him! But of church every Wednesday night. He had once been some mother's disband them, but while there were some whom he could approach with impunity, there were a few—two or impunity, there were a few—two or three good sisters, two or three breth-three good sisters, the good pity him! But of the tramp, had each time gone down don't believe you have noticed how on his knees and buried his face in his filthy I am."

"I care nothing for your clothes, may bey: I am thinking of your soul. Somewhere in the wide world I have a boy who may be in a far worse believed that he had a history.

"I want us to sing a song of in-with three good six to a song of instance in the good six three good ed deacon, who the Devil was actually afraid to tackle.

Devil's most powerful enemies. For bell rang for services.

had exerted all his energies to make dance a great success, his one chief ambition being to so disturb the Devil. the church services that any thing worship would simply be impos-

no play—that they would soon be your self in his place?"

ried and true remedy, recommended for faint hearts and pricking consciences; in his haset he failed to give proper directions for use, with the result that the fiddlers took an over- is true. dose and instead of playing the part you had the proof 'ere this." assigned them, were quietly sleeping at home; while the Devil in his rage and disappointment used some very in here to be noticed, and don't wish other mother's heart was aching for nodded his head two or three times breakfast table, greatly pleased over the astonishment and glad surprise of the

decided to attend prayer meeting would be no use to say more. himself. It might be that he could find something to do there, and he was anxious to know what would be started to the church sollloquizing: "If it had all turned out as I had light planned; if those fool fiddlers had breathless slience and reverence. not gone beyond the bounds of reasleading church members-the kind | he the churches benefit-the public netic influence. would not have dengunced me so phatically." was very far sighted and argued from on the whole armour of faith, with she point that:

"Success like some soft fairy veli Covers the deeds of man, It makes the unliest wrong look well

Entering the church and slipping into a seat near the door so that he could get out easily if the atmosphere happened to be too spiritually warm comfort, the Devil was disagree- a higher plane of Christian livingfor comfort, the Devil was disagree ably surprised to find a larger congregation than usual. But outside a crowd of youngsters were keeping up a most terrible racket with babywakers, cannon-crackers, pop-sticks the door, he gave no sign of recognition. He made no reference to the disturbance would distract and confuse this preacher and people, put them to flight. He was decidedly uncomfortable as the people sang:

"There were ninety and nine that safely In the shell of the fold, But one was out on the hills away, Far off from the gates of gold-"

A tramp was passing and paused he pulled off his dirty cap and softly the gift of gab.

his clothes ragged and filthy, it a whipped cur.

The tramp listened and trembled. was hard to realize that he was once an innocent bane, held in the arms his eyes to grow dim. Oh, if he could stimps of this city."

All loving Christian mother and per-only call back the years of his wasted glimpse of this city." haps cradled in the lap of luxury. Just another prodigal! What had auted him to coam? Had he traveled

It was Christmus night—the night self was to blame. Who was his earth and had lived among sinners than any earthly friend." sympathetor regular prayer meeting services mother? Where was his home? and had at last died for the sins of ically. and had made great preparations for a fashionable dance.

For a long time he had been ploting and planning how he might best manage the little band of worshipers who so faithfully attended the little guilty? If so, God pity him! But of the tramp, had each time gone down to be assured—

The services were nearly over. The good old deacon had prayed a touching pod deacon had prayed a touching prayer; others had sent up sweeping petitions that took in the whole world and no one in particular but as if impelled by an irresistable power, the tramp, had each time gone down don't believe you have noticed how the little way and spend to-night and longer good old deacon had prayed a touching prayer; others had sent up sweeping particular but as if impelled by an irresistable power, the tramp, had each time gone down don't believe you have noticed how

the church members could be tempted to stay at home, and were often
absent from services, offering the
plous looking woman over there on
absent from services, offering the flimslest kind of excuses. But this old man who had more reasonable excuses, offered none, and nearly always and at his own expense hired ances, and tearing down character.

Ways and at his own expense hired ances, and tearing down character.

