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NOTICE.

Having qualified as administrator upon the estate of Wm. G. Albright, I hereby notify all persons having claims against said estate to present them to me, on or before the 1st day of July 1878, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment and save costs.

JOHN G. ALBRI HT, Adm. of Wm. G. Albright. Graham, N. C., June 11th 1877

THE HIGHWAY ROBBER.

I will tell how it happened, word for word. Would you take me for a highwayman? You shake your head. I am thirty years old. The judge gave me twenty years; then I'll be fifty. Wife? Yes, and two children living—one under the sod; I wish the rest of them were there. Don't ask questions. I can tell you better without.

I am from Northern New York. I had good schooling when I was a boy, and learnt the carpenter's trade. I came down here as soon as I was a journeyman, and got to work right away. I was steady; I didn't drink; I never drank; I saved my money.

After awhile I married a nice girl, and for five years I was the happiest man alive. I tell you what it is, with a loving wife, three pretty children, a comfortable home and plenty of work, I would not have changed places with the President.

I had money in the savings bank, too, and was beginning to think of starting for myself—that is, in a small way—repairs and such like. My boss was a first class man. He told me he would throw plenty of odd jobs in my way if I wanted to quit journey work, and said it was probable if I staid with him I should be foreman in another year or so. That day—I mean the day he was telling me this—I was clearing away a scaffolding. Perhaps I was forgetting myself a little thinking over what I had best do; anyhow, a heavy plank slipped in lowering and broke my arm—compound fracture the doctors called it. The boss was very kind, says he!

"William don't fret yourself. Just take your time. You shall draw your wages right along. When you get your work again I shall let you pay half the money back—the other half I will stand. I do this," says he, "because you have worked steady and faithfully in my employ, and I reckon you are about my best man."

I think I would have been willing to have my other arm broken just to hear the boss say that over again. It took all the pains away.

The fracture was a bad one and was a long time healing. My wages came regular. My wife was always cheerful, and the children—one a baby—were as hearty as they could be the whole time. I used to sit and plan all sorts of things. I was going to buy a few lots just out of New York, in the country, and build a snug house myself. Then we should have something to tie to. I would work on my own account and we would soon make up for lost time. Before I got out, there came an account of great failures—bankers and banking houses, and big real estate men, and all that sort of thing. I felt safe enough. I knew I could go to work for the boss as soon as my arm was strong, and I felt sure he would be all right anyhow.

I got round at last. When I went to the shop to report I found a third of the men had been discharged—all the unmarried ones. The boss was a changed man. Says he:

"William I am glad to see you able to work. You shall have a chance as long as I have any."

In four months he failed. He gave me a first-rate recommendation, and I got another place. In less than six months my second boss went up. Then my troubles came thick and fast. I could not get steady employment, and had to draw out, little by little, the money put away in the savings bank, till only fifty dollars remained. I meant to keep that against sickness. The bank broke and I never saw my fifty dollars.

I took a cheaper place. It was a bad business. My wife got sick in it, and my oldest daughter. The little girl died. That broke me down. I could not help it; I told my wife I did not care if everybody died after that. I worked when I could get work. I pawned everything we could spare. My silver watch, my wife's pretty things, our sheets, pillow-cases, they all went pretty much for nothing. We lived along somehow in this way up to last December. I tried everywhere for work—any kind of work. I tried all over the city; all over Brooklyn; in Jersey city, in Newark, in Westchester, everywhere. Up to this time I never had a thought of doing wrong.

