THE HIDDEN CITY.

By WALTER H. M'DOUGALL.

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[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER XI.

OUT OF DARKNESS.

He discovered that he overlooked the great estufa.

When they reached Listah's chosen retreat, after threading the maze of the many devious passages, the priest counseled Eric to take some food and lie upon his bed while he reconnoitered. So Listah left him, and he laid himself down on the rude couch. He could not sleep, of course, for his mind was too agitated.

It was now midday, as Listah had told him, and a little farther down the passage in which the old recluse had made his home there shone one slim white ray of light from above, feebly illuminating one little spot. He went to it and saw a small opening in the wall a few feet above his head. He stood looking directly upward along the ray of light and saw that it came through a trapdoor in the roof of an apartment above.

Placing several large stones together, he was enabled to peer through the opening, and discovered that he overlooked the great estufa, the sacred council chamber and secret room of the Kabilo. It was deserted and dark, but his eye, accustomed now to intense gloom, could discern every feature of the great room into which he had never before penetrated.

It was arranged like an amphitheater, with a capacity of perhaps two hundred people. In the center stood the hideous image of Chalcu, the god to whom the fearful human sacrifices were devoted. Barbaric and rude, misshapen and ugly as it was, the image awoke from its terrible import a thrill of momentary awe even in his bosom. How many lives had been given to this ancient idol; how many fair throats had poured forth their virgin blood upon its altars in the long ages of his dread reign?

The image had been, he could see, newly painted, and the gold and silver upon it polished until it glowed in the darkness with a semblance of life. Two immense emeralds were its eyes. They were turned toward him and seemed full of dark fire, as though the god saw him spying there. The effect of dignity was lessened by the row of ancient but very precious sea shells that formed the teeth of this terror of Atzlan. They made its smile more terrible to its votaries perhaps, but to Eric they reduced the god's dignity to grotesqueness. This element of the grotesque grew upon him as he gazed at it standing there, solemnly, like a Mardi Gras relic, a monument to the folly and the debasement of man.

As he looked the light grew dim and faded suddenly. A figure came down the ladder, then another, and he saw Chalpa and his assistant, Tepelpec, a weazened, pockmarked villain, standing before him by the side of the idol.

Chalpa examined it carefully and remarked:

"He is dry now. We can take him out and set him on his pedestal at once. How handsome he looks in his new dress!"

"He is delighted at the prospect," rejoined Tepelpec. "I'll wager no Katun feast was ever graced by such a beauty as Lela. The god looks hungry, too, methinks."

"Ha!" ejaculated Chalpa. "Fifty-two years of fasting would make even Chalcu hungry. It comes all too rarely, this feast. It should occur every twenty years. But he will feast well and nobly! Is everything prepared?"

"Everything, although the victim is far from feeling disposed to go willingly. She will not drink the sacred aitsi, and I fear that she will make us trouble to the last."

"Perhaps," replied Chalpa with a grin full of triumph and hate. "But go she shall; quietly if she will, or in our tender hands if she is unruly. And the people—are they quiet, think you?"

"Too quiet; I fear there is a strong undercurrent of feeling against this sacrifice which only needs stirring to become an open protest. They seem to think that you have taken some unfair advantage of the girl." As Tepelpec said this he cast a quick, sly glance at his superior.

Chalpa started and glared at his assistant:

"What do you mean? Do you dare to say"— He hesitated.

"Nothing, father, nothing, only—I have heard a word or two now and then that seemed ominous."

"By Chalcu, I would like to hear such a word! The lips that uttered it would utter no more lies. And remember, keep watch over your own tongue lest it slip and lead you to destruction."

"I speak to no one," answered Tepelpec, "but to you. From you, I think, I need conceal nothing. We, I hope, understand one another. I know that you have long desired to be revenged upon the girl, and that you would hesitate at nothing, my master, to accomplish your ends—even unfairness"——

"You dog!" cried Chalpa, "do you dare to think that I would cheat in this solemn and fearful duty?"

"Pray talk not of duty, dear father; here, alone, we need conceal nothing. I am not your slave! I fear you not, and I dare tell you that I think you a most admirable master of trickery, one who would steal the snake's fangs from him without his knowing it. Believe me, I admire you, and I am proud to aid you in your plans."

Chalpa, pale with rage, sprang upon the smaller man, seized him by the throat and shook him as a terrier shakes a rat.

"Miserable son of a polecat, thy drivelings bespeak thee an idiot! I have a mind to kill you now at Chalcu's feet!"

Tepelpec's eyes and tongue were protruding when Chalpa cast him loose, and he staggered for a few moments.

"Kill me, Chalpa," he cried, "aye, and in one hour the people will know how you swindled them! They will see the crafty Chalpa in a new light, as one who seeks his private ends in their public matters, who takes their maidens to the feet of the god because they will not love him, who juggles with the sacred dice and with such solemn mien tricks the simple worshipers. Ah, they will relish learning how they have been deceived!"

