

THE ALAMANCE GLEANER.

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NO. 31

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A Promise

It Was Well Kept and Did Great Good

By EVERETT P. CLARKE

About the middle of the nineteenth century, when the wild and woolly west deserved the appellation, a girl in a frontiersman's outfit was getting supper in anticipation of her father's coming home from attending to his daily duties. She was about fifteen years old and seemed to be made up principally of arms and legs. Nevertheless her face was pretty, and she gave promise after passing theilly age of making a comely woman. While she was standing over the cook stove she heard a clattering of horse's hoofs without, which grew rapidly nearer, and in a few moments a horseman galloped up to the door and threw himself from his animal, which he struck on the hunch and sent on its way.



led him to an upper story of the house and put him in a closet. Then, going below, she waited breathlessly for what might happen. But a few minutes elapsed before half a dozen men broke into the clearing and came toward the house. All passed on but one, who pulled up at the open door and called out to the girl: "Seen a man go by here just now?" "Yes."

"Which way did he go?" "I heard his horse gallopin' into the timber over there," pointing. The man started off and joined the others. After awhile the fugitive came downstairs. He was not over twenty-five years old and good looking, though his face was ashy pale. He went up to the girl, took her hand in his and said feelingly: "You've saved my life."

"What did they want with you?" she asked. "They wanted to hang me." "What for?" "Well, I'm the slickest gambler in the territory. I went into the settlement down the creek and cleaned 'em all out. Besides, I've done more shootin' than all the rest of 'em put together. They decided that I am too desperate a character to have around, so they concluded to get rid of me." The girl listened to this with a sober countenance. "What makes you look so sorry?" asked the man. "I don't like to think of you as a gambler."

"Stop gamblin' and shootin' and all the other things." He made no reply to this, but seemed to have been deeply moved. He stood looking out through the open door in the direction the vigilantes had taken and listening. Presently he said: "I reckon I'd better get out of here while I have a chance. They'll overtake my horse and, seein' no rider on him, will know that they've passed me. They'll come back for me."

He took the girl's hand and looked earnestly into her eyes. "Say, little gal, if it hadn't been for you I'd be awagin' now. You own the rest of my life. For you I'll stop gamblin' and shootin' and the other things. Goodby."

He bent down, kissed her, then struck out for the timber on that side of the clearing from which he had come. In a gambling house a man was dealing faro to a motley crowd, few of whom possessed some claims to respectability, while the most of them were rough. A young clergyman, whose calling was denoted solely by a white necktie, entered and announced that services would be held that evening in the building commonly used for a dance hall and he hoped that all in the room would make it a point to attend. No one paid any attention to him. Presently his attention was arrested by a girl of twenty who entered the room, walked up to an elderly man who sat at one of the tables where a game of poker was being played and placing her hand on his shoulder, said persuasively: "Come away, father."

The clergyman watched her, looking into her face inquiringly. When she spoke he started. Memory seemed to be working within him. Then suddenly something was recalled, and his face lighted up. "You go home with your daughter," he said to the man the girl was trying to get away, "and I'll play your hand for you."

Every one at the table looked at the speaker wondering, for a clergyman to gamble, even for another, was remarkable. The man he addressed looked up at him curiously and saw something in the resolute face that led him to obey. He rose from the table and gave the clergyman his seat. The girl, too, looked at the latter curiously, then took her father by the arm and was leading him away when the clergyman asked: "How much have you lost?" "All I had—\$1,200."

The father and daughter passed out, and the game went on. There were three men at the table besides the one in the white necktie, and every one of the three was a card sharp. There were old tricks and new tricks practiced by the sharps. The clergyman seemed a bit unfamiliar with the new, but thoroughly versed in the old. However, he had not played long before all schemes were alike familiar to him. The game was simply one of wits against wits. When a player was detected in cheating he returned his winnings. He was not abashed, and no one objected. As the game went on a number of persons stood about the table watching it, especially interested in the clergyman's sleight of hand. Slowly, but surely, the pile of bank bills and gold pieces before him increased. It was not only his skill in card manipulating that attracted attention, but that one of his cuttings should be so versed in the ways of card sharps. At last he called a halt and counted his winnings. They figured \$1,200. Shoving the \$600 over to the others, he scooped the rest into his handkerchief and, rising from the table, said: "Gentlemen, I trust you will all be at the services this evening."

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson XII.—Third Quarter, For Sept. 20, 1914.

Text of the Lesson, Matt. xxv, 31-46. Memory Verses, 34-36—Golden Text, Matt. xxv, 43—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

To understand this lesson as to the interpretation of it, the time when and the parties concerned, we must notice carefully the first verse and the words, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." That defines clearly the time when, and also that the judgment referred to is not the judgment of the saints, His redeemed ones, for when He shall come in His glory they shall come with Him, the Old Testament as well as the New Testament saints. If we may make that distinction. Let the Holy Spirit tell you about this as you read Zech. xiv, 5; Col. iii, 4; I Thess. iii, 13; Rev. iii, 21.

Then, as to the people to be judged, note the second verse of the lesson, "Before Him shall be gathered all nations." (Would anything be more clear and plain in this connection than the statements in Joel iii, 1, 2, that in connection with the restoration and deliverance of His people, Israel, He will gather all nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat and judge them because of their treatment of Israel? In Zeph. iii, 8, He says that it is His determination to gather the nations and pour upon them His indignation, and in the rest of that chapter He calls upon Israel to be glad and rejoice, for He will be mighty in their midst and get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

In Zech. xiv, 2, He says that He will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; in verse 4 that He will stand again upon the Mount of Olives, and in verse 9 that after that He will be king over all the earth. Let us then be clear about this—that in this judgment among those to be judged will not be found His body, the church, for she shall be with Him, nor Israel, for she is not reckoned among the nations (Num. xxiii, 9). There is no mention of any resurrection of the dead, just or unjust, so it is not the judgment of the saints who shall never come into judgment for sin (John v, 24), because that was settled on Calvary, but shall be judged for their works after the

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