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EASTWARD

OR

A BUDDHIST LOVER

A NOVEL

Hosea, Lucy K R

"Atmanam, atmana, pashya" — BHAGAVAD GITÂ

BOSTON

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The Back Bay Bookstore

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PRESS OF
HODGES & ADAMS, 21 KNAPP ST.,
BOSTON, MASS.

"The religion of one age
Is the literary entertainment of the next."

— EMERSON.

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EASTWARD.

CHAPTER I.

"ORDINARY timber, sir! Quite ordinary timber," said Professor Salvator, *sotto voce*, to President Dombrey, as they stood scanning the long line of applicants for admission to the University of Jansenville; for there appeared but the usual row of boyish, roguish-looking faces.

Such would have been the report to the faculty no doubt, had not the professor been impressed, in recording the names, with that of "Gerald Livingston" amongst the L's. He had studied genealogical trees with great interest and now stopped, re-rubbed his glasses and re-read the name, then remarked, "A noble ancestry, no doubt," and closing his eyes for a moment, the "Declaration of Independence" rolled down before his mental vision with the name of "Livingston" prominent amongst the signers. Therefore, to his ordinary report, he added, "One shining light, I trust."

Now, this 'shining light' was quite innocent of any especial notice his name had elicited. In fact, his distinguished patronymic had never excited his interest nor his ambition.

His father had been too closely engaged in weighing out sugar and coffee on small profits to hunt up the genealogy of his family; and his mother, poor soul, had never known the time when her arms were free from encircling a youn "Livingston," whose baby necessities absorbed her entire attention.

How Gerald came to be registered as a "*theologue*" was in this wise:

Mr. Livingston, Sr., had quite a family of sons growing up around him and, fearing he could not give them all the personal attention their morals demanded, determined, as Gerald was the eldest and had already shown some symptoms of lounging, to make of him a minister of the gospel. By this means he hoped to show to the younger scions a healthy moral example and at the same time secure an element of saving grace in his own behalf. "For," he reasoned, "if I send my son into the Lord's vineyard, it will surely inure to my own advantage, as well as to that of my whole family."

Mrs. Livingston viewed the matter from an entirely different standpoint. She thought, "Now my dear boy can always wear those white starched shirt-fronts he is so fond of;" for her motherly heart was always delighted to see him well dressed.

When we say that Gerald did not know the history of his own name, we mean that of "Livingston." "Gerald" was a name he had given himself; for he detested that Irish-sounding nickname "Jerry," and his whole name, "Jeremiah," smacked too much of the backwoods.

He was five feet ten in height, with a fine intelligent face, of an open expression, set off handsomely by a pair of arched eyebrows, which shaded his appreciative gray eyes. He was properly classed as a handsome young fellow, and, save a mildly receding chin and rather delicate ears, would have been considered quite a forcible character. He had a way of

swinging his arms when he walked, of which he himself seemed entirely unconscious, but which impressed other people with an idea of great mental activity. Before his superiors he had uniformly the air of "I beg pardon, sir," politely predisposing them in his favor. With equals he was one of the "Hurrah! hoop-la!" boys; but with inferiors exacting, always demanding the fullest amount of small serving.

The first year of his college life passed without any especial incident. The faculty had forgotten his imposing family name, for they saw nothing remarkable in the possessor of the honored record. He joined, if he were not the leader, in the usual college mischief, hazing, cane-breaking, raising an occasional bonfire out of some old outhouse, driving off the neighboring cows, or cutting down the village signs. But when complaints of these silly frolics came to the ears of the faculty, Gerald was rarely even suspected of being one of the law-breakers.

With others of his age and class, he was quite prominent also in another pastime for which the college young men had become distinguished, — that of flirting with the young ladies in the Female Seminary, which was situated about midway between the university and the village.

Everybody said when Prof. Savoir came to the town, some years before, for the purpose of opening a young ladies' school, that he had "missed his bearings;" "he could never expect to secure pay pupils amongst these village people, who had the public schools for nothing;" and they darkly hinted that in less than three months he would have to sell his furniture to pay his rent.

The professor, however, knew what he was about. He was more of a philosopher, more of a student of human nature, than these unsophisticated village folks. He made three trips to the town, counted the number of students in the university, learned the

increase in attendance from year to year and satisfied himself of the healthy financial condition of the institution. Then he rented the old "Sparrow Mansion," fitted it up for a "Young Ladies' Boarding School," and prepared for a large number of pupils.

His advertisements were soon prominent in all the leading Eastern papers: "Professor Savoir's French and English boarding-school for young ladies, in the charming university town of Jansenville, offers particularly desirable advantages, both educational and social!" The school soon filled up with girls from different directions. True, but few of the village matrons felt able to send their daughters; but, in spite of this, the school was a financial success, as the professor well knew it would be.

It was a little amusing to observe, as time wore on, the daily regularity with which the students passed the boarding-school on their way to the village post-office,— burdened usually with the weighty correspondence of a letter a week to "Pa" or "Ma." It was equally interesting to mark the dainty costumes of the seminary young ladies, who, by a strange coincidence, were always out about the same hour to enjoy an evening stroll upon the school lawns.

Gerald's tall white hat, whalebone cane and jaunty air soon rendered him conspicuous, and he was at once designated by the young ladies (who were studying French) as "*ce charmant jeune homme.*"

But this happy-go-easy life was not conducive to deep study, and he was sometimes reprimanded by the faculty for lack of application and a seeming want of appreciation of the great advantages which the university afforded. The proud father sent him liberal remittances (for his business was slowly improving under careful management), nor did the son hesitate to call on the "Governor" for any extra sums which extravagance or pleasure demanded, under the name of "necessary expenditures."

However, he was not after all very different from other young men of his age, who, overlooking or quite forgetting the fact that they were studying to be ministers of the gospel, were only too ready to devote themselves to worldly pleasures. Indeed, it was a sad truth, which the worthy professors had to acknowledge, that the majority of their pupils did not realize the sacredness of the calling they were expected to embrace.

A faculty meeting was held every Friday evening, when these important questions were warmly discussed. They were in earnest in the work they were doing, these gentlemen of highly religious, if not of the highest intellectual culture.

President Dombrey sometimes addressed his co-laborers on these occasions.

"Let us make the most of the timber furnished us," said he. "If we find it unseasoned, hollow or knotty, it is our business to season, fill and smooth it. It is for that duty we are here. How are we delighted, fascinated indeed, before works of art, created by great sculptors! One could hardly imagine the human form to exist beneath the ugly surface of those rough blocks of marble. But the master-hand chips off the jagged edges and develops the beautiful statue. Dear Brothers: if we are earnest workers, what may we not accomplish also with the material here! True, we may find many blemishes and cracks as we progress; but our labor, our polish, our skill will go far towards removing the one and concealing the other, until out of the most unpromising material we may create the great gospel lights of the future. My friends, we must blame ourselves if our work be unsatisfactory."

Prof. Salvator also had an opinion. "For thirty-five years," he began, "I have been a teacher of theology, and have compared the results of my labor from year to year. With all due deference to our

worthy president's optimistic convictions, I must say what I believe to be true. The '*timber*' *has degenerated!* Our pampered manner of living, the laxity of parental discipline, or both, have rendered the youth of to-day far inferior to those of past generations. When I was at Andover, it never became necessary to urge our students to work, nor was any effort necessary to lift them up to important theological truths. They were *seekers*, *workers*, *enthusiasts!* To teach them was a privilege, a delight. Who can point to a student nowadays as a possible *Knox*, *Hopkins*, or *Edwards?* I tell you, my brothers, we are fallen upon '*degenerate times*'! Mankind is on the retrograde."

Prof. Sunnimead had a word to say: "Don't let the pessimistic views of our dear Doctor Salvator discourage us. If we are weakening at home, are we not exercising a powerful influence abroad, over the heathen in foreign lands? What could be more encouraging than the reports we are constantly receiving of the success of our missionary efforts in the benighted regions of *India*, *Ceylon*, *Siam*, and *Birmah?* Have we not native Sinhalese students in this university, to whom we are imparting the great truths of the gospel, who on their return to their native land will promulgate these truths to their benighted, perishing brethren? Who could ask for more studious pupils than these Sinhalese young men?"

It is true these pupils were all that Professor Sunnimead had pictured them. For the rest, they knew nothing of the doubts and apprehensions of the professors. They were attentive and studious, and received the doctrines as they were given them without question.

Whether it was from a sense of obligation under which they felt indebted to the university for their instruction, as well as their bread and butter; or

whether it proceded from a natural reverence for those in authority, we do not know. True it was they were deferential, submissive and industrious, if not confiding or communicative. Two of them were in the class with Gerald, and it was remarked that there never were feelings of antipathy manifested towards them by the American boys, such as have been often witnessed in other institutions of learning, where *colored* students were admitted.

Their straight black hair, black eyes and tawny skin gave them quite a resemblance to the higher types of our American Indians.

Their companionship with the other students was often of the closest character. There was a dignity of manner, a loftiness of sentiment, on the part of these Sinhalese, that caused them to be looked up to and sought after, rather than ne lected. Even the young ladies of the seminary hadg ventured some of their captivating glances at these manly fellows, from time to time; but thus far their keen shafts had fallen harmless. The more they withstood these blandishments, the more eager were the chits to make an impression upon them; and "As hard as a Sinhalese heart" soon became a proverb in the Savoir school.

Every three weeks, as a rule, Prof. Savoir gave a *soirée* in the seminary parlors, to which the students and faculty of the university were usually invited. Opportunities there occurred for mutual acquaintance, and some friendships, thus formed, ripened into love, and happy marriages followed. Generally however, they were but idle flirtations, brought to a sudden termination by parental interference, an enforcement of the seminary rules, or the caprice of the parties themselves.

Only two or three elopements had ever occurred, and none of recent date; but the legends of these early adventures were regularly handed down to

the new-comers with other tradition of the institution.

It is strange that, no matter how carefully guarded may be the secrets of a school, they will find their way sooner or later to the ears of every new pupil that arrives.

CHAPTER II.

THE university of Jansenville occupies a commanding position upon an imposing hill overlooking the town bearing its name.

It is almost entirely surrounded by gigantic firs and maples, and its tall gables would hardly be noticed above the trees, did they not blink and twinkle through their many shutterless windows, in the early morning sunlight, like living things, long before a single ray has touched the white houses of the town or sparkled upon the fluttering bosom of lake "Finnwater," which lies shining like a gem in the distant valley below.

The old inhabitants of this "university town" do not realize the peculiar healthfulness of their climate. They do not know the air they breathe is particularly pure and invigorating. Few of them indeed have any knowledge, from experience, of the enervating drowsy atmosphere of more southerly latitudes, or the sharper changes of the farther north.

They never travel and rarely think of their climate. They are happy and comfortable, content to stay at home, and always proud of their university. The town itself stands about twelve hundred feet above the sea-level, surrounded by hills in apparently endless succession, which, though cultivated to their summits, are almost lofty enough to be dignified with the name of mountains.

The farmers who dwell upon these grassy slopes, or even in the valleys below, cannot boast of an exceedingly fertile soil; but they obtain moderate returns from their fields and dairies, while their pleasant homes and surroundings make up for all the rest.

The accounts which they sometimes read of sultry summers in crowded cities seem to them lamentable fables of newspaper folk, when contrasted with the spicy, resinous air of their pine-forests and the exhilarating effect of their mountain sunrises.

The sky, which so gracefully curves over this elevated plateau, is quite Italian in its summer tints. The delicate blue into which the soft azure of the hills along the distant horizon melts and is lost gives the appearance of a depression in the earth's surface, so that the dwellers in the town seem to live, as it were, in a little "happy valley" of their own.

Fortunate, indeed, is the man who can claim this happy valley as his childhood's home.

Amidst all the experiences and perplexities of an active life, one by one the sweet illusions and memories of early youth fade away and are lost; but the recollection of this enchanting spot, in which he first drew breath, haunts him like an angelic vision, strengthening with his years.

And thus many who have migrated to busy cities, in search of wealth and fame, lay down their budget of yearly cares during the summer months, tired, discouraged — disgusted perhaps — with the life-struggle, and return hither, as a child to its mother's knee, to renew the vigor and elasticity of youth, and to ascend into a purer atmosphere, where mind and body are purified and brought nearer to nature and to God.

None of the allurements of fashionable life are found here. No grand dinners tempt the appetite, no rich wines fire the blood, no frivolous society enervates the mind nor demoralizes the community.

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But for every student thus imported, "snatched as a brand from the burning," how many of those poor, devoted men and women laid down their lives upon the parched soil of that sunny land!

How many of their hapless infants, born in their frail bungalows, paid the penalty of their parents' enthusiasm with their innocent lives!

How many mothers, as they laid away their precious offspring in the jungles, questioned in their agony even the love and wisdom of Almighty God, in thus chastening His faithful servants.

Although we may believe these pious sacrifices useless, utterly so, and although we may feel that the low state of religious faith (or want of it) in our own country demands every effort for true enlightenment, yet we cannot but respect the devotion which inspires men and women thus to give their lives and the lives of their offspring, under a mistaken conviction that they are rescuing from eternal torment that really pious, mystic-loving, religious people,—a people who, centuries before Christ appeared on earth, believed in His purest moral teachings, and many of whom in all these years have lived and died in the full belief and practice of all the essential truths of Christianity.

At the time this story opens, there were at the university four Sinhalese students, by name *Koh-Ehn*, *Thun-Gah*, *Vin-Goorlah*, and *Kyn-Dhwen*.

They were fine specimens of physical manhood, with few features distinctive of their nationality, except a somewhat dusky color, and certain round holes in the lobes of their ears, whether for caste, ornamental or religious purpose, no one knew.

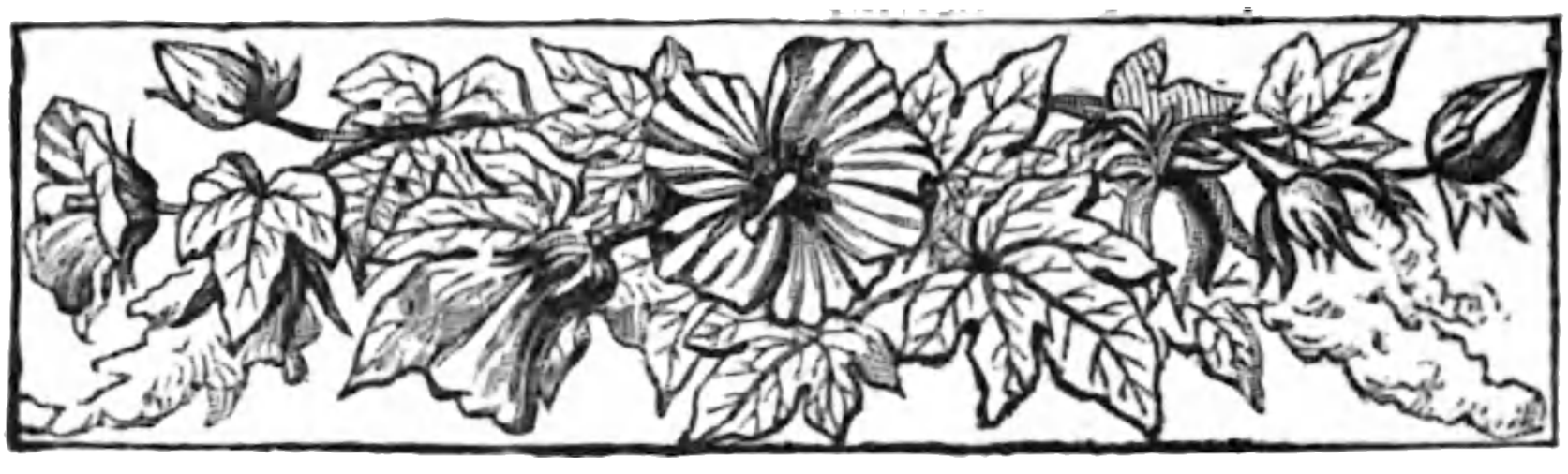
The last-named, Kyn-Dhwen, was the brightest scholar. He spoke the English language fluently, having learned it in the schools of Ceylon, as indeed had all the others.

The father of Kyn-Dhwen died when his boy was

but fourteen years of age, but he had so earnestly and deeply implanted the Buddhist faith in his tender heart by early teaching that no after-instruction could entirely eradicate it.

The mother, after the death of her husband, became so thoroughly frightened by the terrible pictures of the sufferings of the unconverted and damned souls in hell painted by the zealous Christian missionaries that she gave up this her only child to be educated in the "true and saving faith," believing she might thus expiate the sins of her beloved husband as well as her own and at the same time prevent the eternal damnation of her beloved son.

Kyn-Dhwen was handsome, dignified, of light complexion, and, unlike the others of his race, he was tall and arrowy. In disposition he was generous and sensitive, and, although decidedly taciturn, soon became a favorite with the students, with whom he entered, without reserve, into all their college games and plays.



CHAPTER III.

A MILE or more from the university, on the opposite side of a wide intervening valley stood a beautiful cottage covered with climbing roses, which now, in the bright spring-time, clung to its angles, spread along its low eaves, and almost concealed the humble dwelling in brilliant wreaths of flame-colored blossoms. The modest lawn in front was here and there decked with patches and clumps of flowering shrubs artistically placed, forming a picture delightful to the eye and marking the abode of culture and taste.

This cottage was the home of Solomon Whitney, and was somewhat isolated from the other dwellings that dotted the hillside.

It appeared in marked contrast with the usual deserted-looking American farmhouses, whose occupants, having exhausted all their energies upon their fields, had neither the taste nor the leisure to beautify their dwellings.

This little farm was all that Mr. Whitney had been able to save from his estate, after a litigation of many years with the church of which his father — good old deacon Whitney — had been a devoted member. The lawsuit grew out of the peculiar terms of a will made by the good deacon, in which he wished to divide his property, conditionally, between the church and his son.

The old gentleman had always stood in prayer and

sat in singing, and insisted that the congregation should do likewise. "Who ever read," said he, "of Christ or His apostles, or the holy men of old, sitting down to pray?" To this innovation the church never would consent, but continued to do just the contrary. In his will, therefore, the old deacon provided that half of his estate should go to the church if a majority of its members should agree to change their form of worship and adopt his; otherwise, the whole estate was to revert to his son Solomon.

The majority declined at once to make the change demanded, but voted to begin a suit at law under the will, to secure one-half of the property.

After a litigation of many years, Mr. Whitney was declared the only lawful legatee; but all the estate, except this small farm, was absorbed in costs.

The grasping church was wrecked: the only consolation left the heir, except an undying hatred of churches in general, and this church-litigant in particular.

Mr. Whitney took delight, thereafter, in announcing that his only child and daughter "Faith" should never enter a church, nor be taught any sectarian doctrine.

He was determined, he said, that her young mind should never be warped, nor distorted by prejudice, nor hypocrisy, and that she should be entirely free from any early sectarian belief or influence.

This was no hardship for Faith. During the week she attended the village school, and on Sundays and holidays roamed over her father's fields and in the woods, where she soon grew into close communion with nature.

In the deep recesses of the forest she loved to listen to the timid partridge as it twittered in the bushes, and to spy out the blue-birds that peeped down from their leafy perches watching for her approach,— for she always brought them food,— when they would fly about her and almost alight upon her arms.

She appeared to be acquainted and in harmony with everything animate and inanimate.

She talked to the flowers when she plucked them, asking "if she hurt them much," and "why their blood was not red like hers." She believed they understood her, and thought they welcomed her coming by their nodding petals.

"Solomon!" said Mrs. Whitney one evening, "I have misgivings sometimes about the way we are raising Faith. I am afraid we are not paying sufficient attention to her religious education."

"How so? What's the matter now?"

Mr. Whitney possessed a stronger will than his wife, and in his judgment she reposed the most implicit confidence, notwithstanding the low ebb to which he had finally brought their fortunes.

"Well, I often think we should teach Faith to say her prayers and study the Bible. A queer feeling comes over me every time she asks me to tell her about God and heaven and angels, of which she hears other children speak."

"Nonsense, Jerusha. It's only because our early teaching controls our opinions. We become Jew or Gentile according to our surroundings in youth. When she is old enough she can form her own belief. I shall not attempt to bias her mind in the least. But I'm not going to talk to her now about our heavenly Father, His loving-kindness, His charity for our weaknesses, His tender mercies, and then try to reconcile these self-evident truths with the Old Testament fables, which are so directly in contradiction.

"Only think of a just and loving Father commanding all the first-born of Egypt to be destroyed; and the children of Israel to be avenged on the Midianites by slaying every male child, and every man, married woman and widow. What sentiments to teach a sensitive child! No, Jerusha, don't be uneasy about Faith. She has a good mind and a good

understanding, which is the sixth sense, and I'll trust her. When I think of the stupid Sundays I passed in my youthful days, when my father made me listen to long-drawn sermons, by prosy ministers, about *Hell*, the *Trinity*, *Vicarious Atonement*, *Election* and *Reprobation*, and the like, I consider the time worse than lost. I really feel that I was deprived of my childhood's right, the right to enjoy pleasant and agreeable thoughts. Why, my dear wife, I wouldn't have our daughter's mind perverted in that manner for any consideration."

Mrs. Whitney submitted, as she always did, after talking with her husband on these subjects, although she could not agree with him entirely in his bitter hatred of all churches.

Faith never seemed to miss the society of other children. She roamed about the fields alone, plunged into the wildest thickets, and remained for hours away. Upon one occasion, when about twelve years old, her mother asked her if she wouldn't like to have some of her little cousins spend the summer with her, as she would enjoy her woodland rambles so much more if she had the society of young companions.