The choir sang:

The choir sang:

The choir sang:

The choir sang:

Turned wonderingly toward the little ing his aunt a siy with the front seat, is the biggest tattler in something to glarify my Father this widow in earrest conversation with support of the tramp. The old deacon, heaven happen will surprise me very much, happen wil ar two, whenever the Baptist church experience and her high-flown senti-

"They are all hypocrites," sneerest the Devil.
"I hope not," pleaded the tramp. Oh, I hope not."

Oh, I hope not."

Oh, I hope not."

Oh, I hope not."

"Well, my friend, suppose we put ent churches were caught like files in a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and have been a purty spectacle in the chords that were broken will vitrate a spider's web, and persuaded to there come in also a poor man in altar. Wonder how many petitions sanction the dance by their presence, vile raiment; And ye have respect to would have been sent up in behalf of while the Devil laughed triumphant- him that weareth the gay clothing, sich a filthy bundle of rags?" ly. Ah! wouldn't he show these and say unto him, sit thou here in a The preacher had seen and under-canting Christmas who had most good place; and say to the poor, stood it all. It was nothing unusual

over reaching nimself. He had distributed lots of neflicine that was labelied "O-be-foyful," a well-known tried and true remedy, recommended to be seemed to be s Christmas or care what becomes of he would repent and return. She had see that the young man was really you after you get out of here. You heard nothing from him now in allineed of food, "and if you'll come are no 'Spriag chicken'—that's plainly most a year, but she was sure that he home with us deacon, you shall have evident—and you know all that I say still lived; had he died her heart the chance of another supper to-

"What's my looks to you?" growled five years, indiscreet language. Many left the or expect it. Let me alone now; it's this lost tramp, praying that God emphatically, happy over the prachall thoroughly disgusted and went the first time I've been in church would protect and save him. He, too, tical turn he had given the conversaback home, or to church, thankful for years and I don't know what made for a narrow escape; while some stayed on, not caring to do either.

After breakafst they all repaired to the absent Jamie, Oh, why would young men, the hope of the country.

I propose to see and hear the whole young men, the hope of the country.

I can't go. Am sorry. My time will and Winnie gave them some sweet and winnie gave them sweet and

The song was finished and the young preacher rose with a welcoming smile than the angels—given every advantshining from his eyes, and for a moage of intellect, conscience, hope and sald about him, any way. So he ment looked over the large congregation, his face glowing with a spiritual that awed one and all into

on and decency; if I only could have the church a short time, but the peosucceeded in interesting mre of the ple were not slow to understand that was unusually full of the Christthat go deep down in their pockets like spirit and possessed great mag-

Meek, gentle, patient, tender and You see that the Devil loving-pleading that the church put more of the forgiving spirit and brotherly love; ever ready to look with charity on the fallen, and still more ready to lift them up; preaching the gospel in all its purity, living it in all explaining its beauties in such a persuasive and winning way that none could hear without longing to get upon dance across the street, or to any other work that the Prince of Darkness was directing; he spoke entirely on the love of God and his idea as to how best to defeat the Devil, seemed to be, to shine him out. He never one time mentioned the Devil, but show-He never one ed forth the beauties and the great peace which were the fruits of pure and undefiled religion, and in such a way that any other than the right way, was awful by contrast.

to listen. "God!" he exclaimed.
"that's me! That was mother's favorite song, too," and strangely affected he peeped in at a window; seeing some vacant seats near the door
more on the power of God than on

Memories of home and mother caused days. of far and at such break-neck speed ful peace, that trustful repose that the down the hill toward destruction, preacher had said was the portion of their now it was impossible to "throw believer. Did he believe? Yes, he on the brakes?" Who besides him- believed it all; Christ had come to friend and there is One other greater ment. What kind of a tramp was that I was disgraced in the eyes of

three good sisters, two or three breth-ren and especially one old gray-halr-yet. Christ died for such as he, and to turn back and take the road that that some mother will befriend him deacon, who the Devil was actuy affaid to tackle.

This old deacon was one of the other side." instead of trying to forward," and there was a tender the other side." instead of trying to forward," and there was a tender will blessed Christmas night.