I did not even think of asking for help. Folks said times would soon mend, and they kept saying so month after month, year after year, but in-

stead of times mending, times grew worse. One afternoon, a day or two before Christmas, I spoke to a middle aged man who was about entering his house—a handsome, elegant house—and asked him if he would stop a moment and hear what I had to say. I liked his looks, and I saw a little girl at the window smiling as he came up the steps. She was just the size of my little daughter I lost, and her smile was just such a smile as she used to give me when I came home from my work. I said to myself, "that man must be a kind-hearted man, when the little girl smiles in that way to him." It was this which gave me courage to accost him in the way I did. I had no idea of begging. I thought perhaps he might take some interest in me and advise me how to help myself or put me in the way of it, especially if I told him about my little girl. The man turned sharp on me and asked me what I wanted in a quick, angry tone. His whole looks changed in an instant. You could not believe it was the same person; I did not appear to mind it; I just repeated what I had said. "Have got nothing for you," says he, very rough, and opened his door very quick and shut it with a bang after him. I could not help stopping on the sidewalk to look at the little girl; I could see her father come to the window, take her in his arms and kiss her ever so many times. It made me feel very low. I had no money, and there was nothing to eat in the house, I walked up and down the avenue till near midnight. I did not speak to a soul; I kept thinking what would become of us; I saw the fine carriages taking ladies to the theatre and opera and to parties, and I said to myself: "Is it possible that they can have any idea of what people are suffering close to them?" I did not feel bitter that night—it was afterwards I felt bitter—but I did feel very low and sorrowful. What could I say to my wife? We had never been without something to eat before. The next day I got a little job, and my wife had a quarter of a ton of coal sent to her and a little tea, by a society agent, and we fought over New Year's and hoped for the best. There was no heat to hope for; there was nothing to hope for whatever.

I used to say to my wife she never need fear for a comfortable support so long as I had my health. When I heard folks tell of such things as afterwards happened to me, I would say: "Peter's why Peter drinks up half his wages every week—reason enough why his family is in distress." "Williams? why Williams wouldn't work more than half the time when work was plenty and he was wanted; no wonder he gets shut off now." But I didn't feel sure what I could do, if only my health was spared. Well, my health was spared. I never had such health; strong, tough, not an ache or a pain—only starvation. Starvation for my wife, starvation for the two little children. I can't believe it now when I think of it. When it comes to that, you don't have much pride left. Betwixt starvation and beggary—you may not think so—but I tell you nature says: "Beg?" No matter what pride says. And what is begging? What makes you say "begging?" I ask for work, I can't get it, because you have none to give me. I ask for food. Why shouldn't I get that if you have it to give me? Well, I began to beg. Nearly all day I sought work. In the afternoon and evening I asked for help. I asked everybody, men and women, young and old, and was refused by everybody almost. Sometimes a man would throw me a quarter as he would throw a bone to a dog. That hurt me worse than the roughest refusal.

Sometimes a fine lady would turn pale and scream for a policeman when I approached, and before I had said a word. For all that some pleasant things happened. One day I was walking up Broadway above Twenty-third Street. A well dressed gentleman turned into it from a side street just as I passed. I spoke to him. He looked at me quietly, and said:

"My friend, in a sense, I am just as bad off as you are. You can have no idea of the miserable condition of thousands in this city who are reputed to be rich, and are keeping up a desperate struggle for appearance without money and little prospects of getting any. We are all in the same boat, and must bear and forbear with each other." He handed me a quarter

of a dollar, saying: "I have less than a dollar about me, and you shall have your share of it."

Said I: "It is not the money I thank you for, but for the kind words you speak to me which have driven many wicked thoughts out of my head."

He was not the only one who was considerate, I met several, and when I encountered one of that sort, I always went home content—almost happy. You see it seemed as if I was not so much alone in the world—I and my wife and my children—when folks talked that way to me.

My wife never got to be strong again after we lost our little girl. She didn't complain. I often wished she would complain. But the children—how God takes care of children! I mean poor wretched children. Why they will frolic and play and enjoy themselves and be merry as merry as can be when they are but half fed and half clothed. God has fixed that.

Do you know by degrees I began to lose all hold on things. I saw nothing clear it was all through a mist. My wife and I used to be regular at church, and the children went to Sunday-school as long as their clothes held out, and we went as long as we were fit to go.

The minister came to see us when my little girl died, and he talked to us a great deal, and told us we ought to be thankful for the time. I tried to be thankful, but it got so hard I could not stand it. I wasn't thankful, I couldn't be thankful. None of these people gave us any help.