"Why, mother!" said she, astonished, "I'm never alone. I have plenty of companions all the time."

"Of course, you have your father and mother here at home, my dear child; but you need children of your own age to play with when you go to the woods."

"But I have them always in the woods with me, mother!"

"Faith dear, what do you mean? Who goes to the woods with you,—there are no children near?"

"I don't know who they are, nor where they come from, but they are always there: little children and grown people, men and women, and Indians too!"

"My child, you frighten me! Have you been

reading fairy-stories? or what has filled your head with such nonsense?"

"Why, mamma, I don't know what fairy-stories are."

"What do you mean, then, by all you have just told me?"

"I mean, mamma, that for ever so long, whenever I've gone alone to the woods, I've found people there. They don't seem exactly like the people I meet in the village, and don't look like them neither, but they talk and sing to me, and tell me such nice, pretty stories.

"I was a little frightened by them at first; for they all disappeared suddenly and then came back again. Did you never see them, mamma, in the woods when you were a little girl?"

"My daughter, I fear you are not well. You must be feverish, you talk so extravagantly. Come here and let me feel your pulse."

"Why, mamma, I'm well. What is there strange in my seeing these people? I see them here, too, sometimes," and she pointed about the room.

Mrs. Whitney now became thoroughly alarmed. She went out immediately to the garden and called her husband.

As soon as she told him of their conversation, he came to the house, and, taking Faith upon his knee, questioned her closely, when she confirmed all her mother had said.

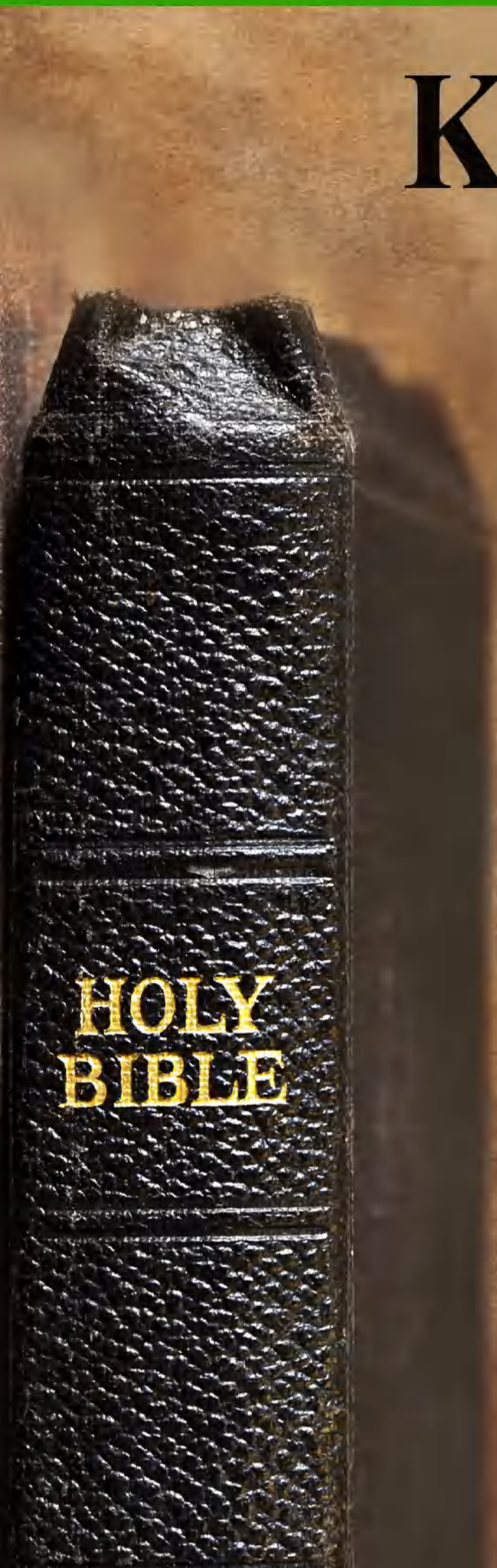
They were both astonished and frightened, and sending her out to play, Mr. Whitney inquired of his wife if she had a good appetite.

"Yes. She eats regularly and heartily."

"I think she has never read foolish stories?"

"No, never! Where could she obtain them?"

"It is very singular, and I think it would be best to call in our family physician. No doubt, her brain is affected either from over-study at school, or a too



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than any one of you in the face of these awful diseases, and I always feel how impotent is human skill. To God and the nurses belongs the cure."

Faith was an especial favorite with the doctor, and he often patted her on the head, saying he hoped she would escape these frightful dangers.

He now felt certain she was the object of his visit; but at that moment she came bounding into the room like a young Dryad, looking as bright and well as usual.

The good doctor was now indeed in a quandary. He began to think he was the victim of a practical joke; but his suspicions were soon dispelled by Mrs. Whitney asking her daughter to go out again, as they wished to talk to the doctor in private.

"Doctor," said Mrs. Whitney, as soon as Faith had left, "you are no doubt surprised that we should send for you when no one is sick; but we have a very strange case, about which we wish to consult you.

"Our daughter has just been telling us that she always sees persons, men, women and children about her when she goes out into the fields. She sees them also in the house, and they talk to her and she to them, but particularly when she is alone in the woods.

"She says she is never alarmed at their appearance and always thought everybody saw them as she does."

The doctor was puzzled. He pulled at his beard, and abstracting a stray hair, drew it slowly through his fingers.

Mrs. Whitney continued, "She seems perfectly well bodily, doctor; but we are afraid her mind is getting disturbed, or it may be an indication of approaching illness; and we have sent for you to see her and tell us what you think had better be done for her."

"Hem! hem!" coughed the doctor; "send for the child."

Mrs. Whitney called her, and she came in, wonder-

ing why she was the object of such anxious solicitude.

The doctor took one of her plump, little hands in his right, put his left on her brow, looked at her tongue, examined her eyes, and listened to the beating of her heart. "Do you sleep well at night, my child?"

"I guess I sleep pretty well," faltered Faith; "but I don't know."

"How about your dreams, — do you dream bad dreams?"

"I don't dream very often, or don't remember 'em if I do."

"But when you do remember them,— what are they like?"

She thought a moment. "Well, I dreamt once I had a leaping-pole as tall as the trees in papa's woods, and I leaped with it from tree to tree, looking into all the birds'-nests and gathering nuts on the highest branches.

"Suddenly I fell from a high tree-top, and I thought I would be killed, but I reached the ground *so softly*, and then I woke up."

"Hem, hem! Disturbed sleep." He questioned her then very minutely about the forms she had seen.

Turning to the anxious parents, he said: "I think the child is troubled with worms. They affect children very strangely sometimes, and no doubt the visions she sees are the results of a disturbed brain occasioned by this trouble. I think if you watch her at night you will find she tosses herself about uneasily in bed. Her day visions are doubtless the distorted shadows of her sleeping fancies."

Relieved beyond expression by his suggestions, Mrs. Whitney asked, "What shall we do, doctor?" saying that now she thought of it, the child looked white about the mouth in the morning, which she had always heard indicated worms.

"What shall we do?" replied the doctor, looking wise and again clearing his throat by his impressive "hems;" "why, give her vermifuge. There's no doubt that'll set her all right, and you may be thankful it's no worse!"

Dr. Goodman was of the old school, and, as the custom was in those days, carried an apothecary's shop with him in a pair of black saddle-bags, stowed away under the seat of his low, rickety shay. Fetching this to the house, he slowly opened the time-worn bag and brought forth a bottle of the bitter decoction: "Give her one dose of this to-night and another in the morning. The next day I will call again."

"Then there is no danger, you think, doctor?" said Mrs. Whitney as she anxiously followed him to the door and down the gravel walk to the gate.

"Oh, not the least, madam, not the least! I wish I felt as safe about all my patients," he added, as he drove away.

She gave Faith a dose of the horrid mixture that night, and if the poor child had never been troubled by perverse dreams before, she had good cause for them now. A ball of yarn rolled before her eyes all night, twisting and twirling around, but would not unwind for her; and she awoke in the morning really sick, with a violent headache and no appetite for her breakfast. Her mother ascribed these symptoms to the curative effects of the medicine, and of course gave her a second dose, according to the prescription of the physician.

Faith lay upon the couch all day, thoroughly sick, and too miserable to sit up.

The next morning the faithful doctor returned.

"Well, how is my little patient this morning?" Seeing her pale face upon the lounge. "Has she seen any of those scarecrows to-day?"

"No, doctor! She has not been out of bed to-day,

and has not felt like seeing anyone," replied Mrs. Whitney.

"She'll soon be all right," he replied. "Give her the medicine to-day and to-morrow, and we'll drive off these hobgoblins forever." Then patting the sick child upon the head and telling her to "perk up," he bustled away.

As soon as he had left, Faith called her mother.

"Mamma," said she, "all the time Dr. Goodman was here, a tall man was standing behind him, shaking his head as if he meant, 'You mustn't take that stuff.' I was afraid to tell the doctor, but I don't want to take any more of that bitter medicine."

Poor Mrs. Whitney's courage now quite forsook her, and she sank upon the nearest chair, weak from anxiety and fear. She tried to answer her daughter bravely however, and said, —

"This is all nonsense, Faith. No one said a word but Dr. Goodman, and no one else was present. How can you talk so? Come, you must take another dose of the medicine immediately," and she arose to fetch it.

Mrs. Whitney kept her medicines on a shelf over the clock and near the ceiling, and accessible only by standing on a chair. She did this that no one might reach them but herself, and that there could be no possibility of a mistake in administering them.

But now she sought for her bottle in vain. "Where can it be?" said she; "I put it on the shelf not half an hour ago."

"Mamma," said Faith, "the man says, 'Look in the parlor and you'll find it under the rug, empty.'"

Mrs. Whitney found it as directed and being greatly puzzled and frightened, went to the field again, where her husband was at work, and told him all that had occurred.

Mr. Whitney dropped his hoe immediately, and,

started to follow his wife to the house, but seeing his colt saddled and bridled where he had left it a few moments before, he mounted at once and galloped after the doctor. It was not difficult to overtake him, as his old spavin'd mare could only travel about three miles an hour, and Mr. Whitney was soon at his side, relating what had transpired after his departure.

"I've been thinking, Whitney," said the doctor, "ever since I left your house, that like enough I'd misunderstood the case, and it moughten't be worms after all! I thought I'd wait a bit, and see if the *vermifuge* would do any good; but since you've told me of this last freak, I'm sure it ain't worms."

"What on earth can it be then?" asked Mr. Whitney.

The doctor looked knowingly into Mr. Whitney's face, but Mr. Whitney's face was a blank.

"Now look here, Whitney, just hitch that wild critter of your'n, and take a seat here in the shay, 'long side of me, and I'll tell you what I think."

Mr. Whitney hitched his colt and took the seat as directed.

"Whitney, you are an honest man, that's true; but not every honest man does always just the right thing. You're what I call cranky, eccentric, and obstinate! You didn't do the fair thing by the church, eh!—Now, did you?—You thought you did, no doubt; but you didn't, and every member of the church will tell you so. You law'd them year in and year out, until both you and the church grew as poor as the mice that scampered over the floor. You broke up the church to be sure; but are you any better off for it to-day? Not a bit! You cut yourself and family off from the church society, which is the best here, and you turned bitterer than gall 'gainst everybody and everything belonging to it!"

"But what has all this to do with my daughter's

illness?" asked Mr. Whitney, as he slowly came to himself after this savage onslaught.

"The sins of the father are sure to be visited upon the children," replied the doctor. "That's the *scripter* for it. Now, your daughter, the dear child, never went to Sunday school in her life. I dare say she don't know anything about the Catechism, nor the Ten Commandments, this minute, to say nothing of the Trinity and vicarious Atonement.

"I believe the Almighty is punishing you through her for your neglect and wrong-doing toward the church. Whitney, I believe your daughter is possessed of the Devil! And you are responsible for it."

This declaration was overwhelming, coming from his family physician. Mr. Whitney showed no visible signs of emotion however, but, looking the doctor firmly in the eyes, asked, "What treatment, doctor, would you recommend for devils?"

"The insane-asylum and a straight-jacket!" replied the doctor. Mr. Whitney left the shay and bade him good-morning, when the doctor drove off as rapidly as his old mare could trot.

CHAPTER IV.

It is difficult to describe Mr. Whitney's state of mind as he slowly returned from this overpowering interview.

The confidence which he had always reposed in his old family physician was sadly shaken, although what he had heard was without doubt the doctor's honest conviction, as well as the general opinion of his church.

He mused, as he rode along, over his past life and experience, saying to himself, — "I've long known the church threatened me with that godly retribution which they believed would come in the shape of individual misfortune and overtake me sooner or later, — the wish being father to the thought; but I really hoped they would outgrow such unnatural prejudice and no longer see in a God of love a vindictive tyrant. Just to think, too, of their including my poor child in their anathemas!

"Ah! it is astonishing to what lengths prejudice and superstition will carry apparently sensible men, even those who profess to be governed by the pure teaching of Jesus Christ.

"If such narrow-minded bigots had the power, I am afraid they would prove themselves equal to all the cruelties ever inflicted by the Inquisition, and hang, drown or burn everyone who did not accept their miserable creeds.

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The narrow road over which Mr. Whitney traveled the next morning to the village of G—— wound in and out amongst the hills, now through dense, dark forests of pine and fir, and again out into the bright, cheery sunlight of an early summer morning. The wavy fields of growing grain, already beginning to show the promised harvest, were gently bowing their grateful tops as if in adoration to the Giver of all growth.

The exquisite emerald carpet of the meadows, sprinkled with rosy clover blossoms, seemed to pout in dark spots at the tall firs which clustered upon one side of the field and here and there threw down upon the glittering floor sombre shadows.

The early sky-larks were constantly springing heavenward, singing their brief carols, and dropping again as briefly into the dewy grass to acquire fresh courage to rise again and repeat their notes of praise.

The pretty bobolinks were also calling to their mates in musical roundelays, while the ferns, the wild mountain shrubs and the resinous pines permeated the morning air with their healthful and invigorating breath.

But all this beauty was lost upon Mr. Whitney. Nature was in her loveliest dress, yet his heart was not in sympathy, and the journey was lonely and sad. His whole life passed in review before him. His early childhood, which had been so distasteful to him because of his father's stern Calvinistic faith; his own rebellious opposition to that father's religious family teachings; and later, his bitter contest with his father's church,— all came vividly to his mind.

He had married Jerusha Woodruff during the early years of that litigation. She was of a peculiarly forgiving and affectionate disposition, and these admirable qualities influenced him greatly. Still, that softening influence was not powerful enough to overcome the strong prejudice he entertained against

orthodoxy, a prejudice that had grown from an early conviction, through long years of contest for his legal rights. When Faith came, his whole affectionate nature was lavished upon her; and because of this love, he had insisted that her religious opinions and convictions should develop naturally.

Now, as he rode along, the doctor's words, "*cranky, obstinate, eccentric,*" rang like a reproach in his ears. He asked himself, "*Am I right?*" and "*What is truth?* Even the great embodiment of all truth, human and divine, failed to convince the Roman Governor." Then the response came to him, "Let every man be judged out of his own heart."

Mr. and Mrs. Winchester, the uncle and aunt for whom he was going, had no children of their own. They were in middle-life, well-to-do in the world, and lived in a comfortable manner upon a moderate income, to which was added an emolument derived from several insurance companies, of which he was the agent. They owned their home, a pretty cottage in the prosperous village of G——, ten miles from a railroad centre. As Mr. Winchester was accustomed to drive about the country, in the line of his business, and to go occasionally by rail, he enjoyed opportunities for meeting people, and learning the activities of the changing and busy world, far greater than his brother-in-law. He also received the city daily papers, was quite a reader of books on scientific subjects, and well up on all the popular questions of the day,—hence his opinion and judgment were constantly sought in the village. Indeed by his neighbors he was considered quite an oracle.

Mrs. Winchester ("Aunt Patience," as she was called) frequently visited her sister, and often begged that Faith might spend a winter with her; but she was always met with the objection that "her father could not spare her for a single day."

When they saw Mr. Whitney drive up to their

door at ten o'clock in the morning, they looked at each other with alarm, for nothing short of sickness or distress could really induce a farmer to leave his crops in the growing season. Now, seeing his grave face, they knew he must have come on a painful errand.

He told them, as briefly as possible, of Faith's affliction, dwelling on the idea of her insanity, and begged them to return at once with him, and give him the benefit of their advice.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Winchester, with their strong magnetism, consoled and cheered Mr. Whitney greatly, telling him to hope for the best. As soon as dinner was over, they made brief preparations and accompanied him home.

During her father's absence, Faith was engaged in her usual round of duties and pleasures, and not until half an hour before his return did she manifest any of her peculiar symptoms. Then she sat down again, with her head resting on her hand, and covered her eyes as before.

Ordinarily a visit from her aunt and uncle gave her the greatest pleasure; but now she sat as if asleep and unconscious, and made no movement of welcome, although told of their presence.

"Does she never speak during these spells?" inquired Mr. Winchester.

"Never, as far as we know," replied Mrs. Whitney, "her lips move sometimes as if speaking to herself, but she never utters a word."

"Is she never violent?"

"Never! On the contrary, she seems absorbed within herself, as if asleep."

"How long do these attacks last?"

"Usually about half an hour, but sometimes longer."

"And was she never troubled with these spells before the doctor gave her that medicine for worms?"

"We never knew them to occur before."

"Did you never speak to her about her singular conduct?"

"At dinner to-day she appeared so natural, so like herself, that I asked her if she remembered how strangely she had acted yesterday.

"'Do you mean, mamma,' said she, 'while I was asleep? I didn't dream anything, and I didn't know I had been asleep until I woke up and saw you and papa standing over me.'"

The doctor now arrived, still firm in his conviction that the sooner Faith was dispatched to an insane-asylum the better.

She appeared to divine his thoughts, and as soon as he had seated himself, she arose and gazing dazedly about the room, walked rapidly to the closet where hung her hat and shawl, and seizing them, started for the front door.

They were watching her movements intently, and the doctor suggested in an undertone that all keep quiet and see what she would do.

Mr. Whitney, however, fearing some injury might befall his child, sprang forward to seize her; no injunction of the physician could restrain his paternal solicitude. Suddenly she threw open the door, darted out upon the road, and fled as if carried along by superhuman power.

Her father followed as rapidly as possible, and both were soon hidden from view by the over-hanging trees. The rest of the party, led by Mr. Winchester, came panting along behind.

After a long chase Faith threw herself at the foot of a willow-tree, under whose drooping limbs she had often played, and when her father reached her, she looked up into his anxious face as calm as if nothing had occurred. She appeared not in the least fatigued, although all the rest were ready to drop from exhaustion.

The doctor now proposed to construct a palanquin of branches, on which to carry her back to the house; but she arose quietly, and without speaking a word, submissively allowed herself to be led back by the hand of her father.

On reaching home, she again seated herself in a state of semi-consciousness, her left hand over her eyes as if to shade them from the light, and her right moving nervously back and forth over the small table near which she sat. Her father kindly took her hand and spoke to her, but she quickly drew it away and moved it over the table as before.

"She acts as if writing," said the doctor, "what a strange fancy!"

Mr. Winchester, who was sitting behind her, now drew a pencil and paper from his pocket. She seemed intuitively conscious of the act; for turning round toward him, she seized the paper and nervously scribbled a few lines which she passed to her mother.

Mrs. Whitney read aloud: "Sister Jerusha, your brother John counsels patience!"

A profound silence for a moment ensued.

Mrs. Whitney's brother "John" had died some years before; she was deeply attached to him and had nursed him through his long and fatal illness.

"Crazy as a loon," muttered the doctor in a subdued voice.

Mr. Winchester turned toward the parents, and in a quiet and solemn manner remarked, as if the idea had just now occurred to him, "Brother Whitney, this appears like spiritualism!"

The doctor was indignant that another, and he not a physician, should express an opinion on the case differing from his own.

He therefore arose, exclaiming, "What! Spiritualism? Devilism!"

Mr. Winchester looked sharply around and said,

"Doctor Goodman, what do you know about spiritualism?"

"Nothing," replied the doctor curtly, "and what's more, I don't want to know anything about it."

"That is very poor logic, Doctor Goodman, which denounces through ignorance, and refuses examination or enlightenment, through prejudice or obstinacy. It is not likely that you will ever see again in your practice such a singular and interesting case as this. Should one ever come under your notice, it would be well to remember that such remarkable demonstrations as we have witnessed are not likely to be caused by worms. Vermifuge may lay devils, doctor, as well as worms, for aught I know; but it is certainly not a proper remedy to quiet the highly excited brain of a young girl, nor a panacea for such disturbances."

The docter nervously seized his hat, and making a slight bow to the ladies, left, muttering, "That man Winchester is worse than his brother-in-law! When a man breaks loose from the restraints of the Church of God, and catches at 'isms,' his downward career is pretty sure and swift. God and His Church are not to be mocked in vain, and some dreadful punishment will be sure to fall upon these sinful people before long."