This old deacon was one of the help them to a better and higher life. tone and touching cadence in the "Madam, if you really wish Devil's most powerful enemies. For years and years he had been night was a little uneasy over to be a help to this people. I do watchman for the mill and seldom missed a church service. Many of the church members could be temptime that has a sanctified locking the church members could be temptime to be a help to this people. I do wish that this night I might be the doubtling the thing that had had pended to him, "and if there be a God, "Never mind old fellow, a lot of may He reward you for this kinds and happen in a few days, and to stay at home, and were often."

Why do you wait, dear brother bell rang for services.

To-night the Devil had prepared for a great display of his power. He had exerted all his energies to make

Many eyes were wet with tears and He had been all over the village them to the test, and give you the many went up for prayer. The tramp with invitations to the dance; some proof of my assertions. That big wretched and undone, touched as he were a little backward at first about accepting, but having left his hoofs, so much, is said to be the Christian's go forward, forgetful of his fifthy aphorns and tail at home and being in the guise of a handsome young man. It says 'Be not forgetful to entertain head in at the door in the guise of the Devil son persuaded them that a little recreation was absolutely necessity to their well being; that if they with them; and them which suffer hobo, will you! Blamed if he ain't presisted in dragging out such a dull, adversity, as being yourselves also in fixin' to start on the hunt fer religion. slow, dead existence—all work and the body. Doesn't that mean 'put an' he's rigged up fer the occasion, no play—that they would soon be

Wonder how many petitions

Wouldn't be clothe the churches in sack cloth and ashes and make that saintly parson across the street hang his head in shame? Ha! ha! Wouldn't it be nice if a prayer should happen to be offered by that stubborn old heacon, to drown his voice in the noise of fiddling and dancing and the calls for cotillion!

Stand thou there, or sit under my foot balances with ridicule, but oh, it was awful. A little widow, too, with sweet balances with ridicule, but oh, it was awful. A little widow, too, with sweet sad face and hair streaked with gray, said Mrs. B—, explaining that the young man was going home with her. "We will go now, if you are ready." Said Mrs. B—, explaining that the young man was going home with her. "We'll," declared the deacon, "I aimost environment to accept and don and are convinced of the law as transcalls for cotillion!

To see a man weigh his soul in the balances with ridicule, but oh, it was awful. A little widow, too, with sweet sad face and hair streaked with gray, said Mrs. B—, explaining that the young man was going home with her. "We'll," declared the deacon, "I aimost environment into a decidedly respect to persons ye commit sin, and after words and are convinced of the law as transcalls for cotillion!

To see a man weigh his soul in the balances with ridicule, but oh, it was awful. A little widow, too, with sweet sad face and hair streaked with gray, words.

"We will go now, if you are ready." "We will go now was going home with her. "We'll." declared the deacon, "I aim had persuaded him to accept and don destitute circumstances; perhaps he, they words.

"We will go now. If you are ready." "We will go now, if you are ready." "We will go now wit words.

"We'll." declared the deacon, "I aim heart filled with power on earth, light or darkness? stand thou there, or sit under my foot to see a man weigh his soul in the

was now twenty-one an had been gone table."

on, not caring to do either.

I propose to see and hear the whole young men, the hope of the country. I can't go. Am sorry. My time will performance," and the Devil saw it fall so low? she wondered. How was be out now in about ten minutes and the devil saw it fall so low? it that a man made in the image of I must hurry on to my duties at the surprised to hear Charlie's rich voice God, and created but a little lower Mill." It was carly, only 9 o'clock as he joined in the singing, and stuff

> All who have read the Bible, have fact that bits of Scripture read years hearted. There was a quizzion light times return to memory, with starti- in his laughing eyes and an ex-ing distinctness and exactly fitting the sion on his geniul face that Just now these words came to Mrs. -'as she sat and pondered: "But his aunt about her escort. when Jesus heard that, he said unto

it that I am always prompted to do while his big heart throbbed joyously certain, you are not entertaining un things that others never do?—things over the happy Christmas thoughts angel." Drawing a deep breath he that would make people look at me in that would make people look at me in