They told us to go to this and to that society, where they said, everything was provided. One society declared that we did not come under their rules because I was an able-bodied man. And another society said they could not help because my wife was not a widow, and another that we were out of their precinct. All the winter we got for aid only that quarter of a ton of coal and tea. Everything seemed dark. It was night all the time. I couldn't make myself believe I had ever been a respectable man, who had earned a good living and who had had a happy home, a dear, good wife and three darling children. I felt I was a loafer—an outlaw—with no home to call a home; with a poor broken-hearted, broken-down wife, two half-starved, weak, sickly children.

Things began to dance around unsteady, zig-zag. I tried to keep hold of some thing. I prayed to the Lord for help. Once I prayed all night—the whole night—I tell you. It did not do any good; it made me worse. My wife was patient and gentle all the while. That made me worse, too. I knew it was not the right feeling; I knew at the time, but I was too far gone to have right feelings. I didn't want to have any. I felt savage and bitter towards all the world, and my brain kept whirling and whirling—you can't imagine how I felt. Folks looked as if they were afraid of me and the policemen watched me when I went along. What had I done? I hadn't done anything.

What is the use of my going on with this sad talk? I could keep it up for a week. You have had enough of it.

One evening after ten o'clock I walked up Broadway, and then across up Madison Avenue. I left my wife sick with a low fever. There was nothing in the house for her. That evening it seemed as if the sky was made of brass. Sometimes I could look up at it and take comfort—it showed me a world far off where it seemed I might find rest. That evening it was brass all brass overhead—stone, all stone everywhere else. Not a human creature I addressed but what rejected me with contempt or avoided me with terrified looks. I walked very slowly up Madison Avenue. I saw a stout gentleman descending from his stoop. I knew he was one of the rich men of New York. Twice I had solicited help from him and had been repulsed. I looked up and down the street, there was no one in sight; I went up to him and asked him respectfully to help me. He was frightened, but spoke out boldly and told me to get out of his way. I took hold of his collar and stopped him. I said: "I want five dollars quick." He made no resistance but trembled all over.

"Take everything I have got," said he, "but don't hurt me." "I want five dollars," said I. His hand shook badly when he

pulled out his pocketbook. He handed me the money and I turned down a side street and walked home.

It seemed, as I went along, as if the avenging angel was following close behind me. How could I look my meek innocent wife in the face?

When I reached home, instead of finding her in bed she was sitting up waiting for me. The table was neatly set, a nice supper was spread, there was a fire in the stove, and the teakettle was boiling over it.

"What do you think has happened?" she cried out. Just after you went two ladies came in. They asked me a great many questions. They belong to one of the societies that declined to give us assistance. They read our case in the entry book. They had everything put in order, made the children eat a good supper and put them to bed. They talked and surprised you would be when you came in, and they laughed merrily, and one of the ladies said her husband would get you a place as night-watchman till you could get work at your trade. They left a tract. Just read this piece of poetry:

With trembling hands I took the paper and read—well, here it is:

"I say to thee, do thou repeat To the first man that thou mayest meet In lane Highway or open street. That he, and we, and all men move Under a canopy of love, As broad as the blue sky above; That weary deserts we may tread, A dread labyrinth may thread, Through dark ways underground be led

"Yet, if we will our Guide obey, The darkest path, the darkest way, Shall issue out in heavenly day

"And we, on divers shores now cast, Shall meet, our perilous voyage past, All in our Fathers house at last."

"Why William cried my wife, what makes you look so? Are you sick? Do tell me, what is the matter?" At this instant the door was suddenly pushed open, and two policemen entered.

"Here's our man," says one. You must go with us."

"What does this mean? Oh, William tell me what does this mean?"

"It means this I answered, taking out the five-dollar bill and handing it to the policeman. "I robbed a man of it."

"You admit that, do you?" said one of them.

"I admit it," says I, "and am ready to go with you."

My wife fell on my neck, and clung to me so tight I had hard work to unclasp her hands.

"Look at the children do take one look at the children, do take one look at the children she cried. I shook my head I couldn't stand every thing you know. I heard one of the officers say to the other:

"It's a hard case." "That one turned to my wife, and said "Cheer up, my good woman; I dare say it may all be explained."