Chalpa stood thunderstruck; such effrontery he knew, of course, was backed by knowledge of his evil ways.

"There is a person," Tepelpec went on, "who knows it all and has the proofs. If I disappear he is instructed to publish the truth immediately. So, my father, when you kill me you merely pull the whole edifice of fraud down upon your wise head. You will not be so foolish. No, you will cherish Tepelpec as your aid and assistant, who can help you well. You need a faithful, trustworthy accomplice in the game you are playing, for you cannot carry things with such a high hand against the people as you did against Quetzal—they are too many. Iklapel and Kulcan have many friends—they will not all believe so readily our story that we saw Quetzal go up the cliff and disappear. They will suspect you perhaps, and you need help to deceive them."

Eric could see that Chalpa was confounded. Full of vexation, he hung between his wrath and his fear for awhile. Then, assuming an air of unconcern, he exclaimed:

"So, friend, you play the spy upon me! Well, so be it: know then that I will stick at nothing to win the place and power I covet. You can help me, and you shall be repaid. Let us now hasten, for tomorrow is the day that will make or mar our fortunes."

"Everything is ready and awaiting only your orders. Kulcan, Iklapel and Jan-ila are confined, as you commanded, in separate rooms in the temple. The old man is obdurate; he swears we have killed Quetzal, but Kulcan may yet yield to save his precious life."

The cruel, hungry smile crossed Chalpa's face.

"He will not save it even then, the coward! I am sorry I did not place him beside the false Quetzal; they would lie beneath the water together and cease to vex us!"

"The maiden is at the house of her grandmother, old Intzu, whom I have commanded to prepare her for her fate. She is haughty and will not speak to me. I visited her but now, but I saw her not. Still she is well guarded by men armed with Quetzal's axes. We can thank him for that blessing."

"I will talk with her," said Chalpa, his eyes lighting with a steely glitter in the gloom. "She will listen to me! Hark! What was that?"

It was a slight noise that made both start, caused by Listah, who, returning along the passage, stumbled over a stone. He stopped at once, seeing Eric's upraised finger, and stood motionless. Chalpa and Tepelpec, like two alarmed rats, peered in every direction in silence for a while. Then Tepelpec said:

"It was nothing—a loose stone perhaps." They noiselessly ascended the ladder and disappeared.

All the while Eric's hand had been on his weapon, but he was loath to kill them in cold blood, although he had fully determined to slaughter Chalpa as he would a rattlesnake or a rabid dog simply to rid the earth of a vicious and dangerous animal. It had become simply a question of self defense, and although he had been long in arriving at such a decision he was resolved to carry it out. In this he was justified, inasmuch as Chalpa had twice attempted his life, and would certainly kill him if he had another opportunity. He could not invoke the law in Atzlan with any sense of security, and he would be his own law and rid the city of a base scoundrel.

When the two had gone he stepped down and related their conversation to Listah. When he had concluded the latter said:

"Tepelpec is right—there is much objection to the sacrifice. People are saying it is time to abolish it. They say that Quetzal was averse to it, and they believe he will return in time to prevent it. But there is a strong party in favor of it too. They seem about divided. Some fear Chalpa and side with him."

"Did you see Iklapel?"

"Yes," replied Listah. "He is guarded by my nephew Aza, and he permitted me to speak to the high priest. He was filled with sorrow, for he thought you dead. He did not believe that you had left us, as Chalpa has said, but he feared that you were murdered. When I told him you were here he almost wept for joy. He brightened up and appeared years younger. He has told me how to get to the vault under the temple by the secret door which you know, he says, and we are to go there and be ready to rescue Lela tomorrow noon. He thinks it wise to wait until then."

"Did you see Lela?" asked Eric, his patience giving way entirely.

"No; she is with her grandmother. But Bari, my wife, is one of the weavers and is allowed to see her; you can send her a message and comfort her."

"Let us do so at once," cried Eric. "She must be told, for that her heart is breaking I know too well. Go to her and tell her all. Give her this knife and tell her to use it upon Chalpa if he becomes too dangerous, but also tell her to be cautious and keep our secret well. Go quickly; I will await here patiently."

Listah turned off, Gilbert following him along the passage, but slowly. The old man, accustomed to the dark ways, could move rapidly, and he soon vanished. In less than thirty minutes he reappeared smiling.

"She is happy," he said. "Chalpa has been there, but she taunted and defied him, and he feared to touch her because the people would know of it and be shocked. She is now sacred in their eyes. Jan-ila has been released, for they think him not dangerous, I suppose, and he will be here soon with food and your long thunder tube, if he can bring it without detection. Everybody is busy preparing for tomorrow, and perhaps he will not be observed. We must meet him. Follow me."

They walked down the crypt until they came to a spot where there was an opening into an unused apartment; the stones had fallen in and choked the tunnel, but there was room for a man to squeeze through. Once in the room above it was easy to pass into another.