a cold, cruel, questioning way?"
What was it that whispered in her "Blessed are they which ear: persecuted for righteousness sake; for claring that she was "hungry as a grower living in Florida. I am their's is the kingdom of heaven are Blessed are ye when men shall revite you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely. for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Suddenly the little woman's filled with a happy light and her face hide his emotion. There was a nice

a far off State who believed and dead—his mother. Why had he Jeft read and studied in thousands of homes and churches every blessed lieve the evidence of his own eyes and veritable sign board proclaiming his bear to listen and had slipped out like the evidence of his own eyes and Christmas Day. The Devii could not bear to listen and had slipped out like the evidence of his own eyes and Mrs. Bear to listen and had slipped out like the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and Mrs. Bear to listen and had slipped out like the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. At last he sposse and the ears are the evidence of his own eyes and the ears. decided that he had seen much better

ife! Oh, if he could only have a "Are you visiting friends here dur- my way of living—i can tell you that clean heart and a clear conscience ing Christmas?" with an air or —and if I ever amount to anything I with an air of

Will

"Madam, if you really wish it for I can not."

. The crowd was now streaming out at the door and many eyes were turn up before then," said Dick, giv-turned wonderingly toward the little ing his aunt a sly wink. widow in earrest conversation with "After to-night, nothing that can stranger's hand with a hearty grasp: happy Christmas. Come out to our food, for I had eaten nothing since prayer meeting, again. Preaching yesterday morning and was starving. Sunday morning and at night. 'Come

"Amen," fervently ejactulated the preacher grasping the tramp's hand my life shall be one earnest endeavor as the old deacon dropped it, and to redeem the mistakes of the past," the poor fellow's heart, making him him joyously, mentally saying: long more intensely for that higher "Thank God." life, so beautifully pictured to him When they rose from the table, that night. The vilest reptile that Winnie had a kettle of hot water "Look at that darned crawls, the basest wretch unhung, will recognize and respond to the voice and touch of genuine hearifelt sympathy and kindness.

no play—that they would soon be physical wrocks and fill premature graves. "To live long, one must enjoy living," he argued.

In this way members of the different churches were caught like flies in collections. For if there are churches were caught like flies in collections. The long of the different churches were caught like flies in collections. The long of the Town in the human heart, crushed by

any one, he was half choked with

declared the little From your looks I think would have told her, she believed. He night, for I am going straight to the

"I didn't come And some where, if living, some smiled his approval. The old deacon shoved Charile into a seat at the

B--; the tramp in the meantime little." After a little coaxing from had told her that his name was Winnie he sat down to the organ and aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his name aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his home aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his home aspiration—how was it that he could had told her that his home aspiration—who had told her that his home aspiration—who had told her that his home aspiration—how was in Florida. He was kindly inspect to the family, which consists trouble to the family, which consists that every eye was wet with the could have a special had told her that his name aspiration. reathless slience and reverence.

He had only been pastor of this litle church a short time, but the peola church a short time, but the peola church as short time, but the peol 16 and a nephew, Dick Osborne, perhaps been puzzled over the strange aged 25 and jolly good fellow, full of fact that bits of Scripture read years fun and frolic, yet kind and tenderin his laughing eyes and an expressubject under thought or discussion. B-- plainty understood. He was longing for an opportunity to tease

"Mr. Baxter was at our prayer gospel in all its purity, living it in all physician, but they that are sick. But the place, so I begged him home its beautiful simplicity; picturing the ideal life in such attractive coloring. I will have mercy, and not sacrificate Challenge to make him enjoy explaining its handless. them, They that be whole need not a meeting to-night, and is a stranger in I will have mercy, and not sacrifice:
for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,"
She glanced again toward the
tramp and was prompted by the Holy
Shirli In do an unusal thing. For a treaty toward her nephew. "I hope haps my experience will benefit you, spirit to do an unusal thing. For a moment she was startled and held her breath. "Dare I do it?" she whispered. "Oh, no, I can not. I would be cruelly criticized—I can not. Why is the things he intended to do for him, it that I am always prompted to do to the him in kindness toward the stranger. running over in his mind the things he intended to do for him, it that I am always prompted to do to the him in kindness toward the cruelly criticized—I can not. Why is

that filled it. Charlie was nade to feel at home and welcome, and soon Mrs. Bbear," and wanted every one to help

her eat another supper. The snowy cover was removed and Charlie saw a table heavily laden with good things, so like he had seen at home in years gone by, that a flood of tender nemories surged over his soul and he turned his head to glowed with a heavenly purpose as ham, baked and dotted the same way she whispered: "Jesus, Master, thy with black pepper, the turkey was servant heareth and will obey. Teach the same delicate brown: the cakes Marked in, taking a seat directly in front of the Devil.