I could have fallen on my knees and blessed him for softening the blow to her.

The grand jury was in session, and I was indicted the next day and tried the Monday after. The man whose five dollars I took swore very hard. He said he was sure I placed a revolver at his head and all that sort of thing. A kindhearted lawyer undertook to defend me by presenting what he called extenuating circumstances. I was sworn and told the story just as it was. The jury had to find me guilty of course. But the Judge the Recorder. I believe they call him—was very hard. He sentenced me for twenty years; he said society must be protected, and that he was resolved to break up this highway robbery business, and should make an example of me—ha! ha! ha! an example—and my wife and children!

FOURTH OF JULY.—We accosted a typical Tarboro small boy:

"What's the matter with your eye, bub?"

"Fourth of July, sir."

"How?"

"Bill Jones bet Sam White he could hit my nose with a fire cracker, 'thout striking the eye. Well, it carried up my nose an' pocketed in my eye."

"What did you do for him?"

"Why, I straddled his blind with my fist an' he passed out, an' that broke up the game."—Tarboro Southerner.

OPEN BACK SHIRTS.

[From the Detroit Free Press.]

They were a sleepy lot on the 4 o'clock car going down Michigan avenue yesterday. The day was hot, the dusk thick, and only one man, and he beyond the prime of life; opened his eyes as a woman crowded in, with a long paper box under her arm. His eyes opened a little more as she sat down nearer him, and presently they widened to their fullest extent as he read the label on the box: "One dozen open-backed shirts." He glanced from the box to the female and back, and groaned out:

"Land o' love! but what will come next?"

She looked around at him as if she feared a case of colic would come next, and he brightened up a little and said:

"Well, I've worn 'em for a year, and I know they are handy and reliable. If my daughters want to get half dozen a piece I shan't cry over it."

"Were you speaking to me?" she asked, after seeing that no one else seemed interested.

"I sorter was and sorter wasn't," he replied, as he worked a faint smile to his face. "I was saying that it's wonderful how much the inventive genius of this country has done for us on the shirt question."

She hitched away a little.

"Twenty years ago," he mused, as he hitched after her, "if any man had told me that the dormant genius of this country would soon rouse up and invent a button-behind shirt I'd have looked upon him as crazy. But dormant genius was all O. K. She roused, she invented, and I've got one of them very shirts on."

The look she gave him ought to have torn him to pieces, but it didn't.

"One year ago," he calmly resumed, "if anybody had told me that the gentle sex would soon demand open-back shirts I'd have gone a fishing and never returned. But the epoch has come in sight—she's right here. I can recommend them as boss."

"Who are you talking to, sir?" she demanded in awful voice.

"To you, madam. I was saying that if I wear 'em there is no reason why you shouldn't."

"I appeal to these passengers!" she excitedly exclaimed.

"So do I," he answered. "Every body in this car with a button-behind shirt on will please stand up until I can count noses."

The old man stood up. He was all alone. He looked around in a sorrowful way, and said:

"The noses have it, and the resolution is laid on the table. However, I'll stick to mine, an' I don't believe this woman here will go back on her dozen till she has given 'em fair show. Which side of the neck do they button on, madam?"

The yells that followed brought in the driver. The old man was pointed out as a drunkard and a woman-insultor, and the driver was feeling for his neck when the astonished man cried out:

"Who's drunk? Who insulted anybody?"

"He kept talking about shirts!" screamed the woman with the box.

"And you've got a box full!" shouted the man.

"I haint no—"

She turned up the box and saw the label for the first time. She grew red, then white, and there was an awful silence. Ripping off the cover she exhibited a bolt of mosquito netting nestled away in the box. Nay, she held it up, and even shook it at the old man. He smiled softly, nodded his head a dozen times, and blandly said:

"Correct, madam—I tumble to it. That doesn't look like a dozen button-behind shirts, and I'm grieved if I offended. Put 'em back, madam, get that you ever saw me and wear any kind you are a mind to.