"Brother Whitney!" said Mr. Winchester, after the docter's departure, "I know very little about these occult manifestations, and I must confess that I have heretofore looked upon them all as the visionary outgrowths of over-sensitive persons or highly nervous temperaments; but when the evidence comes through an intelligent and healthy child, who tells us that she sees and converses with the dwellers in another or subjective existence invisible to us, we must confess the subject is entitled to our closest and most serious consideration. By the world at large, especially by ignorant, weak or highly imag-

inative persons, running after these psychological phenomena is not very profitable employment. It absorbs the time and the attention due to the more important duties of home and family. I think, more evil than good is likely to follow investigation by this class of excitable unthinking people."

Faith now awoke, and rubbing her eyes looked bewilderingly around, and asked her mother why they were watching her.

She was evidently ignorant that anything remarkable had occurred, and they did not enlighten her. A moment after, she arose, and taking her mother's hand left the room.

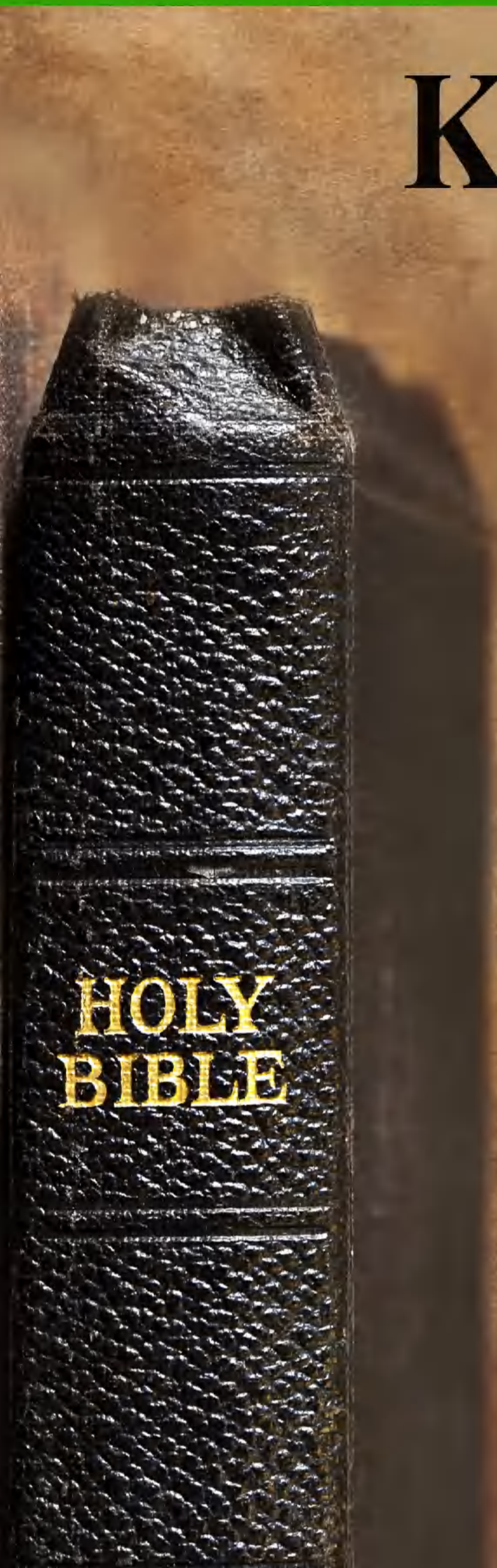
After she had retired, Mr. Winchester continued: "My advice is, that you let the child alone, neither talk to her of these matters, nor compel her to take medicine. She was well enough before you forced these unconscious spells upon her by your anxiety and this foolish medical treatment. She has evidently a highly nervous organization, and to subject her to such an unnatural strain at this early age, may entirely destroy her health. Situated as you are here, liable to be criticised by every eye, it would be very unfortunate if it were known the child possessed such unusual occult powers. She would be shunned by her schoolmates and friends, and there would be no end of disagreeable consequences. It would be bad enough in the town where we live, but in this narrow, bigoted community the effect would be ruinous."

"But do you think, Brother Winchester," asked Mrs. Whitney, as she re-entered the room, "that the souls of the dead ever return to earth again?"

"That is what many sensible people believe, Jerusha."

"I would rather not believe it."

"It is not a matter of belief, my dear sister, the question simply is, 'Is it true?' And that is what we all want to know.



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largest for home use." "Deacon Gripwell was charged with being hard on his hired help, with scrimping his table, and declaring that milk, johnny-cake and beans were healthier and better diet than meat or coffee. — (They were certainly cheaper.) When his men got briars or thistle-thorns in their feet or hands during harvest, he told them to wait till Sunday to pick them out, — daylight was too precious on working-days."

"Elder Mixer, the village druggist, was charged with diluting his liquors and adulterating his drugs every Sunday afternoon, when his shop was closed." (The first was no doubt a slander, for he was his own best customer.)

"Elder Sharp traded in horse-flesh, and every one admitted he knew how to 'butter his own bread.' He could metamorphose any old stub-tailed cob into a beautiful silky-tailed colt, and none the wiser, and he was now said to be experimenting on glass eyes."

"Good old Deacon Ernest, who was called the *piousest* and *prayerfullest* saint in the whole church, — except the minister, — said he knew *separately* every letter in the alphabet, but *collectively* they had always proved a stumbling-block to him. In one of his prayers he called lustily upon all the sinners present to 'jump into the good old ship *Lang Zion*' and save themselves before she lifted her *bulwarks* and sailed away!"

These and similar stories constituted the gossip of this good religious town. They were told without malice, often by the deacons themselves, as good jokes upon each other. They showed at least that saints, in worldly matters, were very much like worldly sinners after all.

Dr. Goodman embraced the first lull in the conversational part of the entertainment to speak on the subject which at that moment was nearest his heart. Feeling the great importance of the secret which he

held tightly buttoned beneath his waistcoat, and which he was now anxious to communicate, he stroked his beard, and began, —

"Brethren! it's not my custom, as you know, to talk about my patients outside of the profession; but I have just come from one whose ailment is not of the body," — and dropping his voice to the *basso profundi*,— "*but of the soul!*"

"Amen! Amen! Amen!" was shouted from every corner of the room, through the force of habit.

"Don't say Amen, brethren," replied the doctor; "what I'm about to relate must excite your horror, and not your Amens."

Now the good doctor was a power — an oracle — in the church, ranking next to the minister himself. The rank, however, was stoutly contested by the leader of the choir, who held that singing was next to prayer. To this the doctor was wont to scornfully reply, "What would your psalm-singing and your praying amount to without my pills and powders to repair your bodies and fit you for Divine service?"

Therefore this reference to his patient touched every heart, and there fell upon the vestry such a sudden hush, such an intense desire to hear the doctor's story that a pin could have been heard to drop in any part of the room.

"Not two miles from here, there lies a patient whose parents have so long defied God and His Church that Satan has at last entered in and taken possession of the whole family. He is dragging souls down to perdition, by pretending to send messages through this sick child from another world, but which are from hell!"

"Ah! Ah!" and groans and hysterical sobs came from a devout sister in a distant corner.

The elders and the deacons now became excited.

They brought out their bandanas and spread them

over their bald heads, groaning aloud, while anxiously awaiting further details.

The doctor now drew a vivid diagnosis of the case, from a medical standpoint, referring particularly to the influence and the conduct of the ungodly father, who was now suffering retribution through his child. He briefly reviewed the cunning manœuvres of the devil in causing a moral and religious blindness in the family, thus dragging them all the more surely down to hell.

Having told his thrilling story with all the embellishments which his excited imagination could command, he wiped his heated brow and returned to his seat.

Silence profound, rested over the meeting for a few minutes, broken only by the stifled hiccough of the astounded sister in the distant corner.

Elder Sharp at last arose, and the shrill, characteristic tones of his voice penetrated and filled every part of the room, — the elder's practice at horse-auctions eminently fitting him to be heard, —

"Brethren, it's hard to believe that under the very shadow of this church's all-protecting wings the devil should snatch at human souls, coming like a *horse-thief* in the night. But, *beretheren*, he knows his own. The man who went to law with the church and robbed her of her rights will surely get his desert. The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and the rest on 'em, who slayed the enemies of His people in Egypt, and in Canaan, is mighty yet to punish those who despise His saints.

"The Lord, my friends, uses Satan to punish sinners now, as He did when He gave Job *biles* and turned him over to the devil. And punishment is still visited upon their children! — yea! thanks be to His holy name unto many generations. Still, brethren, if we are striving to save the heathen in *furrin* parts, we ought at least do our *dooty* to sinners at

home and not leave this *here* wicked family to perish without an effort to save their souls. Let us appoint a committee to visit and labor with them unto conversion."

But who should compose the committee? None of the brethren had been able heretofore to answer the crushing arguments of Mr. Whitney himself; and now that he was backed by the devil in person, they all felt the effort would be utterly hopeless.

Deacon Ernest came to the rescue. He said he didn't see why God wasn't as powerful in this *here* vestry as in the house of the ungodly. "He don't tell us to go to hell and hunt the devil up to convert him, nor to run after his imps, but to resist him if he comes after us, and he will fly far from us, and when we need help, to come to Him. So let us come to the Lord, brethren, for help. Let us pray!"

CHAPTER V.

At school Faith was intelligent, quick and studious. She was so unselfish and winning in all her ways that she soon captivated the hearts of her young schoolmates, notwithstanding they were at first inclined to shun her: for there were vague whispers of her recent infliction.

She never courted their society however, nor did she resent any neglect; but her sweet simplicity and innocence, and her evident purity of heart, soon drew them all lovingly toward her, while her modest reserve gave them an impression of her superiority, as if she were not one of them. There seemed about her, indeed, a kind of halo, a mysterious attractiveness which the quick instinct of childhood was prompt to discover, but could not analyze,— a sacredness such as one feels when gazing into the eyes of Raphael's "Madonna di San Sisto" in the Dresden Gallery, which picture, indeed, she resembled in a remarkable degree.

The noisy little groups of children never dreamed of letting Faith into any of their mischievous pranks; but often modified their own conduct by asking each other, "What would Faith Whitney say if she were here?"

Still she was by no means a recluse, but entered into all their little amusing games and exercises with the same zest as the rest.

Whenever she was puzzled over an intricate problem and became disheartened, she had but to drop her head between her hands, turn her mind within in deep meditation, as it were, when the problem would slowly pass before her inner vision worked out and completed. She then copied it from memory.

She never thought of questioning the source of this power, nor did she think it a remarkably strange gift; for it had become a part of her life.

Upon one occasion, to Faith's great distress, one of the little girls who sat beside her rested her head upon her lap and fell asleep. She could not be aroused by the teacher after repeated attempts, until Faith timidly placed her hand upon the child's head, stroking it gently, when the little one awoke immediately.

She was very careful thereafter not to let it be known that she possessed powers not common to other pupils,—powers the scope and extent of which she knew nothing herself.

She more than satisfied her teachers in all her studies. In written composition her exercises were far beyond her years; they showed such a knowledge of human nature, such a breadth of reading and thought, that they could not understand how so young a pupil could write them. She told them she always wrote easily and rapidly, and brought her manuscripts exactly as she had written them, never rewriting nor correcting a word, but admitted that she did not always comprehend the full meaning and bearing of the subject.

Thus the years rolled quietly by until Faith reached the age of seventeen.

Her parents followed the advice Mr. Winchester had given them, troubling themselves no further about her peculiarities. Her spells of abstraction and of abnormal influence gradually left her, and

there were no further returns of them during her school-days. She often told her mother, however, of visions which came to her at night, and of the pleasure they gave her. Both father and mother had long ceased to look upon their daughter's power as a calamity, but rather as a heavenly gift and blessing.

In the absence of that serene content which the faithful orthodox believer enjoys when resting under the blessed assurance of his own escape from hell, regardless of the eternal damnation of the rest of mankind, — Mr. and Mrs. Whitney rested comparatively happy in the belief that friends who had passed from this life were still living in spirit about them and became their ministering angels. For Faith's sake they rarely spoke of these things, and in the course of time her occult powers were remembered only by the members of her own family.

She had now finished the high-school course, and availed herself of all the books accessible in the very limited school-library, consisting chiefly of historical works, a few travels, a copy of "Chamber's Miscellany," "Pilgrim's Progress," the Indian Missions, and several bound volumnes of highly prized sermons by the most eminent divines.

The members of the strictly good, orthodox school-committee were not going to imperil their own souls, nor the souls of the young intrusted to their care, by placing within their reach any such pernicious books as those of *Byron*, *Dickens*, *Scott*, *Thackeray*, *Shakespeare*, nor even *Thompson*, *Cowper*, or *Young*. Not they! Even Milton was rejected; for although he wrote of hell, which was orthodox, he wrote poetry as well, which grew out of worldly imagination and was of the devil incarnate!

For a year previous to Faith's graduation, she had been a prey to thoughts never known before.

Perhaps she instinctively began to realize that

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her — terribly oppressive thoughts, she rose up with clasped hands and exclaimed bravely,—

"Faith Whitney, awake! The romance of your childhood is over! The future beckons you! demands you! Awake, and accept your womanhood!"

CHAPTER VI.

PROFESSOR AND MADAME SAVOIR were eminently fitted for the work they had undertaken. One was the complement of the other. Under their management, everything connected with the school moved in perfect harmony, like a piece of well-oiled machinery. With a thorough unanimity of thought and purpose, how could it be otherwise? No one ever spoke of the Professor without mentioning the Madame also; for she was as much a power in this educational community as her gifted husband.

There were no juvenile Savoirs to interrupt the conjugal harmony of the twain, nor expose to the world any interior friction in their domestic life, if such existed. The young ladies in the establishment alike respected, admired and feared them. It was a subject of conjecture amongst them how husband and wife could uniformly manifest such deferential politeness toward each other, and they often wondered if there never was a time when the "*suaviter in modo*" was laid aside and the "*fortiter in re*" asserted in its place.

As we have just said, however, there was no one to expose the interior *ménagement* of the Savoir mansion. The lady teachers were no nearer the professor and his double than the pupils themselves. They were all held, as it were, at arm's length. An impassable barrier appeared to separate them; yet

they could make no complaint, nor could they mention any occasion when they had been unjustly treated.

Both the Professor and the Madame declared they detested the system of espionage which prevailed in other schools. They never required a teacher to watch a pupil, much less one pupil to act as a spy upon another. No, they considered both methods highly impolitic, if not immoral.

Long years of experience had taught them a more discreet and safer method. When a new pupil came, they embraced an early opportunity to take an impression of the trunk-lock. A skeleton-key soon put them in quiet possession of the young lady's secrets — the state of her own mind, and also that of her papa and mamma. They were never so exacting, nor prying, as to require the reading of letters which the girls sent home, as was customary in some establishments; and so the poor homesick children could unbosom themselves to their fond parents with perfect freedom. The answers that these epistles brought, which were often tearfully laid away in their trunks, were for Professor and Madame Savoir quite sufficient. "Surely," they reasoned together, "if we are to guide aright our precious charges, is it not quite proper we should understand their hearts?"

"To this plan we are without doubt indebted for the high moral standing of our institution." — It was always to them the profoundest mystery how the two elopements which had taken place in years gone by could have been possible.

The young ladies were always permitted the freest intercouse with the students, but were never allowed to leave the seminary grounds with them. They played croquet, archery and even light games of ball together, during the long, dull summer afternoons, upon the school-lawns, which were large and

beautifully shaded with many tempting bowers and rustic seats, scattered here and there in shaded nooks under the trees.

Gerald Livingston was an admitted favorite with the fair maidens, as he was a skilful player in all their games, and his perfect ingenuousness of manner gained him many favors from the teachers. Latterly however he had become very fond of the company of Kyn-Dhwen, and quite ignored the seminary attractions, often preferring to stroll through the fields with him or to engage in a game of foot-ball with the other students.

Kyn-Dhwen never really cared much for the young ladies' society, and only called upon them because urged by the other students. He was therefore only too willing to meet Gerald's wishes and stay away altogether.

This was not the case with the other Sinhalese students. They had become quite interested of late in the white beauties, who were glad to accept their attentions. Besides, they loved the outdoor exercise and the mental relaxation which the games afforded, and their achievements in archery and croquet soon became something remarkable. The ravishing *toilettes* of their fair opponents were lost u on them, so absorbed were they in the delight andp witchery of the contests.

It was indeed a pretty sight to see these agile young fellows draw the bow, and dart like young Apollos after the flying arrows, with a swiftness and lightness peculiar to the East Indian alone.

The young ladies, with a quick perception of masculine grace and beauty, were ready to lose their hearts over these "dear Sinhalese," as they called them in the free chatter of their rooms or surreptitiously discussed them behind their books in the class-room.

Dear little Milly Humphreys, who was the pet

and darling of the whole school, received a severe reprimand one day from Professor Savoir, after one of these exciting games. She was graphically describing it to one of her chums, aside, in an undertone, while the professor was endeavoring to explain an intricate problem in equations — "Multiply both sides, by four times the co-efficient of x" — when he heard a suppressed titter, and his quick ear caught the words, "Just too 'cute for anything."

He held an Algebra at his side, with his forefinger marking the place. In a flash of anger, he slapped the book down upon the desk beside him,—

"Millicent Humphreys, of Humphrey's Station, leave the room!"

This sudden shock brought Milly to her feet as if an anarchist bomb had exploded beneath her. With lips half opened in her fright, she gazed like a startled fawn at the excited professor.

"Millicent Humphreys," he repeated, "leave the room!"

This second reprimand in a still louder and more determined tone clearly defined her position. She pursed up her pretty little mouth defiantly and slowly walked out.

The example had an admirable effect upon the remaining girls, and the professor proceeded with his explanations uninterrupted.

Poor little Milly! She had suffered a severe blow and her pride was sorely wounded. When her friends crowded about her at recess, she refused to be comforted.

"I'll pay him up for this," she sobbed, hysterically.

"It was real cruel," chimed in her room-mate, soothingly, while another exclaimed, —

"I mean to call him 'Professor Savage' hereafter."

This struck Milly as being very funny, and she laughed through her tears. Still she thought it would only be a proper punishment to the professor

if she should refuse to come down to supper that night.

She therefore fasted on crackers and chocolate drops in her bedroom.

The next day her face bore a sorrowful and injured air in his presence, and she continued pensive and reticent throughout the amusements of the day, although usually one of the brightest, cheeriest, liveliest little fairies on the grounds.

She was only sixteen and had never known a cross nor a hardship in her life.

Quick and witty in repartee, the students loved to say piquant things to her in order to hear her happy replies. Fully aware of her popularity, she took delight in drawing the young men on to declarations of love, and, silly boys that they were, two had already been on their knees before her, each vowing that "without her the world wouldn't be good for anything, and life wouldn't be worth living."

These conquests only made Milly's frivolous heart more coquettish, and, like all foolish children, she did not prize the sensible enjoyments that were entirely within her reach.

She thought, "If she could only bring one of those reserved Sinhalese, Thun-Gah for instance, to his knees, that would be an achievement which none of the other girls could boast of."

Thun-Gah was a picture of manly vigor and dignity. His serious black eyes and modest bearing seemed to stamp him as proof against female flirtation.

Milly played croquet with him every time he came to the grounds; but let her look never so lovely and be never so fascinating, he preserved the same exterior.

A close observer, however, might see that he was quite partial to this "airy fairy" little creature, and that he never looked at the other young ladies as he did at her.

Milly was an expert player, and the games they played together were closely contested. But this day it was evident that she felt, as she said, "out o' sorts" and scarcely able to make a wicket. Her hand was very unsteady, and altogether she seemed unusually disturbed and nervous.

Thun-Gah had never seen her in this frame of mind before, and after the second game was over, he looked kindly at her and inquired, "What is the matter, Miss Milly, are you ill to-day?"

He had never before asked her the least personal question, and now he called her by her Christian name Milly, and his tone was soft and tender.

It was an unusually sultry afternoon, and they were alone upon the grounds, the rest having gone upon a stroll to the woods, or to their rooms for an afternoon nap.

Milly did not look up when he addressed her, but his sympathetic words affected her strangely; and instead of answering, she put her handkerchief to her eyes and wept silently.

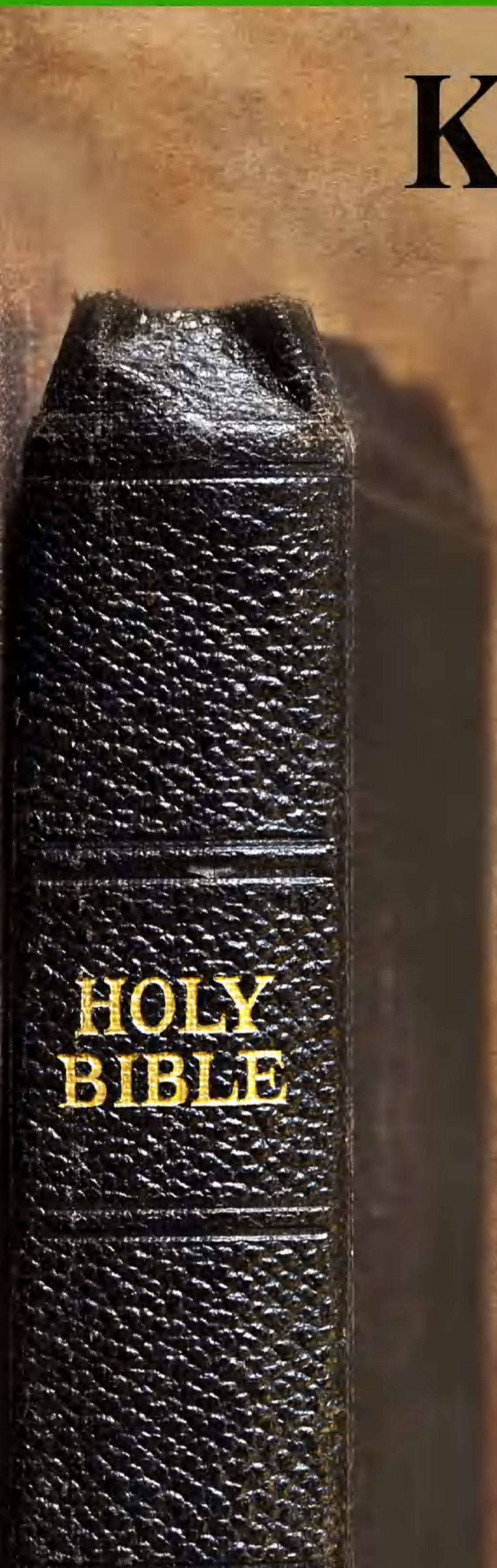
A young lady in tears! He had never seen such a sight before; and now, dear, gay little Milly was weeping.