Another song was sung: "Glory to God in the Highest, On Earth Peace and God to Men," which made the Devil Devil resilens. The tramp listened with throbbing heart, wendering with throbbing heart, wendering with the hearts of the 26th verses, and spoke especially from the 18th to the 26th verses, and the angel said worth had come into this house of worship. No one cared whether he went to heaven or hell—no one ever had talked awhile dead—his mother. Why had he left

After the preacher had talked awhile and wall to be add a him the proposition of the people and knew that the hearts of the people and while a services were closed with a candles: the ples and evaluate the present of the people and knew that the hearts of the people and with the hearts of the people and the test of the people and the test of the people and with the hearts of the people and with the people and with the one and with the people and with the same dell-ale brown. The same transport was actually be to look into the would set for six.

"I'd like to wash," whispered Charlie to Claude, who led him out to the sink on the back porch. While washing he said to the boy: your mother is an angel. give her the trouble that I have given my mother. Look at me and take warning; keep good company and stay at home. I am going to change or —and if I ever amount to anything I will owe It to your good Christian no mother, who has restored my faith

while Charlie took from his pocket a little comb and smoothed his hair. They returned to the dining room Winnie preparing ham turkey sandwiches. "She's working a scheme to keep from washing dish-

es," declared ner brother, at which they aillaughed. "Well we'll compromise affairs, this way," said Dick; "every wash his or her own plate," and he nelped himself to a generous slice of julcy pie, and winking one eye comleally.

"Agreed," laughed Mrs. B-Now, Charlie, you are to feel home with us. Just help yourself; don't wait to be helped, or you are sure to get left-a thing you have found out if you have ever been around cotton mill people," she declared.

"Have you ever worked in a coton mill, Mr. Baxter?" Winnie, not knowing what else to say at present.

"A little in the weaving depart-

"I'd be glad to get work, for I am dead broke; but I had my suit-case and clothes stolen a few weeks ago and have been sick, and am is such a plight that I am actually ashamed to

work does not commence again till next Monday. No telling what

hours ago I cared for nothing in the "How do you do, my brother. Glad world, and had almost determined to see you here. Hope you'll have a to break into some house and steal Now, here I am, a guest in a Christhou with us and we will do thee tian home, unworthy of the least kindness which is being so freely lavished upon me. But the rest of sending a strange magnetic thrill to earnestly; and Mrs. B-- beamed on "Thank God."

ready, poured it in the dish pan and placed it on the 'ack table laughing; There, I've done my part; everybody wash his own plate; I won't excuse even you. Mr. Baxter," she declared shaking her yellow curls and skipping out of the dining room, leaving them to repair as far as possible, the damage that had been done to the table. Charke was sent up stairs with Dick

and Claude and given a bed in the kindness or friendly interest from Mrs. B heard them still up moving about and talking in low earnest emotion, his hands trembled and his tones. Next morning when they eyes were wet with unshed tears, 48 came down to breakfast. Charile had moise of indding and dancing and the calls for cotillion!

But—. In his great ambition to make the dance a crowning success and to make himself recognized as that parson would have come straight and took a back seat, the greatest power on earth, the Devil smade the very common mistake of over reaching nimself. He had discording the control of the law as transported as transported of the law as transported destitute circumstances; perhaps he destitute circums night before. He was really hand-some with his dark hair and eyes. there was a subdued and thoughtful expression on his face that added to his attractive appearance. He had every appearance well?bred and being well-born and Dick was no less proud of him than

music on her new organ. more so to find that he could play "a After a little coaxing from tears and each heart more sure that the young man must have a history. After that, the silence was unbroken for awhile, until Claude, unable to longer restrain his currestty, laid his hand gently on Charlle's shoulder and

asked softly but eagerly: "Charlie, it seems that we have known and loved you ever so long; if you don't mind, something about yourself? how you came to leave home and so on!