"Here comes Jan-ila at last," said Eric as the youth began to descend the ladder from the room above. He carried with much difficulty a huge bundle of firewood—light branches, such as were used as fuel for the temple. When he reached the foot of the ladder he fell on his knees and embraced Eric's legs with many protestations of joy.

"I did not believe you dead, my master. I knew you would return. I have brought the rifle and the cartridge belt; now we can rescue Iklapel and Kulcan. There are many who are with you. Chalpa is feared more than he is loved, and when they see you many will desert him. Let us hurry!"

"Hasten slowly, my lad. We will wait for the proper moment; then with due effect and the pomp of our surroundings we will crush friend Chalpa so that he will not rise again."

"See," said Jan-ila, breaking into his bundle of fagots, in which he had concealed the rifle, "I have brought food and candles."

"That's more to the point, for I am nearly starved," answered his master. "But first we will go to the chamber under the temple. There we can be near Iklapel and be ready at any moment. Show us the way, Listah!"

They followed the old man, who held a candle aloft, and after a journey of perhaps a half hour came to a stop before an apparently solid wall of large stones. Eric recognized the great slab in the center as a door similar to the one Iklapel had opened when they had inspected the treasure vault.

They passed through and along the passage again until they came upon the treasure house of Atzlan, filled to overflowing with the accumulated wealth of dead, forgotten nations. Even old Listah lost his stoical reserve and burst into astonished exclamations, while Jan-ila walked around among the various ancient, almost priceless relics with open eyed and open mouth in wonder. It was truly a remarkable spectacle. More wealth in gold and silver lay there unguarded, unheeded, than the banks of the entire world could command. Its introduction into the commerce of the United States would revolutionize all the markets on earth! Half—yes, one-eighth—of it was a colossal fortune; the wealth that Pizarro, Cortez and their followers ravished from Peru and Mexico was equaled and surpassed by this treasure.

"It is the treasure of the gods," said Listah finally. "It belongs to them—yes, and it belongs to Quetzal!"

"It is not for us at any rate," rejoined Jan-ila. "I would not know what to do with it if I had it."

"Nor I," Listah replied, "but Quetzal knows, I would wager, and many wonderful things he could make for us. For me one good ax, or knife of his wondrous, new metal that he calls iron is worth all this great pile."

There was a strong fascination in the hoard to Eric. He felt a sort of miserly greed creep over him as his eyes roved over the mass; the old vases full of gold dust, strangely shaped utensils and furniture, meaningless trappings of all sorts, shapes and sizes aroused his antiquarian interest and his cupidity at the same time, for there were fortunes in single objects lying there upon the tiled pavement; relics of the prehistoric past that nations would vie with one another to secure—not for their intrinsic value alone, but for their ethnological interest.

A great golden calendar, a circular disk, with strange obsolete characters all over its surface, lay against the wall. What a prize for a museum! And he noticed several figures of animals, well modeled in gold, and among them stood a regal elephant with greatly curved tusks. He looked sharply at it, and as he stared he realized that it was a model in miniature of the extinct mammoth!

"There are pictures of them in the sacred books," said Jan-ila when Eric had pointed out this wonder, "for I have seen them often. The pictures show men spearing them and being trampled under feet by these same monsters."

They lost no more time, but started at once for the chamber under the temple, for Eric remembered well the way now, and they reached it in a few minutes. Noiselessly they entered it, and the two priests reverently, for both had been there before on solemn occasions. This room held the ark of the Atzlan faith, Quetzalcoatl's vessel, and it was a sacred apartment, into which none but priests ever ventured. Listah extinguished the candle as soon as they were fairly in the cellarlike chamber. A few narrow shafts of light shot through the crevices, but they could see that the light was dim and that darkness was rapidly approaching. They heard footsteps upon the light flooring above, but they ceased a moment later.

They waited a full hour in deep silence and almost complete darkness; then Eric reached out and touching Jan-ila upon the shoulder drew him close and whispered:

"You go up the ladder and lift the trapdoor silently and carefully. If no one is in sight, slip out into the room and then outdoors to find Iklapel. If he is there, call him softly and tell him we are here, ready to act. Be very careful, my boy, and don't get nervous."

Without answering Jan-ila quickly mounted the ladder, and after a moment's pause cautiously and almost imperceptibly opened the trapdoor. They saw him disappear through it, and it was closed softly.

An hour elapsed, and then Eric went up, and lifting the trapdoor peered out. A dark form, and one which he did not recognize, sat in the doorway motionless. Its back was toward him. He raised the door higher; he could see nobody in the room. While he stood there wondering, looking upward, he saw the opening in the floor above fill up with a dark object, and he quickly closed the trapdoor and held his head close under it to listen. Not a sound reached him, but after a long interval he felt the door move. He drew away from it and descended the ladder. A pair of legs appeared, and then the form of Jan-ila, who closed the door after him. He had caused no more noise than a serpent in all this time. Grasping Eric's hand he whispered:

"Iklapel was upon the roof, and I went to him; I could have escaped down the outside pathway, but I wished to return to you, for you will need me. Aza the Sleepy One guards Iklapel; Kulcan is confined in Chalpa's house, and Iklapel fears that they will prevail upon him to side with Chalpa after all. The people are greatly excited and ready for almost anything. Kulcan's attitude will influence very many, and I think it well to inform him of your safety. Aza could be influenced, I believe, to come over to us and carry word to Kulcan, for he—Kulcan—will never weaken if he knows you are alive. What thinks my wise master?"