During all these past months she had filled a prominent place in his thoughts, and he had often murmured to himself, "Ah, were I not so dark and she so fair, it might have been, it might have been — But ah, no! It can never be — it can never be."

Milly dropped on a low wooden bench under a drooping elm, a few steps in the rear, hidden from view, and Thun-Gah tossing his mallet down sprang to her side.

His eyes flashed, his lips were hot, and his breath came quickly as he threw himself on the grass at her feet and gazed up into her face.

She drew her handkerchief from her eyes as she felt him approach, and extended her hand.



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Again bending down over the blushing figure before him, he continued, "Gladly would I fly with you this minute, dear Milly; but we are here under the eyes of the teachers and pupils. And we must wait."

Then starting up again excitedly, he exclaimed, "No! No! I cannot wait! I cannot wait! You are mine! by all the ties of Heaven you are mine!" and again his eyes flashed and his lips quivered. He folded his arms resolutely across his broad chest, as if in that manner only could he keep them from encircling the form of the lovely girl before him.

"Milly, my heart, my love! Will you fly with me? Will you fly to-morrow night?"

The passion which inspired her lover seemed influencing her also. She thought only of the present.

"Yes! I am thine — forever thine!" she whispered aloud; "I will do as you wish!"

"It would be folly, dearest Milly, to hope for the consent of your parents to your marriage with a foreigner like myself. They could never view it in the proper light. My great love would not weigh a feather against my East Indian blood. No, Milly, we must marry and get their sanction afterwards; we must elope."

How sweet it was to the simple Milly to know she had inspired such intense feelings! She wished he would never stop speaking to her of his love. She wished he would fly with her at once, to his romantic home, where love would be their only thought, their only life! Her ardent fancy pictured his Oriental clime, where summer reigned perpetually and the trees were laden with tropical fruits, nature bountifully supplying what man laboriously toiled for elsewhere! She saw the deep forests, filled with birds of gorgeous plumage, and heard

their strange sweet music — she even laughed aloud at the imaginary monkeys leaping in the trees, and already felt herself in the arms of her noble lover in that enchanted land!

"I know your room," he continued, "many an evening have I watched the light from its window, until it flickered and went out, and its mistress slept. The little balcony and lattice-work just beneath you must make use of to-morrow night!"

Milly felt a strange thrill pass through her as the event was actually being planned.

He spoke rapidly, —

"The whole distance is not over fifteen feet to the ground! At twelve exactly I will await you below! Step through your window to the balcony, the lattice will be a convenient ladder, and I will take you in my arms before you are half way down! We will catch the midnight accommodation, and reach the city of L—— by morning! There we will find a minister and be married, and we can determine on our future movements afterwards."

This was all very plain and simple. Still, little Milly, thoughtless as she was, realized that it would take money and that her lover could not have a great deal, so she whispered encouragingly, "I have fifty dollars in money. Papa sent it to me last week, and I've not used a cent of it. I need only take my little bag, you know; we can send for my trunk some other time."

"We must not talk any more now, dear love," said he; "it is not safe. And, furthermore, we had better not meet again until ——"

"We elope!" added Milly, now only too anxious for the event to come off.

"One more word, sweetheart! You must not speak to me when I take you in my arms. Be silent!" Then, almost in a whisper, "To-morrow night at twelve precisely!"

"Good-by, darling!" and with a parting kiss he hurried across the lawn and took his way to the university, unmindful of everything else in the world but the projected elopement.

Once in his room, he busied himself collecting his books and writing short notes to his trusted friends.

Milly was also all in a flutter. She shut herself up in her chamber, and, being afraid to make any demonstration, such as putting away her clothes in her trunks, or other preparation, for fear of discovery, she passed the rest of the long day and evening too much excited even to think.

The next morning she went through her recitations with quite a calm exterior; but the practiced eye of the Madame detected that everything was not as it should be. Perhaps the reprimand the professor had given her in the school-room had been too severe, and she might be thinking of going home, — a thing which could not be permitted.

She communicated these fears to her double at lunch, and when Milly was again at recitation made a visit to her room, and explored that receptacle for all the schoolgirls' thoughts and fears, — the trunk.

She was about to give up her search as useless when, in the bottom of the handkerchief-box, she espied two pink notes, in Milly's handwriting, carefully laid away. One was to her mother, and the other to her room-mate. The latter was unsealed, and ran thus:—

"My Dearest Gussie, — When you read this letter, I shall be 'Mrs. Thun-Gah' and many miles away from here. We are going to elope at twelve to-night from my window, which I know is not the best way; but then, dear Gussie, I am forced to do so, you see, under the circumstances. You have no idea how he loves me. Oh! dear Gussie, it takes my breath away to write it; and only think, I did

not know it myself until yesterday. You know I am tired of school and how unhappy I've been of late. My husband (how funny it sounds!) is not rich; but, then, where we are going one can live on bananas and cocoanuts and love. Besides, I know Pa will forgive me. I hate awfully to part from you, you dear love of a darling!

"Ever your adoring

"MILLY."

CHAPTER VII.

THE large pond "Finnwater," nearly two miles long and one in width, filled one of the valleys near Jansenville and formed a conspicuous feature in the landscape. The rounded summits of the hills about it were covered with groves of hemlock and spruce, which in winter flung down upon its glassy surface dark, sombre shadows. In the summer months the clear water along the green sloping shores was lovingly caressed by long pendant branches of elms, maples and willows, beneath which the little pleasure boats glided noiselessly, as through the grottoes of some fairyland.

Near the centre of this romantic lake rose a small knoll, a few hundred feet in circumference, known as "Tim Finn's Island."

Tim Finn was a famous fisherman in the early days, who dwelt upon this island, living the life of a hermit.

One night, during a terrible storm he was murdered by Indians, from motives of revenge. His body was found the next morning on the shore, with the scalp torn from the head, and an ominous cross cut upon the breast. Dark stories were mysteriously whispered about Tim's early life. The ruin of a beautiful Indian girl and his brutal treatment, and desertion of her afterward, accounted for the revengeful tragedy of his death.

All the neighborhood knew that Tim's ghost glided noiselessly about the island at midnight, sometimes murmuring sadly in the notes of an anxious night-owl, or moaning in the low cooing of a belated dove. When storm and tempest lashed the lake, his excited spirit could be heard above the raging elements, in the shrill scream of the excited bittern or the plaintive cry of the solitary loon. The mighty thunder told his anger, and his terrible eye glared in every lightning flash. No bucolic juvenile, the country round, ever passed along its weird shores after dark, without whistling vigorously to sustain his courage.

"Finnwater" soon became a pleasant resort for the university boys, and they were not long in exploring every nook and corner of its capes and bays, with no fear of Tim Finn or his ghost, by night or day.

They pitched their tents upon the little island, and encamped in large numbers during the summer months, fishing in the lake, and lounging along its shores under the deep shade of the overhanging trees. In their light boats they sailed round bay and headland, not infrequently with gay parties of visitors, and with song and merriment whiled away many a summer's day within the leafy, cool arcades. They drew their table supplies from the farmers in the neighborhood, paying the market price, while the lake afforded plenty of fish.

True, the "Mountain Moose," as the boys facetiously called the farmers' cows that came down daily to the water to drink, being very tame, quietly submitted to be drawn upon to improve the morning coffee. The young hunters of the university were quite successful also in what they termed "grouse shooting" and brought their game proudly into camp. They admitted that natural history was not thoroughly taught in their classes, and their knowledge of birds and bovines was largely gained from

observation. Hence it was said by the older students that they thought it quite probable the young hunters made mistakes: as their game was always stripped of feathers before reaching camp, and in a pot-pie it was impossible to distinguish varieties of species. This was student reasoning, but the farmers steadily missed their milk and chickens.

Gerald Livingston was a leading spirit in this gipsy life and its amusements. He loved the country and thoroughly enjoyed the abandon of these summer relaxations, and always returned to his books with a stronger determination to do his duty.

The Sinhalese also never missed the island parties. Perhaps the scenery reminded them of their own island home, amidst the wild forests and jungles of their native India.

This primitive life, this "tenting on the beach," so attractive to almost every human being, is surely something more than a mere love of nature. It probably springs from a long-past race-impression of the nomadic or pastoral life of remote ancestors.

The shores of "Finnwater" were also favorite picnic-grounds for the country folks about, both young and old, and many a bonnie lassie lost her heart and plighted her troth to her stalwart farmer lover as she sailed beneath the conveniently sheltering branches of the drooping trees or under the frowning cliffs of the romantic coves.

Mr. Whitney's house lay in this direction, behind a gentle elevation, which entirely concealed it from the lake, though it was not very far away.

The happy laughter and the chanting of merry songs often floated up to the ears of Faith, upon the summer breeze, as she sat at her chamber-window, or read or sewed beneath the trees.

These water-parties were usually composed of church-members or Sunday school scholars; and Faith was not invited to join them.

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moment later, two men clasped together came struggling to the surface, but sank again as quickly.

In a flash Mr. Whitney gathered the rope into a noose, and, rushing into the water as far as he could wade, threw the loop with fortunate accuracy over the drowning bodies as they again rose for the last time slowly to the surface.

Haply the noose tightened around them, and Faith, seizing the coil which lay upon the ground, exclaimed, "Draw gently, Father, draw gently! for fear you may lose the hold." She then assisted him to pull the heavy weight carefully but quickly to the shore.

The bodies of the two young men, limp and lifeless, united in a death-grip, were with difficulty separated and laid on their backs upon the grass.

In one of them life seemed still struggling for mastery. They immediately rolled him over and applied their restoratives. His breath came slowly back, and with a deep sigh the limp body began to move.

Forcing a few drops of brandy into his throat, they turned quickly to his companion, who was entirely inanimate.

Here, indeed, life had fled forever, and all effort at restoration seemed vain and hopeless.

Turning the body for a moment to let the water pass from mouth and throat, they rubbed the chest with brandy, put a few drops into the mouth pressed gently upon the lungs, and chafed the pulseless limbs with all their strength.

Seeing no signs of returning life, poor Faith's self-control was fast deserting her, and she cried aloud, "Oh, father, father! he is dead, he is dead!"

In an agony of grief and despair, she threw herself at the head of the poor lifeless student, wiped away with her handkerchief the froth which now came oozing from his parted lips and stood in flecks upon

his pale cheeks, and then blew her warm breath with all her power into his insensible throat.

Her heavy hair, all unbound, fell like a thick pall around the deathly face as she, again and again, pressed together the parted lips and forced her breath into the unconscious mouth, while her father held the nostrils tightly closed and, with alternate gentle pressing upon the motionless chest, tried to create an artificial breathing.

"Oh, my God! is he dead?" cried a faint voice, and the form of the resuscitated student stood beside them.

"For me he risked his life and has lost it! Oh, Kyn-Dhwen!" he sobbed, "my more than brother, why could I not have died instead of thee or died with thee?"

Kyn-Dhwen — for it was the promising young Sinhalese that lay before them — was all unconscious of his friend's distress.

Faith, absorbed in her superhuman efforts, heard nothing, but continued to force her almost exhausted breath into the rapidly collapsing lungs, as if impelled by a frenzied determination to save this human life, and an overpowering conviction that she must be successful. With an apparent premonition that the poor student was not yet to die, she urged her father not to cease for a moment the chafing of his limbs in order to start, if possible, the circulation of the blood, while she continued her attempt to force her breath between the ashen lips. Suddenly a gurgling sound, a sigh, came slowly from his chest. Another and another followed, discharging the breath she had imparted, and he was alive again!

"Thank God! he lives, he lives!" exclaimed the excited and exhausted girl as she fell fainting on the grass. She remained prostrate but a moment, — the fresh air revived her, and as she arose she recognized for the first time his companion who had

spoken. The look of anguish on his pale face as he saw his friend struggling with death, was painful to behold. His deep anxiety and hope that the efforts would restore him to life — showed an entire disregard of himself and touched Faith's heart.

She at last found her voice and said, "Thank God, your friend is alive, he is saved; but you look much exhausted and need a stimulant. Sit down upon this bank a moment and let me bring you some brandy and camphor."

He was hardly able to speak, but thanked her kindly and explained the accident. "We were fishing together when a sudden turn upset our little boat. At first we laughed at our predicament: for we were both good swimmers, and not being in the least frightened, immediately headed for the shore. We swam side by side for a few moments, when I was suddenly seized with cramp and must have drowned at once but for my friend, who grasped me with one hand, and swam with the other. I saw he could not possibly swim with me in this helpless state weighted down as I was by my heavy clothes, and I begged him to leave me to my fate and save himself. 'Never will I desert a dying friend,' he replied, and we sank together. I knew no more; and how we have been so miraculously preserved, I cannot understand."

Mr. Whitney, who still labored to bring back the slowly returning life of the unconscious Sinhalese, now called Faith to him.

"He speaks," said he. "Listen! and tell me what he says."

Faith leaned her ear close down to the mouth of the yet scarcely breathing man to catch the faint sound of his voice and, turning to her father, whispered, —

"He says, 'Om! Om!' Nothing more."

* * * * * * *

"Halloo, Livingston! what's the matter now?"

was shouted from a boat, rapidly approaching, rowed by four young students.

They leaped upon the shore and immediately surrounded their unfortunate companions.

* * * * * * *

As Faith and her father slowly climbed the long hill on their way homeward, she asked, "Father! don't you think the poor Sinhalese was calling for his mother when he exclaimed so pathetically, 'Om! Om!' as if it were the last word upon his dying lips and the first to touch his reviving consciousness?"

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN Madame Savoir ran her eyes over Milly's astounding note, she sat upon the floor a few moments in a state of breathless excitement. Her not over-sensitive heart knocked excitedly against her rotund bosom.

"To-night at twelve o'clock! There is no time to be lost!"

She put the letter carefully back in the trunk, locked it as before, and staggering to the back stairs, crept down slowly, supporting herself heavily upon the railing.

The professor was at liberty, a few minutes later, and she sent for him to join her in the parlor, where in brief excited sentences she told him all she had learned. It was now two o'clock, and taking a piece of paper, he instantly wrote: —

"Mr. EBENEZER HUMPHREYS,—Milly is ill. Come instanter! Prof. SAVOIR."

This message was soon ticked over the wires to "Humphreys' Station" sixty miles distant.

Mr. Humphreys, Milly's father, had been for many years a poor sheep-raiser.

The five hundred acres of land which he owned were too barren for any other use; but one day a railroad was surveyed through his sheep-farm and he received a snug fortune for the right of way.

The station was named for him, and his once desert land was sold off in town-lots by the foot.

The poor sheep-raiser became suddenly rich.

Mr. Humphreys was a fond father, and now felt that he could not use his easily acquired wealth too lavishly upon his children. He sent both his sons to college, probably converting thereby two honest farmer boys into reckless spendthrifts.

Milly, the baby, was his idol.

He was at the station when the telegram from the professor was handed him. The through express train was just drawing in, and, sending word to Mrs. Humphreys not to expect him home that night, he immediately sprang on board.

We will not describe the poor man's anxiety through his lonely journey of three hours. It was just becoming dusk when the train stopped at Jansenville, and he found Prof. Savoir awaiting him at the station.

His child's illness was soon explained, and the proper course of treatment promptly agreed upon.

The excited Milly retired as usual, but not to sleep; and as soon as the clock struck eleven, she arose, dressed herself as best she could in the dark, and then sat down by the window to await events, —

"It must be near the time! I surely counted eleven!

"Perhaps it was only ten.

"How long the minutes are! — They seem interminable. But isn't an elopement jolly though?

"Just to think — a true lover beneath the lattice!

"Oh dear! I wish the time would come.

"But, after all, what is a little waiting to the long years of love and happiness in store for us!

"It must be nearly midnight — and that's love's hour.

"I 'll look out!

"There, sure enough, is my true love, — waiting

silently at the foot of the lattice like Romeo for his adored Juliet! Oh, how sweet!"

The timid girl resolutely steps out of the window and gazes with rapture down upon her loving Romeo below, —

"But not a word, not even a kiss, dare I fling from my fingers, all must be secrecy and silence: for so he warned me!"

With a stout heart she climbs over the railing and clings to the lattice with her satchel by her side. She has no fear: for, true to his promise, her gallant lover is there to meet her, and reaching up catches her in his eager arms. A moment more, — and he has leaped with his precious burden to the ground.

How sweet to feel the strong grasp of her own, her adoring husband about her! She pillows her head upon his manly breast! She freely trusts herself, and all else, to his loving care in the darkness of the night, while he fairly runs to the carriage in waiting, bearing her light form in his loving arms!

Not a word is spoken, nor is it necessary: for love, though blind, is exceeding trustful.

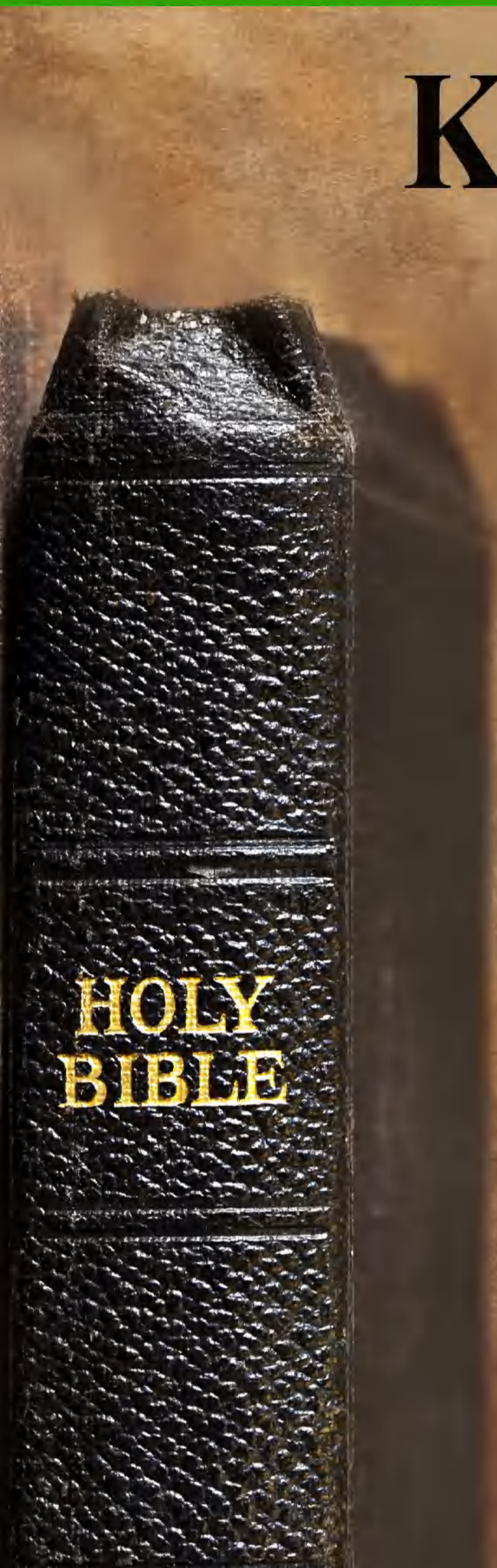
Quick! The train is puffing at the station!

Rushing into the nearest car, he drops with his blushing prize beside him into the nearest seat.

The love-sick maiden looks coquettishly and fondly up into the face of — "*her loving father!*" while the rushing train rapidly bears them home.

After telegraphing to Mr. Humphreys, Prof. Savoir lost no time in reporting the situation to President Dombrey of the university.

President Dombrey received the startling intelligence like a man used to grappling with knotty problems, and immediately called Dr. Salvator and Prof. Sunnimead to his assistance. They at once agreed that, as the event was so near at hand, it would be best to put an end peremptorily to the escapade and reason with the offender afterward.



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criminality, and I wish, if possible, to probe your apparently dormant conscience. I wish to ascertain if the sentiments of honor, gratitude and duty are unknown to you? I wish to learn if through all these years we have nursed a viper in our midst, and I also wish to place before your diseased moral vision the position you occupy here and the heavy obligations resting upon you.

"In short, I wish to tell you that you are physically, morally and mentally the property of the church. The church has snatched you from perdition, has fed you from infancy, has watched over you from childhood, and to her you are everlastingly indebted for your education, your regeneration, and your salvation, and you are bound by all the laws of God and man to serve her in the future.

"How have you repaid your spiritual mother for all these benefactions?

"You have violated the most sacred principles of confidence, of trust and of honor! You have acted the part of a coward, a seducer and a robber!

"Do not attempt to justify yourself, sir!" he said emphatically, seeing that Thun-Gah was about to speak.