"And how I happened to be a tramp?" sadly. "Claude, I am bitter ly ashamed of it all and wish it could be blotted from my memory. Perso I will tell you about it."
"You needn't if you don't wish,"

spoke up Winnie, though she too, was all curiosity and almost expected to learn that he was a prince in disguise. Charlie bowed and smiled his thanks thing commenced the painful recital, pausing occasionally to control his trembl-

ing voice:
"My father is a wealthy orange youngest of four children and at the my life. What time I was not in school I was loafing with other idlers and of course fell into bad company. I learned to smoke cigarettes, too occasional drink with my companions. and often played cards. parents never dreamed that I had failen so low. Those with whom I asso-ciated were all of respectable families. was and none but members of our "gang"

having a regular meeting in woods; we had been reading James," "Liberty Boys of '75." other trashy literature calculated send many to destruction, and had thrown them aside for a game of cards. We were deeply interested in a game of "seven up" when my father appeared on the scene with a large switch in his hand, jerked me from the ground and started to give me a thrashing, there in the preof my companions, who stood dumb-founded before his wrath,

this fellow, any way, he wondered, my companions, I cleaceded my fists a handsome young man with go and dared him to lay his hands on me hair and laughing again, declaring I would fight him to saw a liceting in

again, declaring I would fight him to saw a licking in store for me at the death," pausing in deep emotion.

"Father paused, folded his arms ter of my little joke and—" across his breast and looked me sternly in the face for a long time before he spoke; then he sand: Charlie, "Oh, my darling boy, he go home and tell your mother goodgo home and tell your mother goodbye, then leave the roof that has
sheltered and protected you from
your infancy! Go! Go quickly ere I
lose control of myself. Don't ever "Yes, mother, your boy—your write to us and don't dare to darken Christian boy! Your prayers have my doors again until you can come lowed me everywhere, mother, and at prepared to take the punishment you last made such a wall around me that resent. For I warn you that I could not climb it, so I was even though you have reached the age to look up to heaven as my only way of manhood, if I still live, you will of escape." Claude was bravely trytake a whipping before you enter my ing to keep from boo-hooing richouse or sit at my table again!" out, Dick was vigorously punching

house or sit at my table again!"
"Thank you sir, I will never rere- fire, and Winnie was kneeling on the if other side of her mother, her arms turn,' I declared hotly. 'not even if other side of her mother.
you were on your death bed and around her brother's neck should send for me!'

should send for me!'

The second of the second of this is the second of the second of the second of this is the second of the second begged me to submit to a whipping such a thing. Who can express and remain at home; but I had begun feelings of poor Charile, who felt to have visions of a fortune that I was going to make in the future, and already saw myself rich and prosperous and father longing to beg my for- there in the shadows and silence of the giveness for his harsh treatment, yet dreading to approach me! And my mother gave me one hundred dollars

and kissed me good-bye.

That was five years ago last summer again he prayed the publican's prayer, and since then I have been all over with all the earnestness of his heart the United States and Mexico, working at anything I could find to getting enough in one place to pay my way to another, or, falling in that. beating my way on top of freight trains and in two instances being failed and made to work the streets for the offense. I have on several occahave all the addresses and intend to pay them yet, if I live. Oh, I have sinned beyond pardon, I fear."
"No, no, Charlie, never that." sinned beyond pardon. I fear."