Eric pondered awhile; he knew Kulcan's weakness and shared Iklapel's fear, yet he dared not depend upon Aza, a tool of Chalpa's, and one who might betray them. He knew that the element of surprise would be the greatest factor in the next day's work, and he desired most of all that Chalpa should remain in ignorance of his escape until the last moment. Many plans came to him. At first the thought of sending Listah or Jan-ila to Chalpa under pretense of submission came into his mind, but he feared to lose the services of either in this crisis. Other plans as weak presented themselves, were dismissed, and then he thought of Lela. He rapidly scanned his chances of getting to her. Jan-ila informed him that she was in charge of several old women, the chief among them being old Bari, Listah's wife, and by her help he fancied he could obtain access to his betrothed. The plan perfected, the next thing was to act.

After unfolding his scheme to the others he exchanged garments with Jan-ila and rubbed earth upon his face to darken his complexion, and buckling his revolver upon him ascended the ladder. Aza still sat motionless, probably in a sound sleep, in the doorway, but he cautiously and silently closed the door and as noiselessly climbed the next ladder. There were three stories to the temple, each with its ladder, which creaked under his weight as he climbed them. On the top, at the sacred space wherein stood the temple, he saw Iklapel standing motionless. The old priest seemed lost in meditation, but he heard the sound of an approaching visitor and yet turned not until Eric laid a hand upon his shoulder. Then he started, for he recognized Eric, and grasping his hand cried:

"Ah, my brother! It gives me strength and hope to see you, although I knew you were safe."

"Yes, safe, dear friend, and we will crush this rattlesnake, Chalpa, forever ere tomorrow's sun sets. I am going to send word to Kulcan to be firm and yield nothing to Chalpa, and I think we are going to come out victors even more easily than you expect. Chalpa is the one man we need bother about. When he is out of the way the rest may be managed. But, old friend, you must take some rest, for you will need your strength tomorrow. It is now late."

"Yes, it grows late; but, see, the people crowd outdoors; they will not go to their beds; they cannot sleep."

"All the better. I can pass among them unnoticed, for I am going to Lela to send her to Kulcan."

"It is a dangerous errand," said Iklapel.

"Not very. Even were I recognized I don't think any man would stop me; I carry many lives in my hand, Iklapel, and they know it. But go to bed and sleep, for we are safe."

He went down the broad, graded descent and reached the ground unobserved. There was nobody near the temple; the priests were busy preparing for the festival on the morrow or about to seek rest. Farther on the people sat in groups about their doors or upon the lower range of roofs. Those among whom he passed glanced at him, but Jan-ila's blanket was close up about his ears, and they did not recognize him. He reached Lela's door and saw that a light burned within; he halted, at a loss how to summon Bari forth, but at that moment Eltza, now a large girl, came from the spring with a jar of water upon her head, and was about to enter the house when he stopped her.

"Maiden, is Bari, the wife of Listah, within?"

"Yes," she answered, looking sharply at him, but not knowing him, for his face was strange to her and dark.

"Tell her, child, that one is here with a message from Listah, who would see her at once."

She went in, and in a moment old Bari came out. There was a pale crescent moon low in the sky, and its light fell upon her face as she looked at him with a frightened gaze. He held up a warning finger as he stooped to hide his height.

"Bari, do not speak; I come from Listah to ask you whether you are still his wife and friend or Chalpa's slave?"

"Why, what mean you?" she exclaimed. "I saw my husband today; he need send me no such message. I do his bidding and no other's."

"But you guard Lela, who is Chalpa's victim, the sacrifice to the god?"

"Aye, but Listah did not forbid me, and it is my duty."

"But, think you, would Quetzal like to see you preparing his bride for death?"

"He has gone and left her—his she was, and he will protect her. I do no wrong in thinking it."

"Yes, he will protect her, and you shall help him," he said, standing up before her and revealing his face. "Do not start—I am Quetzal. I have returned, but it must not be known until tomorrow. This you must do. Tell her privately that she must ask Chalpa to permit her to have one last conversation with Kulcan before she dies. She must go to Chalpa's house, where her brother is confined, and tell him I am here and will smite the rattlesnake tomorrow. Tell him to yield not, nor be discouraged, for he will be safe."

"Kulcan is not at Chalpa's house," said Bari. "The priest has taken him to your dwelling, out beyond the city, and is with him there, for he says he will occupy that house himself hereafter."