"There can be no justification. Reparation may be partially within your power. During the rest of the year that you are to remain here you must not make another female acquaintance. Like a monk of your race you must bury yourself in your books, and contemplate the mission the church has in store for you.

"As for the young woman you attempted to disgrace, you will never see her again. She is gone forever.— You may now leave," he added abruptly, and the president turned to his books.

Poor Thun-Gah was overwhelmed!

The mirror had been held before him in such a startling and condemning light that he fairly stag-

gered to his room, pressing his beating head between his clammy hands.

"Yes, it must be so!" he groaned; "I am the meanest of wretches! God! from what a fate has innocent Milly happily escaped!"

As he uttered that loved name he felt the chords about his heart give way.

"My heart! My heart!" he said pathetically as he clasped his hands against his side; "it is dying!" It is dying!

"This poor body must still live on and carry forever that lifeless member.

"My God! how blind is man,—how unrelenting is fate!"

The poor Sinhalese's haggard face haunted the professors like a condemning ghost for weeks afterward. Its expression of resignation and hopeless despair touched their callous hearts.

Perhaps it took them back to early days, when their own blood ran not so sluggishly in their veins. Perhaps it awoke memories of some long-forgotten face, or, it may be, they were thinking only of the present, and the unrestrained passions of their own sons. At all events, a mutual feeling of uneasiness or of sympathy prompted them to discuss the matter together: —

"The events of the past week," said President Dombrey, "have brought us to the determination of a question which has never before occupied our minds.

"The marriage relation of our Sinhalese students is a question of growing importance. We have, I fear, lost sight of their human nature in stimulating the spiritual. Would it not be wiser to seek some rational means to meet this natural desire, and avert in the future such catastrophes as that from which we have happily just escaped?"

Doctor Salvator, who was before inclined to a

little sympathy, now that President Dombrey suggested a possible innovation upon the established custom, jumped to his feet:

"I have as much sympathy for these young men as any of you," said he sharply; "but I'm not going to turn sentimentalist and compromise the dignity of this institution and the church by catering to the animal passions of its wards.

"We have nothing to do with the lower instincts of these Sinhalese, except to suppress them.

"If we have failed at all in our duty, it has been in allowing them too free a range. We should never have permitted them to mingle with our other students in social pleasures.

"We are training them for a special mission, and the less they have their minds diverted from that purpose, the better.

"I believe in unswerving rules, gentlemen, — unswerving rules!"

"I believe," said Professor Sunnimead in turn, "that, on the contrary, the best results in our work are always obtained by meeting the students half-way, provided, of course, we do not yield a particle of our dignity. The privileges we have usually allowed them have been, I think, appreciated; and these privileges have given a stimulus to better and healthier work.

"We can no longer force disagreeable religious truths down the throats of our students; we must 'sugar-coat' them, so to say, by pleasant surroundings, privileges, and by tact."

Dr. Salvator fairly turned pale about the mouth as Professor Sunnimead continued,—

"Our President is wise in calling us together to devise ways and means for meeting this question of marriage.

"I have a plan which appears to me perfectly feasible, and which I think will rather redound to the credit than to the injury of the university."

Dr. Salvator's slender frame expanded and collapsed with the violent emotions that stirred within him.

"Let us hear what Professor Sunnimead can suggest," said the president.

"I understand," Professor Sunnimead went on to explain, "that we are training these Sinhalese students to be ministers of the gospel in their native land. We are not training them for the cloister nor the priesthood; we exact no vows of celibacy from them, nor is their warm Southern blood so easily tamed."

Dr. Salvator made a movement as if to leave the room; but the uplifted finger of the president restrained him.

"If they do not marry here, they will marry at home. We usually have them with us until twenty-four years of age, — the years when the sentiments of love are more easily aroused and more difficult to restrain. If they do not see the women of their own nationality, they will naturally think of the women of ours.

"Why not prevent forever a possible repetition of Thun Gah's temptation? Why not import, at the same time with the Sinhalese boys, Sinhalese girls, who, through receiving a similar education, would become suitable companions for them in their life-work? We can send at once for a few, already of marriageable age and fairly trained."

As soon as Dr. Salvator saw that Professor Sunnimead was not going to propose a union with American girls, but, on the contrary, that the cause of orthodoxy would be strengthened by the addition of the Sinhalese wives, he sat down feeling more comfortable.

President Dombrey's face beamed with a smile of satisfaction.

"I think the idea an excellent one," said he, cheer-

ily, "and to show my indorsement of the plan, I will draw up at once a request to our missionary headquarters in Ceylon to this end, and I know that Dr. Salvator will cheerfully agree to so sensible a solution of the difficulty." In a few moments he placed the following before them: —

"To Rev. Dr. Moonson, Missionary Headquarters,
City of ——, Ceylon, India.

"Dear Sir:

"Will you send over by the next ship, at the expense of this university, two or three attractive Sinhalese girls from the female schools you have so successfully established.

"It is thought advisable that the Sinhalese young men we are to graduate should make the acquaintance of women of their own race before they return home; and it is also desirable that these girls should by association become more like the young women with whom these students have associated here, and see something of American life and customs.

"We have only one suggestion to add, and that is, to bear in mind that our American girls are very fair and the young Sinhalese rather fastidious. Therefore, have regard to *physical attractions*.

"Believing the best results will follow,

"We remain,

President Dombrey, D.D.
Jonathan E. Salvator,
A.B., D.D., LL.D.
George Sunnimead, Professor.

"University of Jansenville."

CHAPTER IX.

"You did not see the fair creature who rescued us yesterday," remarked Gerald, as he and Kyn-Dhwen lay prostrate on their cots in the island-tent the next day after their miraculous escape — too feeble to rise.

"No, I did not," replied Kyn-Dhwen, with an abstracted and dreamy air.

"I saw her but for a moment myself," continued Gerald; "and do you know, Kyn-Dhwen, I've been in doubt ever since whether that mysterious being was a woman or an angel.

"Were it not for this camphor-bottle that she left behind, with its spicy odor of humanity about it, I should be strongly inclined to believe some heavenly spirit had come down to our rescue.

"What an angelic face she had. It is hard to believe such loveliness belongs to flesh and blood. And how she looked at me with those large sympathetic eyes swimming with emotion!

"Kyn-Dhwen, those pure lips would have warmed a stone into life! But for that sweet breath of hers, you would not now be here to listen to the raptures of your grateful friend."

A deep hue overspread the pale face of the poor Sinhalese as he heard these glowing words, and he strove to master his emotion, for he felt that a heathen student had no right to indulge the senti-

ments and feelings such as the careless words of Gerald were calculated to arouse in his heart.

"As soon as I can get these fearfully dark circles from my eyes," continued Gerald, "I mean to hunt up this mysterious 'Grace Darling' and thank her for her energetic and heroic conduct. Of course, you will accompany me, Kyn-Dhwen; for if you do not, she may think perhaps you did not recover, notwithstanding her superhuman efforts."

"I will go with you, and I am certain I will know her the moment we meet," replied Kyn-Dhwen.

"It is true I did not see her, Gerald, yet there must have been something about her presence, some indefinable power, an aura surrounding her that impressed my whole being.

"I feel sure I should recognize her at once. I should be unconsciously drawn toward her as the steel is drawn to the magnet."

"My experience also was something like that, Kyn-Dwhen. A peculiar influence seemed to emanate from her. What can it mean?"

* * * * * *

Who hath not felt at some period, or at many periods of his life, the soothing charm, the "peculiar influence" of a woman's presence?

Few women are really conscious of the involuntary power they possess, a mysterious individuality that impresses the minds and hearts of men with whom they come in contact. An impression which often remains to plague the poor heart of man for long years thereafter.

This subtle power, this astral aura we may call it, can hardly be analyzed.

The rustling of a trailing garment, the aroma of a sweet perfume, the cadence of a gentle voice, will often arouse the slumbering echo, unlock the closed doors of memory in whose chambers lie buried thoughts and long-forgotten shadows of departed

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sion, and it will be less fatiguing. Let us step over to this one and begin; it is the nearest and very likely it is the place."

A few moments brought them to the gate in front of a low cottage, with a small dormer-window squeezed into the roof, in the effort to form a second story. A straight walk of broken clam-shells led up to the house, between rows of rank marigolds and sweet carnations, whose mingled odors saluted them as they ascended the steps.

Gerald lifted the old-fashioned, forbidding and grizzly lion-headed knocker, which groaned and shrieked in its iron rust — as if the lion were angry at being thus rudely disturbed for the first time in many years, and it then fell angrily back again upon the thin door with such a hollow roar-like reverberation that the young men were fairly startled.

A shuffling of feet and a fumbling of hands, — and the old-time bolt was with difficulty withdrawn. Repeated creaks and snaps followed; — at last the door yielded, opening with a bang, and a tall *vinegary-faced* female stood in the portal.

"Does *Miss-er-er* live here?" stammered Gerald, not knowing really for whom to inquire; and the sharp, forbidding features of the woman not inviting confidence, he could get no further.

"Be you them students from the Divinity?" squeaked the female voice.

"We have that honor, madam," began Gerald in his most courteous manner, with a polite bow, supposing a compliment to be intended.

"None of your soft soap around here, you miserable loafers. I despise the hull pack on ye, ye smooth-tongued hypocrites! A pretty set of preachers you 'll be. I hain't had a chicken nor a full pound of butter since you've been coming to the lake, and now you 've the imperence to come sneaking around my house, in daylight too, asking for a 'Miss'!"

Gerald and Kyn-Dhwen retreated through the front gate in quick step before she could finish her sentence; but it was some time before they got beyond the sound of her shrill voice.

"Not much of the *angelic* about her," laughed Gerald.

"Rather more of the *Tartaric*, I should say," suggested Kyn-Dhwen.

"I suppose, after all," he continued, "the poor woman has been bothered a good deal by the boys, and she is doubtless not half as furious as she would have us believe."

The next house they approached from the rear, and the sweet picture of happy farm-life which they came upon was in most refreshing contrast.

Two rosy-cheeked girls were making butter under the shade of a heavy grape-vine, which tangled itself over a trellis of rustic boughs. Each had a heavy wooden bowl on the bench before her, in which she rolled, patted and slapped the yellow mass. Their dimpled arms and plump hands seemed fashioned for such artistic work, and they were humming a sweet country air with which the rhythmic strokes of their ladles kept time as the young men came up.

One glance was sufficient to assure them that the angel whom they sought was neither of the butter-makers.

They could not retreat however without speaking, as the fair milkmaids had evidently espied them and stopped their song. With cap in hand they walked forward to the bench, when Gerald asked politely, —

"Can we have a glass of your fresh buttermilk, ladies?"

"All you wish," both answered, and with long-handled dippers they reached into the churn at their side, and brought up the rich fluid.

"A thousand thanks," returned Gerald, "your milk is delicious." After the further exchange

of a few words with the musical maidens, they walked on.

It took nearly an hour to call at all the houses visible in the neighborhood and to ascertain that the object of their search was not in any of them. They returned to their camp greatly disappointed.

"The mystery about this affair deepens," said Gerald.

"There is a mystery about it," echoed Kyn-Dhwen, "which, I fear, time alone can clear up; but let us not give up the search until we have called at every house within ten miles."

The deep interest which filled the hearts of these two young men was very different in character.

With Gerald it was curiosity, with a chivalric sentiment of gratitude akin to love.

But Kyn-Dhwen felt himself under a controlling desire, a holy inspiration, to gaze upon that giver of a new life, a re-incarnation, in the light of his Buddhist faith, and to fall at the feet of the wonderful creature in adoration.

A week after the attempt to find Faith, the camp broke up, and the students returned to the university.

Kyn-Dhwen and Gerald became now almost inseparable companions, and Gerald was wont to say when remarks were made to him about their close intimacy, —

"'Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend!'"

The professors observed a great change in Gerald, but knowing nothing of his tragic experience at the lake, they ascribed his seriousness and his change of manner to a "change of heart" and were greatly pleased with his supposed conversion.

When Kyn-Dhwen could get away without his friend's knowledge, he often took long rambles by himself. He usually carried with him, in the inside

pocket of his coat, two small volumes bound in ancient vellum, from which he would recite and read whenever he came to a secluded spot. They were printed in the Sanscrit type, and were yellow with age and rather indistinct. In his room he kept these books carefully put away in a small tin chest, in which all things precious to the homeless young exile were deposited: — a few faded pictures, a small bundle of old letters and his father's rusty old-fashioned knife. Even in these he hardly felt himself entitled to claim ownership.

He had conceived the idea that the university was robbing him of his country and of his revered father's religion. He felt that it had trampled upon his feelings, until he scarcely dared to think of his people,— still less of their religious worship.

Once or twice he had spoken to his fellow-countrymen of this abject slavery of soul; but they seemed unconscious of it. They had been in the American schools from childhood, and were now only Sinhalese in color and in the stigma which attached to a converted heathen.

His instinct told him it would be folly to open his heart to Gerald upon this subject, no matter how close the intimacy might be between them.

He could never expect to overcome a life-grown prejudice against the miscalled and misconceived "idol worship" of the East. Anything said on this subject would only arouse terror and apprehension in his companion's breast.

No! in his own heart alone must he conceal his thoughts, hopes and plans.

Six years had he been separated from his mother, his home and his country. How long, oh how long, must he still yearn for human sympathy? Eagerly he devoured all the missionaries' notes and letters, although the pictures which they sketched of his "benighted race" made his blood boil with indig-

nation. Still, they were messages from his dear native land. True, his mother had been frightened into the abandonment of his father's religion. She was seeking for the light,— poor woman! — but what had been the pressure brought upon her by Christian missionaries?

Kyn-Dhwen possessed remarkable self-control, and was wonderfully patient under the wrongs and restraints which he believed he suffered. His judgment usually rose superior to his passions, which prevented many an altercation with the teachers and many a rub from his fellow-students.

Only once did he so far forget himself as to bring down a crushing rebuke. He had been listening to one of Dr. Salvator's sweeping lectures on eternal damnation. As usual, when talking on this theme, the worthy doctor became intensely in earnest. He painted with such fervid eloquence and in such startling colors the picture of the hell of his prolific imagination, that one might readily suppose the good doctor really saw the hated enemies of his doctrines, writhing in the sulphurous flames he had conjured up.

"Believe," he was in the habit of exclaiming, "that ye are worthy only of damnation, and ye shall be saved! But doubt your guilt, and ye shall be damned!" and his clenched fist came heavily down upon the desk before him.

One day during the profound hush which followed a terrible denunciation of unbelievers in general, Kyn-Dhwen's steady voice rose among the students,—

"According to your reasoning, Dr. Salvator, my just and lamented father is burning in hell.

"Nevertheless, where he is I am content to go."

The excited divine turned nervously toward the speaker, and, recognizing Kyn-Dhwen, poured forth such a volume of abuse and invective against the heathen and their ingratitude that the poor Sinhalese

regretted he had spoken. The students also looked upon him with pity and reproach.

Some days elapsed after this scathing rebuke before Kyn-Dhwen could summon courage to appear in the lecture-room again or even mix with the students. To Gerald only could he unbosom himself, and from him only could he receive nominal sympathy.

One beautiful Sunday morning after this episode, Kyn-Dhwen left his little room in the dormitory for a walk, long before the other young men were out of their prolonged Sunday naps.

He strolled aimlessly across the hills and fields on the outskirts of the village, thinking only of effacing the unpleasant remembrance of that terrible sermon, by plunging deep into the silent woods, the great restorative well-spring of nature.

As he walked on, regardless of where the way led, he came upon farmers milking their pretty Holstein cows as they stood quietly chewing the early cud.

He saw the country maidens busy with their morning work, their glossy hair already done up in crimpers, preparatory for the village choir or the Sunday evening swain,—their natural bloom of health increased by the excitement of the Sabbath morn.

These humble scenes, however, interested him not. His thoughts wandered off to that mysterious being whose breath was his existence, the giver of his life, dimly conceived, yet never beheld, whose astral power seemed to his oriental mind to be ever about him, ever exerting an invisible influence.

Thus he strayed onward, quite unconscious of time or place, until the far-off church-clock of the village suddenly tolled the hour of nine.

Remembering that he must be at the chapel for morning service at ten, he felt that he must immediately retrace his steps, but found he was quite bewildered in his absent-mindedness and ignorant of the way back.

Going to the nearest farmhouse, he ran up to the door of the low wing, intending to request a glass of water and to ask for direction to the university.

Tapping briskly, but not expecting an immediate response, he took off his cap to wipe the perspiration from his face.

The door suddenly opened, and turning with cap in hand, he was about to prefer his request, when his eye rested upon a young girl — not one of the country lasses, such as he had passed on his stroll hither — but one possessing an angelic face, with a mild blue eye and fair expansive brow indicating a higher type of mind and expressing a soul within of unconscious purity.

He recognized this peerless being at once as the *Spirit of his dream*,— the realization of his waking hours! She who had brought him from the very gates of death,— the mysterious giver of "the breath of life"!

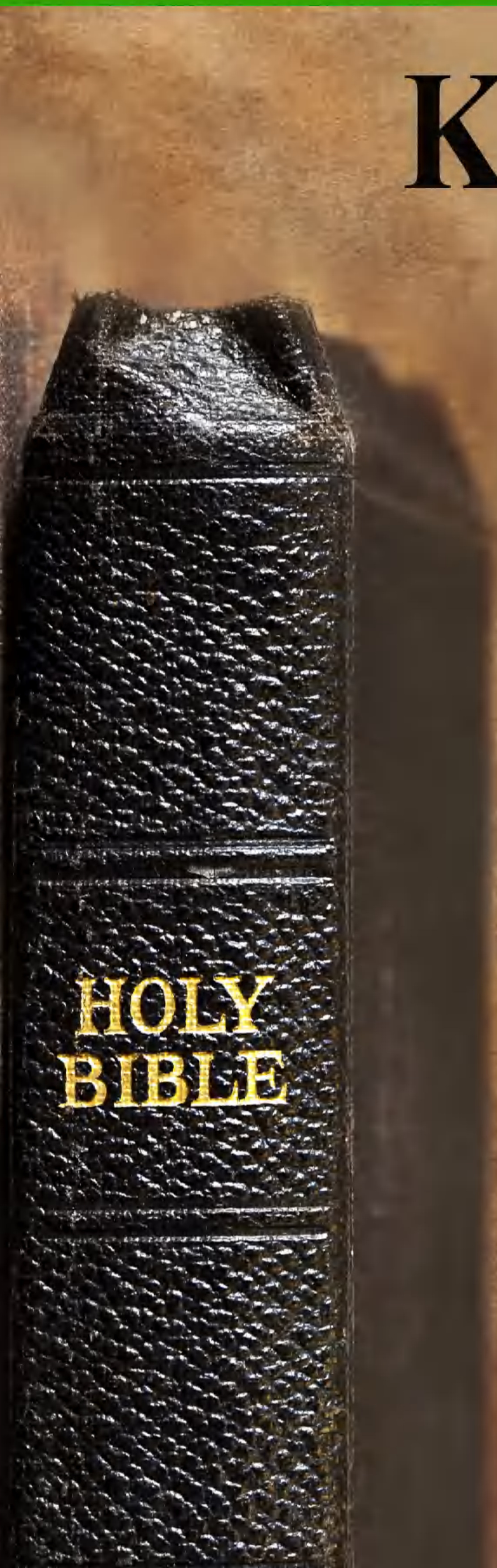
He forgot thirst, time and place as he stood speechless before this startling vision.

Faith was greatly confused. She held the door wide open in her astonishment, and at the same moment took an involuntary step backwards.

Kyn-Dhwen might have taken this as a sign to enter; but he was oblivious to everything, except that he stood in the presence of that being whom he had begun to believe supernatural and separated from him forever.

As if fearing she might yet fly from him or dissolve and disappear before his eyes, he stepped over the threshold and fell upon his knees at her feet.

With clasped hands and in such words as he could command, he implored her to listen to his thanks for the worthless life she had so miraculously preserved,— calling her his guardian angel who had snatched him from the jaws of death. Faith was terribly embarrassed and begged him to rise, say-



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No excuse, no apology could she offer, nor indeed was either necessary. The very atmosphere of this room and the presence of this strange, fascinating being made it for him a place of enchantment.

"Are you quite fully recovered from your accident?" she at last found courage to ask.

"Thanks to yourself and careful nursing, nearly so."

"And your companion?"

"He, too, is well and would return thanks also."

"Oh, I deserve none, I assure you. My father is more entitled to your thanks than I."

"May I have your name?" he asked, a trifle more at ease, now that she seemed so human.

"Faith Whitney is my name."

He had never heard the name before, and it occurred to him that this might not be her home.

Before putting this question, however, he looked about the room as if expecting an answer to his thoughts, for up to this moment he had been too spellbound to see anything but his mysterious preserver.

For the first time his eyes rested with astonishment upon the paintings hanging on the walls. His question was left unuttered as he looked with wonder from the pictures to the girl before him.

Her deep blushes silently betrayed the artist.

"Please do not look at them," she at last said; "they were not meant for — for —— Please do not look at them."

"Are you a portrait painter?" he asked, more bewildered than ever.

Faith felt her courage sinking.

In a minute he would ask, "Whose likenesses are these?" and "Where have you learned your art?"

What could she answer?

She did not know the likenesses herself, nor how she had painted them. How, then, could she explain to another?

She could see no way out of her dilemma.

As if appreciating her distress, he held out his hand, saying, "I bid you good-morning, Miss Whitney."