"No, no, Charlle, never that."

whispered Mrs. B——, ner eyes wet the time before he could earn enough with tears. After a moment the young

man continued: "Never until last night, did I serlously consider the thought of turning home and begging my father went to look for him. "Sa to forgive me; but once every year I did you run for?" he gi have gone there secretely and peeped ping Charlie on the back. through the window for a glimpse of father looks more stern and uncompromising. Those occasional stolen glimpses of mother have kept me from many contemplated misdeeds, but it took absolute want and degradation, poverty and helplessness to bring me to my senses, and make me willing to submit to father's switch. I am 22 years old, now, but as soon as I can years old, now, but as soon as I can days. Come back in the house Charget there, I am going nome and take lie, out of the cold."

bear, which won't be half what I de-serve." Then Charlie turned to Mrs. Then Charlie turned to Mrs. - his eyes shining with gratitude. "God only knows where I would have stopped had it not been for your timely aid; perhaps never, till landed in the bottomiess pit. Truly my lines have fallen in pleasant places; the kindnesses that you have all shown me shall not be thrown away. I will let my future life

"e my gratitude." "It was bad compay that led Jamie astray, too," said Winnfe sadly, "Oh, I do wish he would come home," al-

most in tears. "See here, now, heart aches and wet eyes are not for Christmas," declared at-nomes and know nothings and will entertain us with many rich stories of his adventures in foreign lands, thereby making the long evening pass pleasantly for Then bantering one hand and swinging her around as he played a waltz on a ten cent mouth harp, he soon had them all laughing just as he intended that they should.

Christmas comes but once a year, of every body git his shear.
If git mine if you'll git yourn,
ever seen sich a time since I been
born."

He laughed as he at last released the er than ever, Charlle thought. That night about 9 o'clock, they were all seated around a wary fire listening told of his life and work as a cowpuncher, while in Texas and Mexico and forgotten. He had just finished telling of a great stampede of cattle in which a Mexican at the door. With a grimace of impatience. Claude answered, and a tall, well-dressed, middle-aged stranger it to behold his repentant son, who stepped into the room after inquiring held in his extended hands a bunch - He came forward with hat in for a thrashing and forgiveness. hand, a tall athletic form with iron "My son! to have you humble gray hair and huge mustache, his yourself is enough! God bless you my

ing his hand to Mrs. B— and bow- er's room, where another touching ing low, "and I came to see you at meeting too place, while Charile told "Gee whiz! I guess anybody that brings news of Jamie is welcome un-der this vine and fig tree," exclaimed

mun's eyes entreatingty. Dick surveyed him with cold, critical eyes half believing that he was an

mentally deciding to kick him out on the smallest provocation.
"Oh, yes, madam, he is very much alive or was a few days ago. "But where is my boy?"

officer in search of poor Charlle, and

- sinking back in screamed Mrs. Bher chair, pale and weak. "Yes, Where is my brother? and be quick about it!" demanded Ciaude.

Don't you see that mother is on the verge of hysterics?" Oh, do be calm, now Mrs. B-

I shall forget in my nervousness the very things he wanted me to say," pleaded the stranger. "I have nothing but good news to bring and am sure need not be the feast bit worried about Jamic. Please calm yourself or I shall be sorry I listened to his request, and came, to deliver his message of love and remembrance." Then rising; "I believe I will remove my overcoat; it is quite warm in this cosy it is quite warm in this cosy if the foor, and as which all the year round it and his hat by the door. And as the did so, the quick and practiced eye of Charlie, discovered that he wore a wis oer light hair and knew that the big mustache was also falss. What the big mustache was also falss. What the days are going by the big mustache was also falss. What the days are going by the big mustache was the could it mean? Was this one of Miss Winnie's lovers, come to steal her from home? Glancing at her, Charlie saw that she was gazing at the man as if fascinated, her hands pervously While the days are going by the days are going by the two the days are going by the two the days are going by the days are going by the two the days are going by the days are going by

Winnie's lovers, come home? Glancing at her, Charlie saw that she was gazing at the man as if fascinated, her hands pervously clasped together.

"Did we leave the front dobr open my boy? Seems to me I feel a gust of air," and the stranger, stepping out into the hall as if to investigate. All were beginning to feel suspicious and grow nervous, and Dick rose to his feet with determination written all over his face, for Charlis had whispered to him of his discovery.