"The deuce he has!" ejaculated Eric. "That is cool! Very well, she must go there at once. Some of your women can attend her, of course, and conduct her home on her return. But there is no time to waste; she must go immediately; hasten now, but be cautious."

Before she could reach the door it opened, and Lela came forth. Going straight to Eric, she threw her arms about his neck and said:

"My own! Something told me you were here. Blessed, true heart, to come to me when I needed you so!"

He kissed her many times, hushing her voice thus, and then said:

"You must go back at once. If you are seen here it will ruin all. Bari will tell you for what I came, and tomorrow all the trouble will be ended. Have patience and courage, my darling. Go into the house now, dear, at once."

She obeyed silently. With one long fond look she entered the house. Old Bari followed her and closed the door behind her.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Story of a Jealous Office Seeker.

A story is related of a French official who was possessed of a very pretty wife and a particularly jealous temperament. This official had frequently applied without success for a certain post. At length his wife proposed to interview the chief in person and see if she could obtain for her husband what he had failed to procure for himself. On this being suggested the latter remained silent for a considerable time, fluctuating between ambition and jealousy. At last he devised a safe course. "Yes, my dear, you have my sanction, but upon one condition only—that you paint your nose a deep red." The lady, it is needless to say, did not proceed with the interview upon these terms. It was afterward commonly said, however, that the story having reached the chief's ears, he good naturedly appointed the careful husband to the post.—London Truth.

The Prayer of a Puritan.

A vulgar Puritan, uttering a discourse which he presumably thought was a prayer, thus expressed himself: "Have mercy on that miserable man who was lately pouring forth blasphemy against thee." It was at a "Sabbath observance" meeting. The miserable man was the Roman Catholic archbishop, a peaceful and devout cleric, and the blasphemy consisted in stating that in his judgment there was no harm in taking a quiet walk in the Botanic garden at Edinburgh on a Sunday afternoon. This awful supplication was uttered, within my own knowledge, less than 30 years ago. I fancy that my reader will have no difficulty in deciding which individual was the miserable man.—Longman's Magazine.

Preferred Old Raggles.

It is related of a Chicago lady (name of Raggles) that when in Italy she was very anxious to see the Apollo Belvidere. When at last Mrs. Raggles was shown that stony type of manly beauty, she gazed at it long and silently, and then, leveling a scornful umbrella at it, remarked, "Well, I've seen the Apollo Belvideer, and I've seen Raggles, and gimme Raggles."—San Francisco Argonaut.

A New England Superstition.

In olden times in New England it was supposed that the first unmarried person of the other sex whom one met on St. Valentine's morning while out walking was a destined wife or a destined husband.

THE LOVE OF MONEY.

REV. THOMAS DIXON'S SECOND SERMON ON MONEY AND CHRISTIANITY.

It Is Not Money, but the Undue Love of It, Which Is the Great Evil—Heartless Proverbs of Hard Hearted Money Seekers. Murders In Trade.

CAPE CHARLES, Va., July 9.—Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., preached on Cobb's island today the second sermon in the series on the question of money and its relation to the gospel of Christ. The proprietors of the hotel on the island have arranged a schedule of three boats on Sundays to convey the people from the mainland to the island to attend the services. The text chosen for the discourse today was the proverb, "He that hath an evil eye hasteth after riches," the specific subject being the "Money Mania."

It is not a sin to be rich if our riches are righteously obtained. And yet a thousand dangers beset the man who sets out with the determination to be rich. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. He is almost sure to reach the crisis in his experience when he will say, "Soul, take thine ease; I have much goods laid up for thee in store," and enter upon a downward course from that moment. The determination to get rich at all hazards may be termed a modern disease. It is a money mania. It is the evil eye of the closing days of this century. It has thrown its spell over millions. It is a disease which sweeps before it the whole nature of man, that lays waste not only the fairest hearts and what might be the fairest homes, but that lays waste what might be the gardens of the nations. It is this modern disease of the evil eye of haste for riches that is one of the most withering curses of our age.

First—It denies and abrogates the paramount law of industry. In the sweat of man's brow shall he eat bread, decreed the eternal God, echoed the eternal nature. And yet men in modern times have said that they will do nothing of the sort. They will eat bread without labor. They will eat bread by trick, by chicanery, by overreaching, by swindling, by cheating, by humbug. This abrogation of the paramount law of industry brings us face to face with the submerged millions in the industrial world, with the countless thousands and hundreds of thousands who cry for bread, who are caught in the vicious undertow of this angry sea of human avarice and are dragged to the bottom of the deepest sea of human misery. In the mildest developments of this mania it is simply gambling, and its necessary corollaries are hard times, panics and the periodical disturbances of the industrial world which result in thousands of wrecks.

COTTAGE BY THE SEA.