The door had closed since his entrance, and as he moved toward it he saw for the first time her easel, upon which rested an unfinished work.

He started as if touched by an electric shock. "My mother! Great God!" he exclaimed as his eyes rested on the unfinished painting.

"Tell me, in the name of Heaven, how came this picture here?"

"Go, please go," Faith entreated. "Don't ask me. Please leave me!"

She opened the door as she besought him to depart, throwing the picture again in the shadow, and the young Sinhalese silently passed out.

"What have I done! Oh, what have I done!" sobbed Faith, as she covered her face with her hands.

"I must hide my dear portraits. I must go away from here. I can never, never answer the people's questions. I am undone!"

When Kyn-Dhwen reached the university an hour later, he heard through the open windows of the chapel the sweet music of the morning hymn. It seemed to comfort his troubled soul, and he rested a moment to listen and enjoy. But suddenly there swelled upon the air those words so sweet to the Christian, yet so painful to the Buddhist ear: —

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strewn;
The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone."

and his heart sank within him. A moment after, he entered and his face showed plainly the influence of powerful emotion. The students naturally thought

it was produced by the hymn they had sung, together with the recent sermon against which he had protested. But it was not the insult of the hymn, nor the fear of his father's future that troubled him. It was the mystery of that likeness of his dear mother he had just seen.

How dazed, how bewildered he felt! None knew his feelings, for he concealed them and performed his duties mechanically.

He excused himself from Gerald early in the evening, and shut himself up in his own room, to think over all that had occurred, and to read his letters from home, the last of which was dated two months before. In it his mother had urged him to become a Christian and return to her, a blessing and a support in her declining years.

She dwelt upon the painful years of their separation, and now that these years were nearly ended,—only one more remaining until she should see him,—the days seemed interminable and the weeks seemed months to the starving mother's heart.

An unaccountable feeling of dejection settled upon the over-wrought youth, as he tried to control his agitation and quiet his conflicting thoughts.

Disturbed slumber came at last and was a partial relief.

* * * * * *

"Hallo, old boy!" called the familiar voice of Gerald the next morning at eight o'clock. "Jump up and get your letter from home! Here, let me slip it under the door."

Kyn-Dhwen leaped from bed, seized the letter and tore open the heavy seal.

A strange hand had traced these words: —

"Your mother 'Hai-Sai' died the 15th of July. She passed away in a firm belief of a glorious hereafter, and her last words were a blessing for her beloved son Kyn-Dhwen."

CHAPTER X.

FAITH was greatly distressed after the departure of Kyn-Dhwen when she reflected upon this invasion of her studio and the consequent publicity of her artistic efforts, dreading as she did the annoyance of curious visitors.

She felt it imperative upon her to leave home at least for a time, and said to her parents that she was anxious to undertake some independent work and be no longer a tax upon them, nor a drone in the world's hive. "You are not rich," said she, "and I am certainly able to support myself."

Mr. and Mrs. Whitney idolized this gifted daughter and only child; and although they felt the justice of what she had said, they could not bring themselves to consent to part with her. Without her they felt their house would be cheerless indeed.

While they were discussing the subject, her uncle Winchester and aunt Patience fortunately drove up to the door.

Here was an opportunity for a temporary absence quite unexpected, as both aunt and uncle not only agreed that a change was desirable, but insisted that Faith should accompany them home at once.

"You must understand, my dear aunt," said Faith sweetly, but with determination, "that in accepting your kind invitation I shall go in quest of

work, and I know, with uncle Winchester's assistance, I will be able to obtain it."

It was then settled that Faith should return with them, and her slender wardrobe was put in immediate readiness for the journey.

Those who leave the home of their childhood and wing their way out into the busy world rarely think of the terribly painful void they leave behind them.

It is perhaps best so. The young make new friends, and embark upon a new sea bright with rosy hues, full of attractive novelties, wafted along by perfumed airs and gentle gales, with grand possibilities looming up before them, — for Hope sits at the helm. The dear old parents are left to live on amidst former surroundings, with only the cherished memory of their departed children. The old form but few new attachments, they build but few new castles. And this sad contemplation, this necessary isolation, is it to be the end, the aim, the achievement of human life, — two easy-chairs by the fireside, an attic filled with empty cradles and broken toys, with but the memory of happy years gone by forever? Fortunately old age is not entirely without its compensations. All is not darkness and despair

The storehouse of experience furnishes the philosophy of the future, and the review of a life well spent strengthens the assurance of a better one hereafter. "The sunset of life gives us mystical lore."

They were too busy, however, to indulge in these reflections, and Faith, amidst many kisses, tears and misgivings on the part of her parents, took her place in the carriage which was to bear her away, for the first time in her life, from the home of her childhood.

At the house of her aunt and uncle, she knew she should find rest and relief. It was also with great pleasure she realized that her unseen friends continued with her as at home, whether asleep or awake.

She had never slept before under any roof but her father's, and when she opened her eyes the next morning everything was strange and forbidding.

Her dear old chamber at home overlooked a picturesque orchard, with the beautiful green slopes of the distant hills beyond, and always when she awoke, the scanty furniture held with her a familiar intercourse, as it were, in the early light. The very glass knobs on the old-fashioned bureau winked at her so knowingly, — the well-studded engravings and the early samplers on the walls wore expressions of kindness and friendly greeting; and when she looked out, the merry twittering of birds and the cackling of hens seemed to welcome her to new life.

Here, as streaks of daylight crept through the shutters, one strange object after another was revealed, and she closed her eyes in despair as if there were strange faces gazing at her.

When a few moments later she threw open the blinds to let in a breath of the sweet autumn air, she started back in actual alarm.

Instead of the far-expanding vista of hill and dale, from which she had always drawn inspiration with the freshness of the morning, she saw staring her in the face, from across the way, a long row of red-brick houses, terminating in the flaunting village grocery, with tin cups, brooms, hoes and rakes hanging at the door, and each window filled with jars of bright red candy and other tempting delicacies.

It looked to this child of the woods and fields as if she had been suddenly snatched from her real life and plunged into a new and strange existence.

These works of man seemed to belittle, cramp and confine her, — in contrast with the majestic forests, the wide expanse of farm and field, the o'erarching sky touching the distant horizon which she had been accustomed to gaze upon and admire, — and she laughed outright on likening herself to Gulliver

being dropped down suddenly amongst the Lilliputians.

It would have taken Faith some time to become used to the change from the freedom of her previous life to the daily routine of her aunt's orderly household, had not an opportunity suddenly presented itself for her untried energies.

It was a soft, balmy day after her arrival, when her uncle invited her to ride with him on one of his business trips about the country, — an invitation she was delighted to accept.

They stopped at the house of an enterprising farmer, — Mr. Pilbean, whom Mr. Winchester had kept snugly insured for many years. He was a "selectman" of the village and a school-trustee.

They found the trustee and his family in a state of great excitement.

The district-school teacher, striving for the mastery in his petty domain, had that very morning "laid out" three or four of the farmer's rough boys and frightened all the young girls into hysterics.

Mr. Pilbean — trustee in charge — had thereupon promptly dismissed the belligerent pedagogue and locked up the school-house, declaring that it would be better to give up the school altogether than to have his "daughter *Julie* witness such *doin's*."

"How many pupils are there in the school?" asked Faith, after hearing the trustee's story.

"*Nigh on to forty!* There's Jim and Tom Ellison, which is *ekal* to four any day, and the 'Watkinses,' the 'Stebbinses,' the 'Bumps' and the 'Risings,' and the crowd from the 'Corners.'

"Yes, there's *nigh on to forty*."

"What branches are taught?"

That was a question the official could not readily answer, and calling his "*Julie*," a rosy-cheeked, mischievous-looking little miss of fifteen, he left the problem to her.

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"Where shall I board?" she asked before leaving, seeing that the matter of bread and butter had not been mentioned.

"Board!" stared the farmer in amazement. "Why, board 'round, to be sure. If the snow gets knee-deep, we ain't the folks to turn the poor school-marm away for a night or two. Besides, I reckon you'll want to go home on Saturdays and Sundays, anyway."

Faith then inquired of her uncle how far they were from her father's house, and was surprised and delighted to learn that this settlement called "Teeter Hollow" was but five miles from her home and the same distance from her uncle's.

It bore the name of being a "pretty hard school district," though Faith had never heard of the place before.

The old people were well enough, indeed they were quite religious; but the rising generation of boys was full of a spirit of insubordination, of resistance to authority, and they had carried things, heretofore, with a pretty high hand.

As Mr. Winchester and Faith drove back, they passed many thrifty farms, the close-cut fields stacked with the ripened harvest, while the hillsides were glowing with the yet ungathered crops of rich yellow pumpkins and the orchards bending down with golden fruit.

Suddenly the road plunged into the forest, under the dark and mellow October woods, through the rustling leaves, everywhere strewing the ground. The balmy air was sweet with the incense of the ripening year, to which the broad spreading ferns beneath added their fragrant breath. Faith was delighted with the ride, and declared she had never before experienced anything so lovely and restful.

Now that her future for usefulness was secure, she felt a sweet content and a brave determination to do her best.

Already in imagination she felt herself in charge of her grand rough boys, trying to subdue their harshness and to bring them under the softening and reformatory influence of a mild and loving persuasion, as well as a more ennobling sense of individual character and duty.

Mr. Winchester remained silent, busily picturing to himself the real danger which he fancied his niece was about to encounter in putting herself in the power of such a wild, half-civilized herd.

On arriving home, he communicated his fears to his wife, saying that this innocent and highly sensitive girl was in absolute ignorance of the hardened world and its evil passions, and to permit her to go into that school at "Teeter Hollow," was simply sending a lamb to the slaughter.

"I think you are unnecessarily alarmed," said aunt Patience; "Faith is now a woman, and has a woman's instinct."

"The halo of purity and innocence which surrounds her will be a safeguard, you may be sure, against any insult.

"I feel a good deal as her father does about her, that she acts often from interior impression and is rarely mistaken.

"Of course, I would rather have her remain with us, but we ought not to restrain her desire for work and usefulness."

CHAPTER XI.

PROMPTLY at nine o'clock on Monday morning Faith was in the low doorway of the school-house at "Teeter Hollow," tugging at the rope and ringing the heavy bell to call the pupils together.

Many had already peeped in at the windows to get a look at the new "school-marm" and estimate her capacity with the birch. Seeing she was only a young girl, they came tumbling past her like so many wild animals, muttering words of jest and insurrection,—

"She's a Samson, she is!" said one. "She's a great teacher! Why, I could twist her round my little finger."

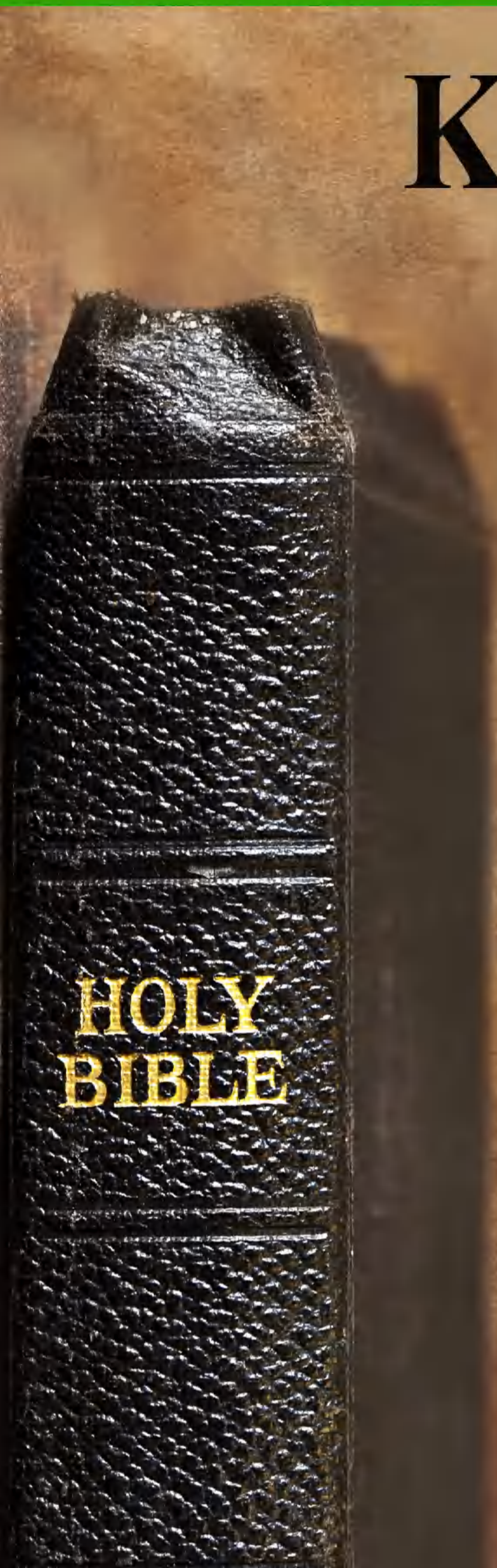
"I'll bet a cent she 'll skedaddle 'fore night," said another. "I wonder if her mother knows she's out."

And more of a similar character which she did not understand.

Her voice trembled perceptibly when she arose from her seat, and in a low soft voice attempted to call her unruly flock to order, hoping to bring her moral-suasion ideas to bear upon them.

Disorder, however, reigned supreme, and seeing it was impossible to make an impression, and feeling almost discouraged by the saucy, boisterous conduct of her charge, she again seated herself by her table and sadly and quietly waited in silence.

"She ain't for fighten' that's sure," said a stout boy



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ingly into the astonished faces all upturned toward her.

"I don't know nothin'. I can't help teach," blurted out the leader, sullenly; "and more'n that I can't learn neither," he added doggedly.

"Oh, yes, you can with my help, if you will only try," replied the teacher; "nothing can be done, you know, without trying.

"If you will help me by doing your part, I will show you all about the problems in your arithmetic, and teach you to write a good firm hand, long before the six months are up. Come now, be manly, and try to help me and yourself too."

The school was already beginning to assume a different aspect in the mind of this uncouth Samson. He felt flattered, and his pride was becoming gradually aroused.

"Well, I'll try it for a week, and if it's no go, then we'll part."

"Very well," said the teacher; "how many more are willing to try for a week also?"

"I will! I will! I will!" shouted the rest, one after another.

"Shut up!" cried the leader, as the roar of voices threatened to deafen the poor teacher.

"Now, my dear boys and girls," said Faith, "get out your books and let us begin with the arithmetic. I have none, but I will look over with you, if you will allow me," said she, addressing the leader. This distinction touched him deeply. He bunglingly drew forth a coverless book, and Faith turned the leaves.

"Teacher, you hain't prayed or asked our names yet!" spoke up a childish voice.

"Never mind," said the teacher, "I will learn all your names in time, as we get acquainted. We will postpone prayers until we lie down to sleep to-night, but you may give me your name now."

"Belle Coons," said she, much pleased that the teacher was in possession of her musical name first.

"And yours?" said she, turning to the young man — the leader — beside her.

"Bert Rising, is mine."

"Thank you," said Faith.

With wonderful tact and ingenuity she at last succeeded in getting all her pupils employed, the secret of proper control. The little ones were soon busy with their spelling and reading lessons. The writers were striving hard to imitate the beautiful copies she set for them, and the more advanced struggled with more difficult problems, while she passed from one to another, encouraging, directing and correcting their exercises.

As all were now fairly at work Faith had leisure to study their countenances, which, under the impulse of study and thought, were by no means so forbidding as they had at first impressed her. She traced lines of manly beauty and intelligence where she had seen only brutal insolence, and their finely formed physiques were a study for an artist.

The girls — one third of the pupils were girls — looked bright, vivacious and coquettish.

The school-room was lighted from three sides by shutterless, curtainless windows. The desks, made of rude boards with still ruder seats, were placed along the three lighted sides, a narrow space separating the boys from the girls.

The blank wall, or dark side of the room, was occupied by a broad, homely table, on which lay conspicuously a shabby dictionary, a mammoth black inkstand and a dirty school register, all — with a chair hard by — being for the exclusive use of the teacher.

A small clock, with a wonderfully ambitious tick, ornamented a shelf above the table, and in a corner near stood the inevitable water-pail, with a rusty tin dipper hanging over it for a drinking-cup.

These articles constituted the modest furniture of this seat of learning, unless we include the immense box-shaped stove, standing in the centre of the room, with its fiery, grinning damper which the boys called the *devil's mouth.* It was surmounted with a great iron urn filled with water, and its long smoke-pipe extended around the ceiling, finally terminating in the chimney over the teacher's table.

Adjoining the school-house was the wood-shed, already half filled with the winter's fuel, the heavy, dull axe lying near, ready for use.

This shed was also the "playground" for the pupils in rainy and snowy weather. From long disuse it smelt ancient and musty, and giant cobwebs hung festooned from the rafters overhead, like great suspension bridges seen at a distance.

Its heavy doors were bored through and through in many places by the active "barlows" of mischievous urchins, and distinguished names of past generations of pupils were cut and carved in dire confusion over every available surface.

The lusty little clock at last struck eleven, and Faith released her charge for "recess."

Out of doors the boys ran whooping and tumbling over each other in every direction, and at last gathered round Bert Rising, the leader, exclaiming,—

"Say, Bert! shall we let 'er stay?"

But the *ci-devant* hero was mute.

At last another ventured the question, adding, "She's a trump," when the subdued leader answered, "Oh, you dry up!"

There was no opposition manifested toward her, and the noisy crowd soon forgot in fun and frolic the resolution they had formed "to put every teacher out that winter."

The day passed quickly with Faith, and she found herself all too soon at Mr. Pilbean's, where it was arranged she was to pass the first week.

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first, but when a teacher knows how to handle 'em, they're a mighty smart set anyway, — both boys and gals."

His enthusiasm carried him so far that he offered to let Faith "make her home" with them whenever she pleased, or "felt like havin' a bit o' sympathy."

Soon after, he said, "I ain't goin' to crow, however, 'till we're out of the woods. One robin don't make a summer, and we'll just wait 'till the first week's over, and see how you wear. We'll see if the boys keep liken-on-you."

With these sage conclusions and aphorisms to comfort her, the hopeful teacher retired to rest, to dream upon the possibilities.

The next morning, the pupils, large and small, gathered peaceably in their seats, at the ringing of the bell, when Faith requested them to sing one of their familiar songs for the opening exercises.

This they were only too ready to do, and suddenly burst out into such a wild, discordant, deafening strain that the old school-house fairly shook with the noise.

She held up her hand, and as soon as quiet was restored said, "Let me show you how to sing."

Then in a soft modulated voice, Faith sang a song of her childhood.

She always sang with great expression, and in this refrain there was something very tender, weird and touching.

She had sung it many times before in her early woodland rambles, when the birds would fly about her chirping, and delighted at the notes, as if one of their mates were calling to them.

It produced an influence over the scholars quite perceptible. A hush, as of fascination, overcame them, and they sat with eyes and mouths open, some of them in tears. Even the larger boys were affected, and Bert Rising drew his rough coat-sleeve repeatedly

across his eyes and fumbled with his books to conceal his emotion.

A busy day followed, and a real interest was already awakened in the hitherto despised and neglected studies. Faith had her hands full, and the hearing of recitations and the answering of questions occupied every moment of her time.

Thus day succeeded day in the old red school-house; the pupils were hardly conscious they were being ruled, nor did the teacher herself realize that any special power of her own controlled them.

They had suddenly become a harmonious, studious family willing, and ready to assist each other. Long before the hour of assembling in the morning they gathered about the yard, anxious to begin: the school-house being to them the most attractive place in the world. The girls under Faith's direction took great pride in decorating the school-room with autumn leaves and evergreens, and the boys, under Bert Rising, chopped wood, cleared out the ashes and made the fires.

How happy were both teacher and pupils! Every day was like a holiday; every scholar was anxious to perform some duty or do some kindly act, — all took an individual pride in the school and in each other.

The older boys carried their refined tastes to an extreme. Finding their heavy boots noisy and clumsy in the school-room, they took them off in the woodshed before entering and put on slippers, which they had brought from home.

Under all these influences, it will readily be seen that the advance of these really ambitious young people must have been rapid. It was perceptible indeed, not only in their educational exercises, but in refined, moral and æsthetic tastes as well.

The "county school commissioner," on his quarterly visit, was actually moved to write these words of

commendation in the school register, after a consultation with Mr. Pilbean: —

"I find Miss Whitney a teacher of no ordinary capacity. Her discipline is excellent, and her methods of teaching have never been excelled in the State."

Had Faith been vain of her success, she would have felt flattered by this indorsement, especially as contrasted with the *epitaph* in the same register, upon her unfortunate predecessor, which said: —

"He could not grasp the ennobling profession of teaching, and his attempt at Teeter Hollow was a failure."

But she was convinced that want of "grasp" applied with greater force to the trustees than to the poor pedagogue, whose failure was a reproach to them and the commissioner more than to himself.