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feelings of poor Charile, who felt un-worthy to witness such a sacred meeting? Unnoticed he slipped from the room and out into the back yard, and night, with heart almost bursting, he bowed his head and prayed as he had never in his life before; "God be mer-ciful to me a sinner." Over and over

happy tears rolling down her cheeks.

my at

and soul, mind and strength, until that sweet peace which passeth all undertsanding came to him and he sat down on the back steps, alone with his great happiness. How he longed to be at home again with his gentle mother, a comfort and blessing to her in her declining years. board bills unpaid, but I She, too, would be just as glad as this mother, to know that he was saved through the goodness and grace of the

> board in the meantime, And not yet have a tob, even. At last they missed him and Dick went to look for him. "Say, now, he growled, slan-

money for the trip and to pay

just couldn't stand to see mother; each year she has grown those tears; and Dick out here in the more gray and sad booking, while silence of the night I have found peace with God, and am happy as can be, even if I haven't a cent and am out of a job."

Dick swallowed hard, gripped Charlie's hand and said: "Old boy, I am glad, though I don't know anything about such feelings, and never had a hankering that way until the past few

a turn of switches with me, and tell "Forgive us for forgetting you for a father to give me all he thinks I can moment, Charlie," said Mrs. B——as bear, which won't be half what I dethrough a trace of tears. "He is another star in your crown, aunt," said Dick in a nusky voice

and I hope to be another;" and then he bolted up stairs. "What else in the world, have I to wish for to make me the happlest wo-man fivin: "Dick is in th hands of the Lord and will soon have his soul 'anchored in the haven of rest' -all my child an are now saved, and you What a glorious Christmas Charlie.

we are having!"
Then Charlie was increduced to famle, who soon found that he knew of his family, in fact had spent a night there while trave;ing through Florida a few years previously, and declared he had never been entertained in a more princely style. Mrs. Bax-ter had spoken to him secretly about Charlie and bads him watch out for him in his travels, begging that if he ever saw her boy he would write and let her know; and he had promised

Dick and Jamie held a secret conferthe privilege of lending Charite money to pay his way home. Jamle knew the family to be far wealthier than Charlie had represented them to be and knew that if once he returned, he would be restored to favor and set up in business. Jamie had been working in North Carolina in the lumber business for two years and had saved

neat little sum.

It was New Year's night and old Mr. Baxter and his faithful wife by their lonely fire place, gazing thoughtfully into the few glowing embers. It was a little cold for Florida weather. The three married children rotesting Winnie, who with her tous- with their families had taken dinner ed hair and flushed cheeks, was pret- at the old homestead and were now gone. The old gentleman's face wore and unusually soft expression and a tear gathered in the wife's eyes as she with great interest to Charlie as he thought that if Charlie had only come to-day, all would have been forgiven

Ife had just finished telling of a great tampede of cattle in which a Mexican old couple sat until startled by the cost his life, when there came a knock ringing of the front door bell. All the servants were away and Mr. Baxter himself went to the door and opened it to behold his repentant son, who he was at the home of the Widow of stout switches and humbly begged

great coat almost touching the floor, boy," embracing him and leading him "My name is Everett," he said, offer- down the long hall toward his mothboy," embracing him and leading him the earnest request of your son, Jamie, her of the things that had happened who is a dear friend of mine." to him during the past few days I guess anybody that course he was soon taken to the dining room and made to eat a hearty supper at the table from which he he Claude, while the mother gasped: "Oh been absent so many long years, while tell me of my boy. Is he still living?" the father stood by eagerly devouring leaning forward and looking into the every word that fell from the lips of the returned prodigal.

On the day he was 21 years of age, one thousand dollars had been placed in the bank to Charlie's credit, and kept a secret by his father, who was ashamed for even his patient wife to know that his hard heart was soften-

ing toward his absent son.

Charlie was soon established as his father's partner in a paying business. restored to Dick and Jamie the borrowed money with an additional sum which he called "interest" and to the astonishment of all concerned, doubly paid all the board bills he had left unpaid, sending with the money a gentlemanly letter of explanation.

Every week a large box of oranges, express prepaid, comes to the home of the Widow B— and letters fly back and forth between Charile and Winnie in a suspicious way, so Dick de-ciares; and he tells his aunt that her Christmas "tramp" stayed long enough to locate her treasure, and will some day make a raid which will be suc-

Why not cultivate the Christmas