Second—It leads to a thousand crimes. The desire and the determination to get rich, and that shortly, is the power that leads the man intrusted with money to risk that money in questionable transactions. It is this haste to be rich that sketches for your cashier and your merchant and your bank officer the wild dreams of luxury which lead at last to an outer act of criminality. The cashier from his desk dreams of a palace, of horses and carriages, and the cottage by the sea, a magnificent mansion in the city. He is not willing to obtain his money by the slow process of work. He believes that he can stake a certain sum and win; with the turn of the wheel of fortune can be rich in a day. He stakes other people's money, and the result is crime. These crimes are but simply eccentric and æsthetic developments of the older crimes against person founded on the same principle.

A highwayman is a highwayman because he determines to be rich suddenly. The burglar is a burglar because he desires to get rich in a night. And the murderer destroys his victim for his money because he desires to be rich immediately. Highway robbery, burglary, murder for money, are the original brutal elements out of which the more æsthetic modern developments of hasty riches have sprung. It is this mania that leads to a thousand crimes today against society. The dive, the gambling den, the saloon, the brothel, have as their fundamental inspiration the desire for sudden riches. There are individual idiosyncracies that develop them, but there are thousands of lives drawn to this whirlpool of vice and crime by the attractive power of the evil eye of money. A man believes that he can become rich rapidly by keeping a saloon. He is willing to trade in human hearts and human blood to accomplish that purpose. A man is willing to debauch his fellow man in a gambling hell, believing that he may suddenly acquire a great fortune.

THE BEST MAN.

Third—This mania as it grows in men emphasizes and develops all that is central in self. It necessarily makes a man mean and selfish. It causes a man to enter his heart's affection upon that one thing. He esteems that to be his treasure of life. Where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also. It will harden and make mean the poor man who is afflicted with the mania as well as the rich who have gone beyond the hope of recovery. I heard of an old farmer in Maine who sent a son into the war. He was killed in battle. The old man afterward expressed his regrets. He said that he had made a great mistake; that he ought to have had a substitute. He said that he could not get a man anywhere in the country to do as much work on the farm as that boy and that he was the smallest eater he ever saw.

An old man who had emphasized this thought in his life above all others went to a meat market and decided to content himself with a bone for soup. He asked the market man—a big, fat Dutchman, jolly and good natured—the price of a bone which he eyed wistfully. The market man told him nothing at all; take the bone along if he wanted it. The old man, who was a little hard of hearing, put his hand to his ear and asked: "Cannot you knock off a little?" The market man laughingly replied, "Yes, he would take 10 cents for it." The old man paid the dime and went away chuckling over his great bargain. It is necessarily true that as we develop this principle in life we overreach ourselves. *The attempt to develop self is sure in the process to destroy self.*

Fourth—This mania surely and thoroughly destroys Christian life. The man afflicted with it begins at once to cultivate these delightful mottoes, old but awful in their meaning:

"Dog eat dog."

"Devil take care of the hindmost."

"Business is business."

"The best man is the man that gets there."

"Resolved. That we will love ourselves as our neighbor loves himself, and we will make it hot for any man that tries to outdo us in this labor of love."

He prays only that familiar prayer, "Lord, bless me and my wife, my son John, his wife, us four and no more."

A man died the other day in the fellowship of a Christian church. He possessed millions, but he wrote that prayer out in his will when he left the earth: "Lord, bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife, we four and no more. Amen. The devil take care of the balance."

CORNER IN CROWNS.

I do not know what a man who makes this principle the ruling one of his life will do if he ever gets to heaven. They say that some of these men who live money, who think money, who breathe money, are going to heaven. Their names are on the church books. What they will do when they get there I cannot understand. Sam Jones declares that if some of them get there the balance of the people will have to sleep with their pocketbooks under their pillow. I am not sure but that he is right. How a man who has spent his life in the supreme effort to create a corner in various commodities and prey on the necessities of his fellow men, how he can enter the kingdom of Jesus Christ and be comfortable is more than I can understand, even with Christ who is love and peace and righteousness. His life means a corner. It means to get his neighbors at a disadvantage and to prey on his necessities. He lives in corners, he thinks in corners, he moves in corners. When he dies, he will die in a corner, and if he ever gets to heaven he will sit down in a corner, and there will be a corner in crowns within 24 hours after he gets there if they turn him loose.

It is very easy to say that this is a superficial view of the modern methods of the commercial world and is based upon impractical education and impossible ideals. It is very easy to say that the person is talking, and he does not know what he is talking about. Again I repeat, any hen can lay an egg. While I cannot perform that feat, I am a better judge of eggs than any hen in the world. Moral judgment is not dependent upon any intimate knowledge of technicalities. Great moral truths are so simple that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. A lie is a lie. Theft is theft. Gambling is gambling. A spade is a spade. And that is all there is to it.

TEN MILLION DOLLARS.