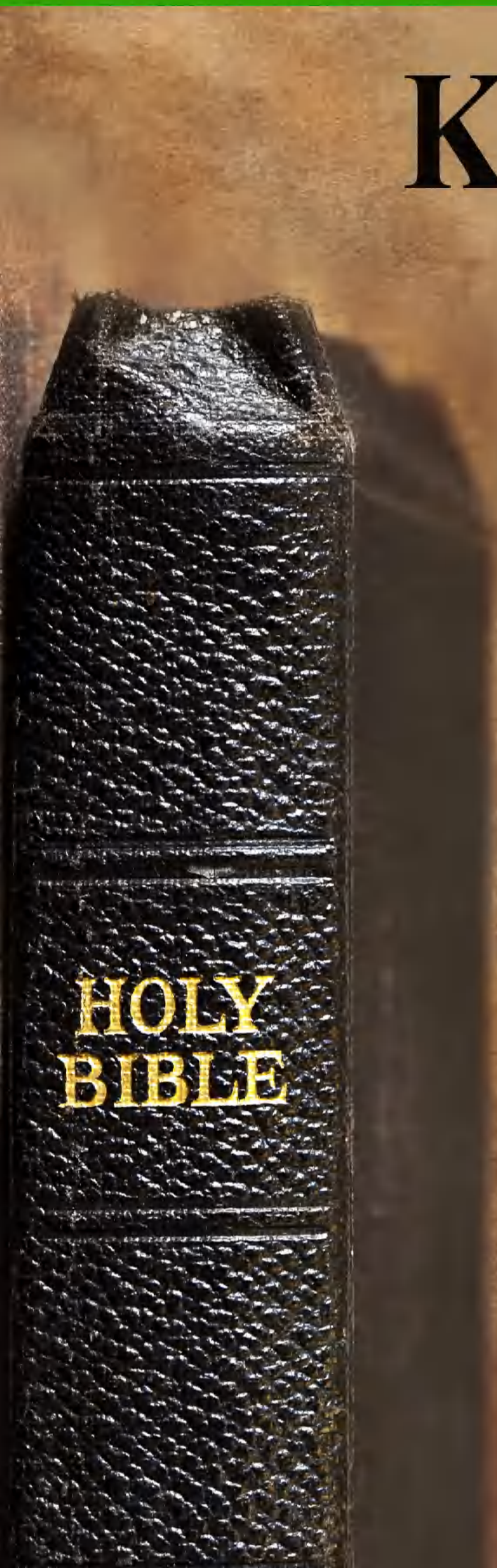
She could see no beneficial result from these official records, generally of ignorant commissioners' or trustees, who possessed neither the ability to point out to the young teacher any faulty method of discipline, nor to suggest any improvement.

These regular visits were always held in contempt by the teacher, and the commissioners were looked upon as petty tyrants, who had the power to blast the professional career of able men and women. They sometimes attempted to sound their proficiency by catch problems, abstract parsing sentences, or the spelling of obsolete or foreign words, — useless and unfair tests, which the commissioners had probably spent the year in gathering up and mastering.

By such mismanagement, many really capable and educated applicants were denied certificates and the schools necessarily often supplied with incompetent instructors.

On Friday evening, Mr. Winchester drove to the school-house and took Miss Whitney home with him to spend the Sabbath.

She there found a letter from her mother, in which,



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"No one," said he, "but a child of hell could make a will reflecting upon the integrity or the trustworthiness of members of the church."

He began his sermon by saying — "I am now standing over the remains of a strictly moral man," with considerable stress on "*moral.*"

"I admit that Orville Mapleton clothed the naked, fed the poor and hungry, and visited the sick, — thus far did he follow the teachings of Christ.

"But, my friends, while all these duties belong to a Christian life, they do not make a Christian.

"They are the earthly duties of all men, but alone they will never save a man's soul.

"While he was blessing the poor and needy, living as he did outside the church, he was quietly damning his own soul and serving the devil!

"Orville Mapleton neglected the Church, the means which God has provided for the salvation of souls, and died an unconverted sinner, — notwithstanding his strictly moral life, his benevolence and his love for the poor!

"He died as the fool dieth, and has gone to an eternal hell, with all the nations that forget God!

"I tell you, my friends, the influence of one *moral* man outside the Church is worse for the cause of religion than two sinners inside of it.

"The *moral* sinner is the greatest worker for the devil!

"Will not the wicked say, 'If a man can be good and moral without the Church and go to heaven thereby, what is the use of the Church?" — What can you reply?

"No, my friends, let the example of this good, moral, God-forsaken sinner, with all his model life, be an example and a warning to you all, not to depend upon good works, but upon the saving and sanctifying blood of Christ. This saving grace can only be found by coming to Him through His Holy

Church, the only means of grace on earth. To be truly saved, you must be bathed and cleansed in His precious blood!"

As Faith listened to this discourse, she was at a loss to understand its logic, and wondered why all the weeping people about her did not say something in poor Mr. Mapleton's defence.

Surely, she thought, no one could believe with the preacher in such a terrible fate for one so highly esteemed for his virtues.

Poor child! she was unschooled in the mystery of orthodoxy, its doctrine of an eternal hell and the vicarious cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

She wondered, too, what it was that Mr. Mapleton didn't believe and how that could affect his hereafter. Perhaps, thought she, the poor man couldn't understand it.

Then she turned her thoughts inwardly and asked herself what was her own belief.

"*Nothing*," was the response; "but that I am Faith Whitney trying to do my duty."

The whole service was entirely shocking and incomprehensible to her; even the words of the hymns they sang at the grave filled her with apprehension and astonishment:—

"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

And:

"On slippery rocks I see them stand,
While fiery billows roll below."

"What dreadful thoughts!" she exclaimed; "human beings bathing in a fountain of human blood, or standing on slippery rocks ready to plunge at any moment into a fiery flood beneath!" What ideas to implant in the minds of her innocent pupils!

She had never thought of death but as a blessed

release from disease or an unhappy life, and the language of the elder shocked her exceedingly.

It never occurred to this unsophisticated child that the Almighty power which placed people on this earth could by any possibility permit them to be persecuted forever in another world after they had done with this.

Besides, was she not always surrounded by her unseen friends? That certainly proved they were not unhappy.

No! she could never believe as the presiding elder did. She would ask her uncle Winchester about his statements as soon as she saw him.

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put carefully away, relieving his parent's anxiety by writing home that he never was in better health, and that any money he did not use would be laid aside for a "rainy day."

The summer was over and autumn's soft delicate haze enveloped the distant hills. The forest was gay and bright in its vari-colored foliage, and the two devoted friends were often drawn into long rambles through the attractive woods, visiting many a wild mountain-retreat.

One day they stood upon a hill jutting out into the beautiful lake overlooking Tim Finn's Island, where they had passed so many happy days together. — Gerald turned abruptly, "I say, Kyn-Dhwen, I think it deuced strange we have never had a glimpse of that ministering angel to whom we owe our lives. In all our walks we've never seen her, nor have we come across any one who ever did see her."

The mention of this subject so unexpectedly to Kyn-Dhwen caused his weakened frame to tremble for an instant; and to conceal his emotion, he stooped as if to examine a bush of beautifully colored leaves at his feet, without replying to his friend's exclamation.

Gerald attributed his silence to the thoughts which the subject of their rescue might naturally arouse in connection with his late sickness and his second narrow escape from death; but as he seemed to be much embarrassed and turned away without complaining of any sudden illness, he could hardly help the inference that there was a secret cause for his conduct, especially as he suggested that they immediately return to the university.

A few days thereafter, Gerald again tried to bring about a conversation on the subject; but he showed the same desire to avoid it as before, and with a similar excitement, except that as he had gained in physical strength he was better able to control himself.

Gerald meant to get at the bottom of this mystery if there was one, and he boldly put the question,—

"Now, Kyn-Dhwen, why is it that you, who were formerly so crazy to hunt up this young lady and unravel this mystery, have suddenly lost your interest and now act so strangely and become so agitated every time I suggest the subject. You can't have any secret from me, surely; but if you persist in acting like this, I shall certainly think you are concealing something.

The Sinhalese stood silent and thoughtful.

"I say, old boy, out with it! If you have got anything pressing on your mind, tell me what it is."

Kyn-Dhwen looked steadily into his friend's face. "Yes, Gerald, I have something on my mind; but I do not feel like talking about it to-day, after the fatigue of our long walk. To-morrow morning come to my room, and you shall hear all I have to say."

Gerald's imagination was more than ever excited. He was right, then, in his surmises. Kyn-Dhwen really had a secret, — a secret he had withheld from him. What could it be? They had scarcely been separated an hour at a time since their perilous accident at the lake. Surely, it could have nothing to do with his illness. Why this secrecy? Had he said or done anything to offend him? Certainly not. But to-morrow all doubts would be solved.

Kyn-Dhwen dreaded, yet he felt it to be his duty to tell Gerald all he knew about their long-sought rescuer. Possibly he might be able to aid in solving the mystery which still surrounded her notwithstanding his discovery. At all events, the knowledge he had obtained could no longer be honorably withheld.

The next morning, as soon as he had breakfasted, Gerald bounded up the stairs two steps at a time to Kyn-Dhwen's room, and found him waiting. Dropping into a chair, he said, "Now, *mon ami*, you see I

am here, *sans cérémonie*, ready for anything you have to offer."

"Not to keep you in suspense, Gerald," began Kyn-Dhwen at once; "you said yesterday that it was strange we had neither seen nor heard of the young girl who at least powerfully aided in saving our lives. What I have to tell you, my dear friend, is — that *I have seen her!*"

"You!" exclaimed Gerald, jumping up from his chair. "When? Where? Tell me at once! How could you keep this a secret from me?"

Kyn-Dhwen, after a moment's hesitation, slowly replied, "I saw her only the day before I was taken ill. The Sunday after that painful scene in the lecture-room I wandered off in a very sad and dejected state of mind, hardly knowing or caring in what direction I went. I soon became lost; and stopping at a farm-house to inquire the way back to the university, the door was opened by the young lady whom we had sought so anxiously and so long.

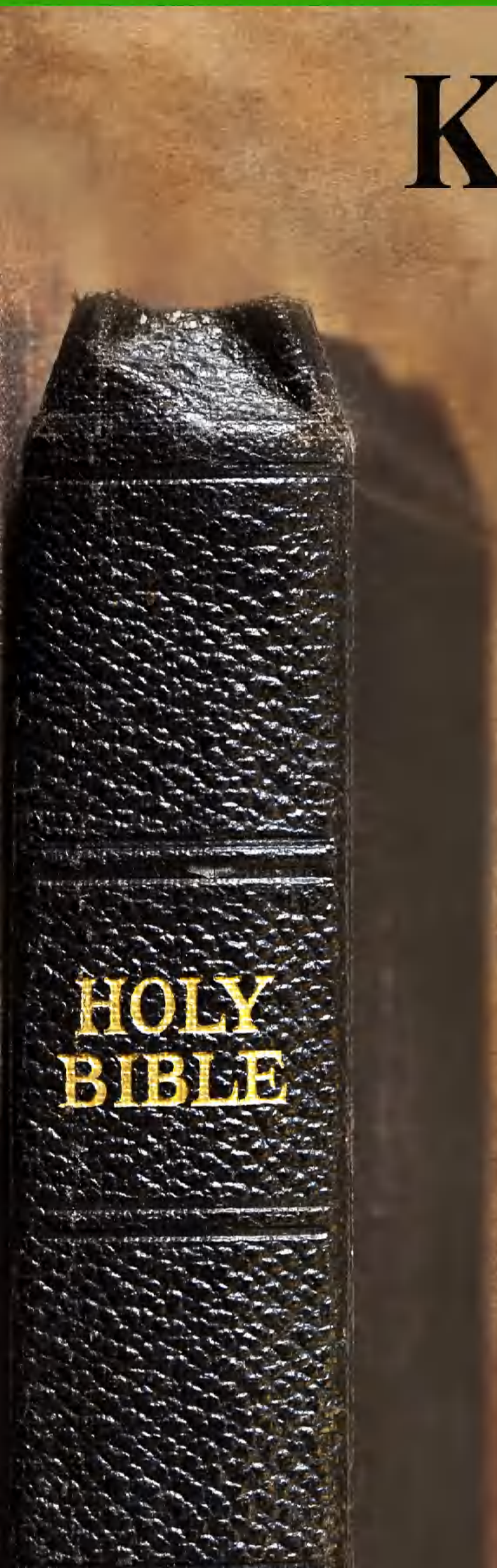
"You can readily conceive my astonishment at that sudden and unexpected discovery. Intuitively I knew it was she, and my eyes never before rested on so fair a face.

"Again that mysterious influence came over me which I remembered having experienced when we were so miraculously restored to life.

"As soon as I recovered myself I followed her into the house, all unbidden.

"She seemed very much embarrassed, as she might well be, for it was rude in me to enter without being requested. I tried to express the gratitude we both felt towards her father, as well as herself, but words failed me; and falling at her feet, my clasped hands and appealing looks alone spoke the sentiments of my heart.

"She extended her hand and begged that I would think no more of it, saying it was but an act of humanity, — the duty of every human being.



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illness and that he now simply reproduced the life-like vagaries of a distorted imagination? That could hardly be: for not once during the time he had so closely watched by his bedside had he betrayed the least evidence of a disturbed brain.

"Well, my friend, what you have said of the artistic ability of Miss Whitney, and especially of the portrait of your mother whom she never saw, both surprises and interests me greatly, and told by a less scrupulous and conscientious man than yourself might well challenge belief.

"I think we should go there together at once, for I have never had the opportunity of thanking her or her father for their timely service. Let us go this afternoon with this excuse for calling, we may learn more about this strange coincidence. What say you, Kyn-Dhwen?"

"Oh, by all means! We have already passed the house several times in our rambles; but I have never felt the courage to enter it again, nor have I yet seen the father myself. Now that you know all that I do, we will of course go together."

On reaching the house, the front door was opened for them by Mrs. Whitney herself. She politely requested the young men to enter, and awaited their errand, which she had already surmised.

"My dear madam," said Gerald respectfully, "we have come to express our gratitude to your husband and your daughter, for their noble service in saving our lives. We would have called long since if we had been able to learn to whom we were so greatly indebted.

"My companion," turning to Kyn-Dhwen, "has been again at the gates of death since meeting your daughter."

Mrs. Whitney, observing the pale and haggard face of the Sinhalese, said to him, "You have, sir, my profound sympathy! I am very sorry you have

taken this fatiguing walk to thank my husband and daughter, for I assure you they consider it but the performance of a humane act natural to any one. Were they at home I am sure they would express the same sentiment."

A pang shot through the hearts of both of the young men as she mentioned her daughter's absence.

But Gerald did not mean it should end thus, and on taking up his hat, remarked, "The next time we call we hope to have the pleasure of paying our respects to Miss Whitney in person."

"It is not at all probable," replied the mother, "that she will be at home this winter."

This last piece of information was a perceptible blow to both, and Mrs. Whitney, feeling pity for their disappointment, as they seemed so anxious to see her daughter, added, "I will write to her that you have called."

Kyn-Dhwen, thinking that Mrs. Whitney could not be ignorant of the scene which had transpired in the studio, — now that there was no possibility of meeting the daughter, — determined to ask permission to see the likeness of his mother again.

"Madam," said he, "there is a portrait of my mother in your daughter's studio. You would confer a great favor upon me by allowing me to look upon it once more."

Gerald was astonished at his friend's coolness and courage.

Mrs. Whitney had for some days expected a call from the Sinhalese, with this very natural request, and had already brought the painting into the adjoining room.

"I am quite willing you should see the portrait which you think resembles your mother," she said, and at once led the way.

Notwithstanding his predetermined resolve not to betray emotion, Kyn-Dhwen was profoundly moved

as he gazed once more upon the dear features of his departed mother.

Quite unmindful of his audience, he knelt before the picture, and, bowing his head in his hands, wept copious tears, the first he had shed since her death.

His convulsive sobs frightened Mrs. Whitney, and she was about to speak when Gerald, who felt that tears would be of the greatest relief, raised his finger in caution.

Her tender heart was deeply touched by this scene, and when she learned that the young man had just received news of his mother's death, she also found herself putting her handkerchief to her eyes and shedding tears in sympathy.

"Come, my boy," said Gerald, after a few moments' delay, "let us return. Mrs. Whitney, I am sure, will allow you to come again very soon if you wish to do so."

Kyn-Dhwen arose slowly, gave a silent pressure of the hand to his kind hostess, and left the house.

As soon as Gerald had seen his companion home, he retraced his steps immediately to the Whitneys.

Mr. Whitney had just come in from the fields, and Gerald was too agitated to express but in the briefest manner how fervently grateful they felt toward him and his daughter, for being the means, under God, of saving their lives, and his pleasure at meeting the father of her in whom he had become so deeply interested.

He at once made known the object of his second visit, by saying — "My dear friends, I hope you will excuse my importunity, for I have come back to ask a great favor.

"It is, that you will permit me to purchase that picture painted by your daughter, the likeness of my dear friend's mother. The poor fellow has been sorely afflicted, and I know that the picture hung in his room would do more to promote his recovery than doctors or medicines.

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It was quite dark when Gerald toiled up to Kyn-Dhwen's room with his precious burden in his arms. The students were all fortunately at supper, and, slipping in unobserved, he placed the painting on a chair by the table, where the rays of the already lighted lamp fell obliquely upon it.

He left a card beside it with the words: "A present to Kyn-Dhwen from Mr. and Mrs. Whitney," in order that the presence of the mysterious portrait might not savor of the supernatural, at least in the manner of its transportation. Then calming himself, he joined his fellow-students at supper.

"I am really upset," said Gerald, speaking to himself on retiring for the night. "How could that young lady paint the likeness of one whom she had never seen, — one who was at the time either dead or on her dying-bed? How could she — a country girl, certainly without artistic teaching — paint at all? We have no artists of such ability about here from whom she could have received instruction. We have not even a collection of paintings."

He could find no satisfactory solution for these mental queries, and his mind wandered off into rambling dreams of seraphs, angels, and other ideals, or reals, among whom Faith was conspicuous with flowing robes and holding in her hand a pencil of light.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE air was tremulous with the sweet music of the Sabbath bells the next morning when Kyn-Dhwen knocked at Gerald's door to inform him of the beautiful gift of his mother's portrait which had come from Mr. and Mrs. Whitney the night before and which he had found at his bedside.

They repaired at once by tacit agreement to Kyn-Dhwen's room, when Gerald explained the part he had taken in securing the painting.

"My friend," said Gerald, "do you believe Miss Whitney painted that picture?"

"Most certainly, I am satisfied she did."

"How could she have painted it?"

"That is a more difficult question to answer."

"The only way I can possibly account for it," said Gerald, "is that after her tragic experience with us at the lake — as you were probably the first Sinhalese she had ever seen — your image became very naturally strongly impressed upon her memory.

(A deep glow mounted to Kyn-Dhwen's face.)

"Being an artist by nature, — a genius,— she tried to put upon canvas her ideal of a female face of one of your race. She caught enough of your expression and features, no doubt, to enable her to make this portrait resemble your mother. The resemblance is of course but chance and appeals to you through your recollection or imagination only."

"Your theory is ingenious and may seem plausible to you, Gerald; but it is very far from convincing to the son.

"*You* see only the foreign face of a Sinhalese lady, while I —— Oh, my God! I not only see, but feel my dear mother's presence whenever I look upon that picture. That is not my face, Gerald,— those lustrous eyes are not mine. Those clear-cut beautiful features are in direct contrast with my angular ones. That expression of sweet submission and trust is not in harmony with my stormy, obstinate nature.

"No, Gerald, your theory does you credit for ingenuity, but it does not explain the facts. Even if it did account for the perfect likeness, — which it certainly does not, — it does not explain the wonderful execution."

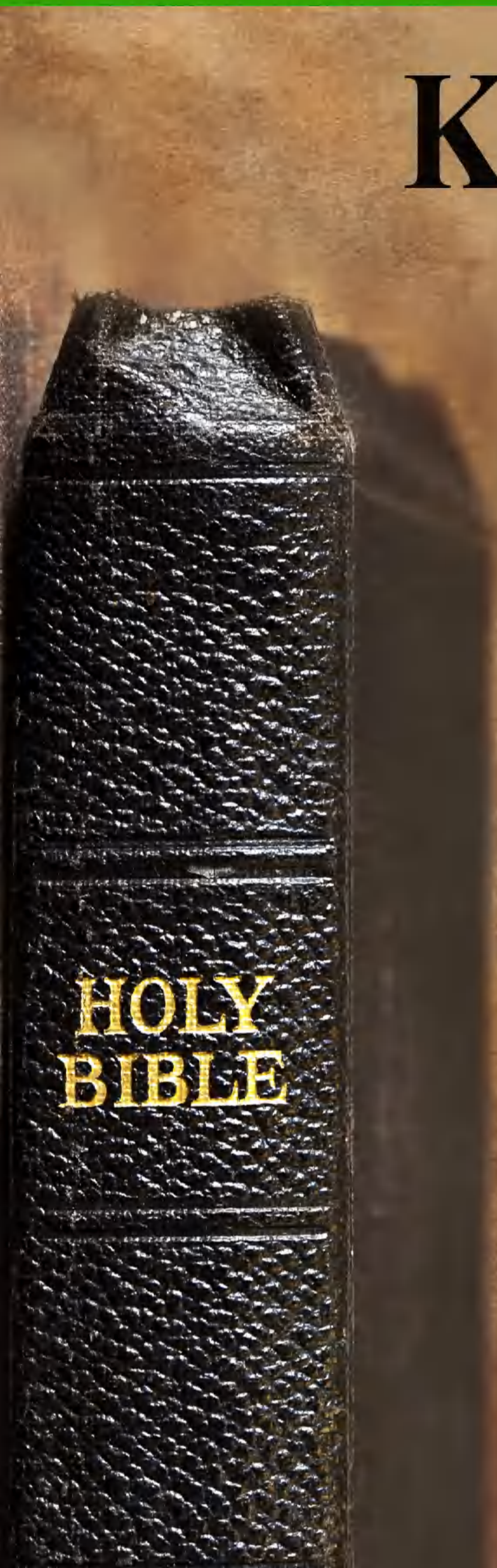
Gerald saw that his reasoning was illogical, and replied, "Well, Kyn-Dhwen, my opinions are doubtless incorrect; but what are yours? Do you believe the picture fell from heaven or came up from beneath?"