Fifth—It is this mania that reduces life to the standard of a miserable commercial dividend. Men afflicted with this disease refuse to enter upon any work that does not pay in a commercial sense. The first question they ask is, Will it pay? I ask a man to give money to save the heathen. He says: Will it pay? Does it pay? I ask him how. "Well," he says, "how much money did you spend on the heathen last year?" I tell him $10,000,000. "How many did you save?" I tell him so many thousands. He says: "It don't pay. They cost too much. They come too high. They are not worth it. Too much money a head." This is the man who refuses to subscribe money to buy the new hearse, because he said he never had any use for the old one, and he gave $10 for that. The idea of a commercial dividend applied to life invariably reduces it to an absurdity.

No work of love pays. Eliminate love from life, and there is nothing left but death. A workingman left his anvil and watched by the bedside of his dying wife. She was a little, withered, tired woman, her face pinched and wan and overwrought with long years of toil. He was a great, broad shouldered, strong limbed, muscular giant. He gave days and weeks and months to the tenderest ministry of love by her bedside. He lost his position, his place in the ranks of a difficult trade in which to maintain himself. He ran the risk of being a tramp, but he never left her bedside till the end. With streaming eyes he followed the preacher to the door and asked if there were any hope. He lost his wages for months. He was brought to the verge of starvation until he had to accept the charity of strangers. It did not pay. No work of love pays. But shall love cease to minister to its loved one?

Children do not pay. It does not pay to have children. They are a constant expense. They add nothing to the income of the household while they are children. Yet shall children cease to be born? My boy has never paid a cent. He has done nothing but spend. He has been a constant expense for doctor's bills, nurse's bills, clothes, shoes, hats. He asked me for 5 cents as I went out of the house last trip. He has cost me more than $1,000 in bills for doctors. He grows more and more expensive every day. He has never added one dime to my income. He has been a constant drain, a constant expense. But as I take him up into my arms and look into his face I would not sell him for the world piled with gold to the stars. And yet he does not pay. The truth is that life does not consist in the abundance of things that a man may possess.

SHRAVES OF LOVE.

Dr. George Shrady, the great physician, left his rich patients and went on a vacation in the mountains for absolute rest. He left orders that he should be called on no account; he would answer no call as a physician. While resting in the hammock at the country house a little barefoot, ragged urchin came up to where he was lying, accompanied by a grandmother. The little fellow looked wistfully up at the great physician, while the grandmother explained: "I could not keep him away, doctor. He heard that you was here; that you was the greatest doctor in the world. He said that you could cure him and make him like the other boys. I told him he had no money and he could not come; that you would not be bothered with him. He said he knowed you could cure him, and he would come. So here he is, sir."

The doctor, moved by his simple faith, by his helplessness, by his poverty and rags, hastened to prescribe for him. He gave him two weeks of personal attention, and at the end of that time he was roaming in the fields strong and well with the other boys. Thanksgiving day the doctor received by express a rude box, and when opened found in it a large turkey, on one leg of which was tied a card on which was scrawled: "Dear Doctor—Here is a big, fat turkey for you. It's the best I could send, but I know he is young and tender, for I raised him from the egg myself." Signed by the boy's name. The doctor treasures this gift above all the gifts from millionaires, above all the treasures of money ever received. Life does not consist in the abundance of things which a man may possess.

Sixth—It is this passion for money in itself and money at all hazards and money quickly that brutalizes the human. For it man trades in the life-blood of his fellow man. It is the most brutal war that the earth ever saw. Martial war is brutal enough. It is a horrible thing to butcher men with swords and bayonets and guns and cannons, but it is more inexpressibly brutal to butcher men and women commercially and cast them into the pit of hunger and want and starvation and despair. It is kind to kill one quickly. It is brutal to kill them by a lingering death.

If a man wrecks a train, they offer a premium for his life. We say that lynching is too good for the man who would wreck an express train loaded with men, women and children. But in this war for money men sneak into the Stock Exchange, and with a lie and a trick and a subterfuge wreck a whole railroad corporation from end to end of the line, destroy a thousand homes, drag down into the ditch, into the pit, into the grave of a lingering death, thousands of women and children, and he is crowned, forsooth, as a modern Napoleon of finance instead of being hung to the nearest limb.

MARTIAL WAR.

In martial war soldiers are kind to one another, even to enemies. There was a picture on exhibition in the National Academy of Design last year which represented a scene on the field of battle between the northern and southern armies. The Confederate soldier in his gray uniform lay wounded nigh unto death with his broken arm folded under his body and the broken leg that made it impossible for him to move. He was crying for water. Near by was a wounded Federal soldier in blue uniform. He was stricken to the earth with a terrible wound, but he was crawling over the rough ground extending his canteen in his strong arm as far as possible toward his wounded enemy. A little child wandered between the two lines of battle in the late war. Instantly both lines ceased firing at the sight of that little bit of white clothing. Two men stepped forward from either of the ranks and seized the little one and led the child back to the mother in her cottage. And after the child was safe they returned to their ranks, and again the awful volleys of lead began their deadly work.

In martial war men do not kill women and children. They do not kill a wounded enemy. Even a Turk will not fire on a hospital. But in this modern war for money maniacs fight. Madmen do battle. They kill women and children without mercy, and a wounded friend is the supreme opportunity of the crisis of battle. They spring on his body and tear him limb from limb. Such a life is the abrogation of civilization, the denial of love, the denial of the basis of Christianity itself. No Christian civilization can exist while these forces are dominant.

Remarks on a Recent Invention.

Mr. Louis Gross of Philadelphia should be investigated. He is too smart by half, or he is a fearful liar, which is worse. Mr. Gross claims that he has invented a hand-me-down egg, and right here this machine made business should stop. Man is a creature of environment, and if something is not done a fearful catastrophe may befall humanity. Today man stands surrounded by wooden nutmegs, sawdust flour and steer butter. He wears false teeth, glass eyes, wigs, wooden legs, cork hands and padded coats, while his wife wears crinoline that is full of gulle at 60 cents a yard. The fabric of society is frail and full of deceit, and man is rapidly adjusting himself to his surroundings. The advent of the tailor made egg fills the last niche in the circle of deception that surrounds bewildered humanity. If this is not checked, very soon there will be "no joy nor beauty nor loveliness" that "continueth in man." All will be "vanity and vexation of spirit."

This is of course the selfish human side. But what about the hens and their kin? Have they no rights that human beings are bound to respect? If this egg-maker is allowed to flood the market with his "false, fleeting, perjured" eggs, what can a self respecting hen do but withdraw her product indignantly from sale? Can hens be expected to go into the marts of trade to compete with pauper egg plants and support indigent and improvident roosters on the mere pittance that the machine article can be made for? Most certainly they cannot. And if the hens are to be insulted and driven from America, where will spring chickens come from?—Kansas City Star.

Royal Bones.

Strange as it may appear, it is a fact that in one of the storerooms of the museum of the Louvre there is an old dusty box filled with bones that belonged to the kings of France. The bones are pitched there in confusion, and every time that the box is moved they are necessarily tossed about and mixed together. The Vie Contemporaine was the first paper to notice the existence of this deposit. Thanks to the information which has been given to us by the director of the fine arts, we can affirm that these bones which are now treated with such odious disrespect are the remains of our kings.

In 1793 the tombs of St. Denis were violated, and the bones were given to M. Ledru, the mayor of Fontenay-aux-Roses, the father of Ledru-Rollin, by Alexandre Lenoir, his intimate friend, who was present at the exhumation in the capacity of inspector, and who preserved a quantity of the precious objects.

The relics were finally transmitted to the nephew of Ledru le Maire, who in 1864 gave them to M. de Niewerkerke, who was charged by Napoleon III with the duty of organizing at the Louvre the "Museum of the Sovereigns," and the relics have remained neglected from that day to this.

We ask for the bones of our kings, the remains of the founder of the Capetian dynasty, of the conqueror of Marignan, of Charles V, the king that saved the country from the yoke of England, and of Louis XII, "the father of the people," a little of that respect which nobody in France denies to the mortal remains of the humblest citizen.—Figaro

Why Not Commit to Memory?

In an age so full of busy activity as the present, so diffused with and interpenetrated by the spirit of utilitarianism, committing to memory seems rather behind the times and is, except in juvenile recitation rooms, almost obsolete. Yet there is something to be said in its defense. It is a great convenience, if nothing more, to have the skeleton of a historic period in the shape of a few important events and dates firmly in one's mental possession, locked, so to speak, in a canny drawer or cabinet of the brain and ready to be produced at a moment's notice. Given such an outline to aid memory, and the facile servant easily and deftly fills it up with the throbbing flesh and blood of manners, customs, incidents and episodes.

Any one of us may lose hearing or sight, wholly or partially, and arrive at days when it is a comfort unspeakable to remember delightful and helpful stories, verses, which we have loved, and chapters from the treasure house of the Sacred Word. The collects of the Episcopal church, familiar by incessant repetition through many years, have been as cheering music in the invalid's room when age and illness have prevented attendance on divine service.—Harper's Bazar.

Women's Legal Rights in Kentucky.

The Kentucky legislature is likely to take still another advance step in regard to the property rights of women. The lower house has passed by a large majority a bill providing that a husband on the death of his wife shall inherit only one-half of the surplus of the wife's personal estate instead of the whole, as now. Even this would be a larger share than the wife receives of the husband's estate upon his death. The Kentucky Equal Rights association hopes ultimately to secure the equalization of courtesy and dower.

The Queen as a Market Woman.

Queen Victoria isn't above turning market women when she can. During her recent absence she allowed the dairy products of her Windsor farms to be sold to a London butter company, which in turn sold to the public thick, yellow butter, stamped with the royal arms, for 40 cents a pound.—London Letter.

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BEWARE OF OINTMENTS FOR CATARRH THAT CONTAIN MERCURY,
as mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucous surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is ten fold to the good they can possibly derive from them. Hall's Cat