Gerald saw he had shocked his friend by his thoughtless words and would gladly have withdrawn them.

"Neither," replied Kyn-Dhwen; "and I fear it would take more than the arguments of a simple Sinhalese to convince even so fair-minded a man as Gerald Livingston, of what I feel to be the truth."

He said this so hopelessly that Gerald dared not ask for an explanation, and he continued, —

"It may sound very unreasonable, very 'heathenish' perhaps, what I am about to say, but no more unreasonable nor difficult of belief than the miracles that form part of your Bible record, which you think it a sin to question. In Ceylon, the land of my birth, such phenomena are not uncommon; but so little are they understood even by my own countrymen that



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this painting would do much to restore his friend to health. The gloom which had oppressed him was lightened, and his cheerful manner once more returned.

But as Kyn-Dhwen recovered his elasticity of mind, Gerald became more and more sombre, meditative and undecided, and always awoke from his reveries in a more perplexed and unhappy state than ever.

He constantly asked himself, "Am I my brother's keeper? What warrant have I for condemning his belief? Are his life and conduct both not as Christian-like as mine?" yet he could not break the narrow circle in which his thoughts revolved, and always fell back upon his predetermined rule, "Never to investigate what seemed past finding out."

Meantime the college course was rapidly drawing to its close. The following June they were to graduate, when life's trials and duties would begin in rude earnest. Already his father had written him that the entire village, where he had spent his youth, would gladly welcome him back; and the church would call him to the position of minister over them.

But Gerald, like all young men, and especially ministers of the gospel, had planned vast schemes of future usefulness and greatness, and this suggestion of his father rather tended to dampen his ardor.

"What! preach in the old tumble-down church in whose straight-backed pews I used to play hide-and-seek on Saturdays, while the deaf old sexton was brushing up for Sunday? What! cramp my talents over a handful — forty at most — of superannuated saints, who would simply tolerate me for my father's sake and set me down as an ignoramus?"

That was a result very different from what he anticipated after his university education.

"But then," he reflected, "what can I expect after all? Converts are few, the church is decreasing yearly in numbers, and many poor ministers, perhaps

abler than I am, are idle. I wish I could go with Kyn-Dhwen to India, and achieve something worthy of my ambition in that strange land. Still, if the inhabitants are all as wise as he, my feeble efforts would prove as futile, I fear, as those of the poor missionaries already there.

"Then my father and mother have both set their hearts on having me near them, after an absence of so many years, and it would be a pity not to gratify their wishes for a while at least, and allow them to take as much comfort out of their graceless son as possible. All the satisfaction they can get in that way will be but a poor recompense for the sacrifices they have made for me.

"I suppose, in the end I will have to settle down, like old Elder Stearns, whom I remember as wearing long hair and leaning upon a hickory cane. He never lost an opportunity to nag us boys about our future salvation, and when he saw us playing bo-peep around him, used to warn us not to make too light of time.

"Perhaps like him too, I shall be mocked and laughed at by all the future naughty scamps in town.

"Well, before I became senile, I should work up a few reforms; tear down a few of our wretched village churches, and give the people decent places of worship; break up the 'donation parties' by which the minister's salary is poorly eked out with *potatoes*, *sausage* and *cord-wood* from the poor or stingy farmers. And I wouldn't have the village gossips coming about my house in vacation-time on the pretence of 'fitting it up for the winter,' but in reality to learn what kind of a housekeeper the minister's wife is.

"No! I'd assert my independence in spite of all the people might say, and I'd never feel myself obliged to toddle every stupid baby in the parish either, and kiss it and call it an angel, to please its foolish mother.

CHAPTER XIV.

FAITH was "boarding round."

There were sixteen families in the "Hollow" and each was called upon to board the teacher in proportion to the number of children they sent to school.

Thus far her experience had been by no means unpleasant. She had become the idol of the pupils, and, of course, with the parents she was always a welcome guest.

Amongst these families — mostly of hard-working farmers — she found no lack of opportunity for the exercise of her thrifty good sense and her helpful and ready fingers. It made her heart bleed to see the poor over-worked wives and mothers laboringto bring up large families of children upon limited means, doing all the housework themselves, and being often called upon to assist in the outside labor. She could not bear to think her presence added in the least to their burdens, and therefore tried in every way to lighten them. Her quick eye detected that "baby" was troublesome, that "Johnny's" pants were out at the knees; that there was a "stack of dishes" to wash, after a heavy day's work, and that the exhausted, almost discouraged mother needed words of sympathy and encouragement. She always put herself entirely in the background and labored for those about her, aiding in those domestic duties daily as soon as she returned from school.

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with questions nor annoy her with attentions. At the table he ate his meals in silence, but his quick eye followed every movement, and his ear drank in every word she uttered, nor did he fail to notice the daily acts of kindness and thoughtfulness she performed.

Faith was greatly relieved and delighted when she found his presence was not a restraint.

In the busy Rising household all her leisure moments were easily filled. Through the day both girls and boys hung lovingly about her, and at night two of the little girls shared her room. She taught them many useful pastimes and planned for them many days of pleasure, thus greatly relieving the widowed mother.

Christmas was near, and she had promised the children to trim and decorate for them a Christmas tree.

They were now very busy upon the decorations and had nearly finished winding the fragrant wreaths for the windows, when the evergreen cuttings which Bert had brought for them ran short.

He was not there just then, and as the younger children had colds she made them promise to remain by the fire while she went out to fetch some more of the cedar sprays. The night was cool, and throwing a shawl over her head she started in the direction of the barn where the branches had been dragged.

The moon was not yet up, but the white snow that crunched under her light footsteps made it sufficiently bright for her to pick her way.

Suddenly she was startled by a sound of moaning which came from beyond the barn. She stopped a moment, uncovered her ears and listened intently.

The cries came from where the evergreens lay — and she could go no further — she thought she recognized the voice.

Could it be possible? Did she hear aright? Was

it her promising young pupil, her "village Hampden," thus calling recklessly on his Maker in tones of such utter despair? — "Oh God, that I might die! Oh, why was I born with a heart to love so madly and a head so worthless? Oh God, have pity on me!"

Sad moans followed these piteous appeals.

She stood like one petrified. Her shawl had fallen from her shoulders, but she did not feel the wintry air.

Suddenly the voice changed to a more hopeful and manly tone, and she caught the quick words, "Yes! Bert Rising shall be worthy of such an angel! He shall be a man! A man that any girl will be proud of! He shall be rich and great,— she shall be mine!"

Faith heard no more, but ran back as fast as her feet could carry her, meeting the children who were coming to seek her. The poor teacher went out for the joyous wreath — but it had changed to cypress in her grasp.

On reaching the house she found Mr. Winchester had arrived and was awaiting her with an invitation to spend the holidays with them. She accepted at once, and very gladly, for under the circumstances it was a very fortunate and timely arrangement, relieving her at once of all embarrassment. She would not have to appear at breakfast, nor again at the Risings' for several days.

Gathering her wraps and her hand-bag with little preparation, she jumped into her uncle's cutter and they were soon skimming over the smooth snow cheered by the light of the rising moon behind them. For some moments Faith rode silently buried in sad and painful reveries.

Nerving herself at length, that she might not appear unhappy to her uncle, and suppressing her reflections, she began to question him about some of the statements which the presiding elder had made at the funeral of Orville Mapleton.

"My dear child," said he, after hearing her detailed account of the doctrine of a future damnation advanced by the elder in his funeral sermon, "I don't wonder you are puzzled and astonished. You were not raised in the church and of course know but little of its doctrines.

"To put your mind at ease, let me say that I do not share the presiding elder's belief in the future punishment of mankind, although there was a time when I dared not doubt it.

"I think our mission here on earth is to do good to each other, to lead pure lives, and perform honestly and cheerfully all the duties that humanity imposes. I also believe that in proportion as we fulfil these duties we secure the greatest amount of happiness possible, both here and hereafter.

"Never fear, my child, for the future. Do your duty faithfully and well each *to-day* while on earth, and your heavenly Father will take care of your hereafter, whatever may be your honest belief.

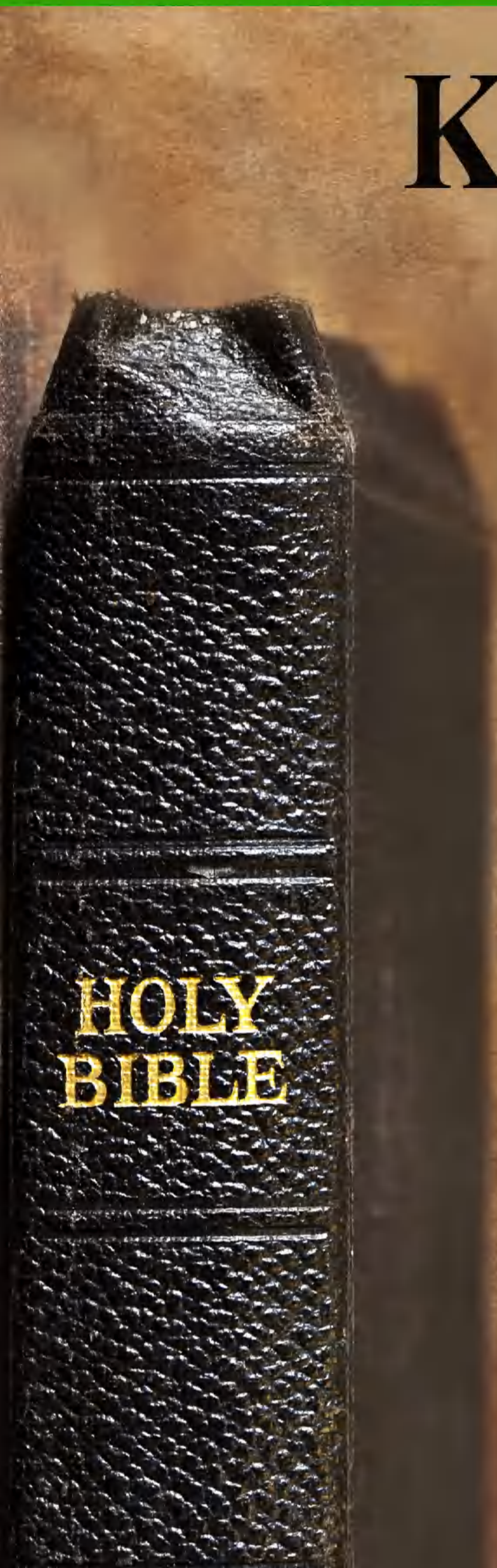
"Belief can work no change in the 'Divine order,' nor stay in the least the immutable law of cause and effect."

"But, dear uncle, is it not wrong to teach people such doctrines as I have described to you?"

"Of course it is, but those who teach them do not think so.

"I am sure many educated ministers do not believe all their catechisms say; but many persons claiming to be Christians are still strongly inclined to demand a hell for those who do not believe their sectarian dogmas. Ministers would find their occupation gone if they did not once in a while include in their anathemas against sin and sinners the future damnation of unbelievers.

"Then, too, believers feeling themselves safe think a little hell-fire necessary to scare their sinful neighbors into the church, or at least to hold them in



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the parables and sayings ascribed to Jesus are full of beautiful and instructive thought, pointing to the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

"Our modern Bible is composed of the Jewish Bible and the New Testament, to believe which, *in toto*, is eternal life, and to doubt in the slightest degree is eternal damnation. Such is the modern orthodox view."

Faith felt greatly relieved in mind and instructed by the remarks of her uncle. It seemed to her, good common-sense and in harmony with what she already knew, and she determined not to allow anything she might hear or see in the future of human bigotry or folly to upset her judgment in the least.

On Christmas-day her father and mother joined them in a happy family reunion.

They informed her of the disposition they had made of her painting of Kyn-Dhwen's mother, which she fully sanctioned as it was prompted by kindness, though she would have preferred the picture out of sight in her old studio. She congratulated herself on being absent when the two students called, and that they did not even know her address.

The striking intelligence of the Sinhalese had very much impressed her. She had also been greatly interested in observing the attachment which the other student manifested as he stood so sorrowfully beside his dying companion on the day they were rescued from the water.

CHAPTER XV.

THE holiday week passed all too quickly for the young teacher, and before she was aware of it, it was time for her to return to her duties at Teeter Hollow.

She found Mr. Pilbean awaiting her in the school-room.

"I jest come over, Miss Whitney," said he, "to invite you to our house for a few weeks. I'll tell you why. We are goin' to hold 'protracted meetin's' in the school-house all this month, and see if we can't square off old accounts and begin the new year a leetle better, and we're countin' on you to make the music. I'm going to send over Julie's melodeon — which belonged to my wife 'fore I married her — and you must make it go for the meetin's."

"Are we to give up the school?" inquired Faith, somewhat uneasy.

"Why, bless your soul, no! The meetin's will be in the evenin's; but as the widder Rising lives way off near sunrise, we thought we'd like to have you stay with us till they're over, so's to be nigh and allers on hand."

"I fear I cannot play any music you would like."

"Oh, I guess you can drum the 'Doxology' and 'Sweet Hour of Prayer,' if you know how to handle a pianer at all. I'll bet on you any day!"

"Will you have a minister?" asked Faith, almost alarmed, as the idea came to her that perhaps they were expecting her to preach as well.

"We're goin' to have the presidin' elder come over from the Cross Roads, and besides, I've written down to the univarsity to send us up a couple of hands to help along. You know them young preachers are mighty glad of a chance to practise on us country folks a bit 'fore they go out on their own hook. They'll answer our purpose first-rate. They can do all the prayin' you know, and they can sing like all possest. Besides we can git 'em for nothin'."

When Mr. Pilbean suggested that Faith should stay with them a few weeks, her heart bounded joyfully. She would then be spared the necessity of returning to the Risings', which now that she knew the state of Bert's feelings toward her would be disagreeable. But when she understood she was expected to attend a series of protracted meetings and be responsible for the music, she did not know which to dread most: the Bert Rising household or the evening meetings with the grave responsibility of "making" the sacred music.

The children had scarcely left the school-house in the afternoon when the busy farmers began preparations for the onset upon Satan's stronghold.

Sleigh-loads of sap buckets and boards arrived, followed by extra lamps and lanterns. The sap buckets served to support long boards placed upon them for seats, and the lamps and lanterns were the improvised chandeliers. Long before the hour of service Faith's humble school-room was converted into a respectable meeting-house with capacity to seat a hundred people.

Her table, ornamented with a brilliant bouquet of dried ferns, grasses and "everlastings," was distinguished as the pulpit. On its right corner stood a pitcher of water and a tumbler, and upon a box in front lay Mrs. Pilbean's Bible, with its long, heavy, beaded book-mark hanging half-way down to the floor, its conspicuous, polished clasp turned in front,

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she sat before the instrument, blissfully ignorant of all the envy, all the gossip, all the admiration that her innocent presence inspired. A glance at her fair young brow was sufficient to show that she was of a different type from the apple-cheeked, rosy faces and dumpy forms about her. Taking up the hymn-book and glancing through the music, she saw at once that it would not be difficult to execute if the ancient melodeon continued to hold together. She did not look up when the elder took his seat by the improvised pulpit, for she had seen him before. From the book which Mr. Pilbean now reached over to her she played "Nearer my God to Thee." The whole audience joined in the singing, and the school trustee gazed proudly round to see the effect of his new teacher's musical accomplishments upon the audience,

Above their loud voices Faith could clearly distinguish the notes of a cultivated tenor, and her fingers trembled as the modulated cadence thrilled her musical ear. Who could it be? Such harmony, such cultivation did not belong to Teeter Hollow.

Forgetting her conspicuous seat, under the influence of this unexpected addition to the music, she turned when she had finished playing to learn whence it came.

To her amazement, on either side the presiding elder sat Gerald Livingston and Kyn-Dhwen, — the two students who had come to assist in conducting the meetings.

To one of them belonged the tenor voice.

For the first time in her life Faith felt the necessity of forgetting herself. Why did the color suddenly leave her face and her heart thump heavily? She could not herself account for this excitement.

For the moment the students did not notice her, but she knew she could not long remain unrecognized. Suddenly, as if by a common impulse, the young men glanced toward her and their eyes met.

The presiding elder was fortunately reading from the scriptures, and the audience did not observe the astonished, startled looks which were exchanged between the young teacher and the university seniors; nor did they detect the tremor of the young Sinhalese. Both Gerald and Kyn-Dhwen realized how necessary it was to conceal any surprise, and Faith was glad to bend her head low down over her music.

This first session was quite brief. A short exhortation from the elder, a prayer from Gerald, a blessing from the Sinhalese, and a social reunion followed.

All the dignitaries of the Hollow — the school trustees, the justice of the peace, the sheriff and constable with their wives and daughters, were introduced to the young students. Faith found herself being presented also, along with the Pilbean family, and she felt confused when they took her gloveless hand in their warm palms and uttered conventional and complimentary phrases.

No opportunity was afforded for further conversation that evening. The Sinhalese, who had only gone over to the "Hollow" as company for Gerald, now showed a remarkable interest in the coming meetings, declaring that he would not miss one for the world.

Faith passed a sleepless night. She was out of patience with herself for being so foolish. She must make up her mind to the inevitable, for the meetings were to be continued every night except Fridays and Saturdays. On those evenings both the elder and the students devoted themselves to their other duties. "Now that my retreat is known," she said to herself, "I may as well spend my Saturdays at home with my parents, there is no necessity for my staying longer away." She accordingly wrote for her father to come for her the following Friday.

The next evening the revival-service continued with great fervor, and the house was crowded. The two students were present, and she sat at the melo-

deon as before. The presiding elder warmed up for the occasion and his thin falsetto voice pierced every corner of the building. He began the service by leading the singing himself: —

"Come ye sinners poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore."

In the lull which followed this exciting hymn, he addressed them: —

"Yes, come sinners, come and seek salvation! The door is open for you this very night. Come now, while there is yet time! Why will you put off such an important matter as the salvation of your souls? The Lord is here! He is urging you forward. Why do you tarry? *Now! Now!* is the accepted time. To-morrow you may not be here! To-morrow you may be cold in death. *To-morrow!* — may be *too late!* — *too late!* — Oh, those words 'Too late.'

"Jesus loves you! He died for you, sinners!"

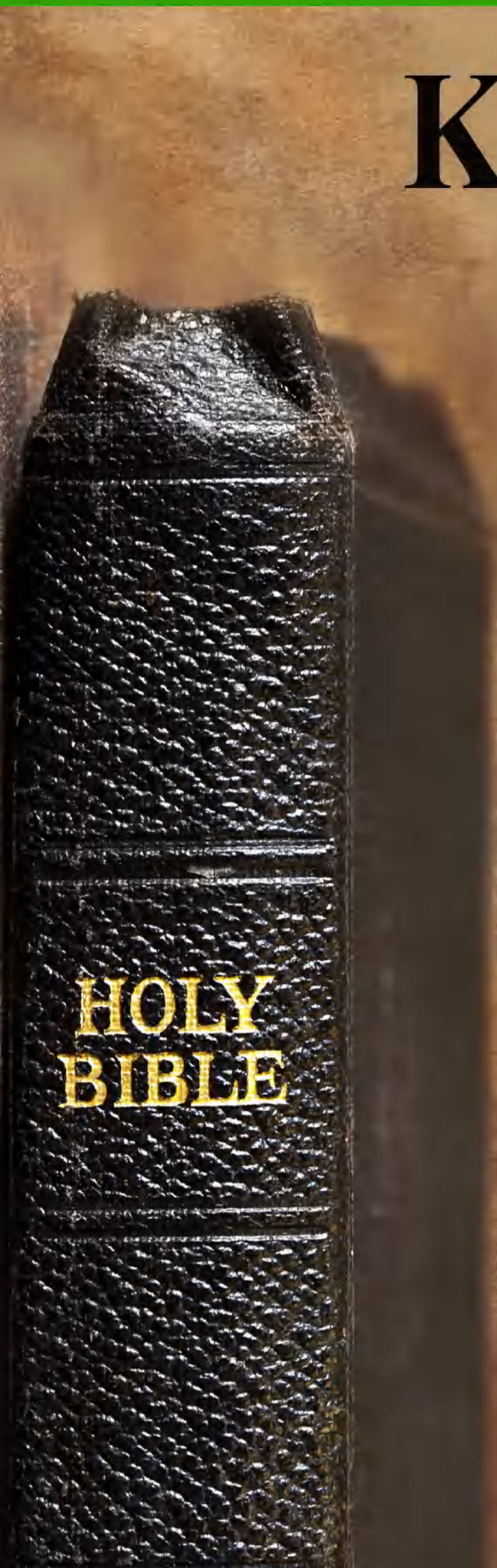
"Amen!" "Amen!" came loudly from the deacons' corner. The elder continued: —

"Yes, Amen! brethren, Amen! *Your* souls are safe; but how is it with these poor, perishing, blind young sinners, — can they say the same? My dear friends, young and old, will you come forward this night and confess Jesus and save your souls, or will you stay on the devil's side and be damned?

"Do you hear that? *Yes! on the devil's side and be damned.* He is here this evening! He is whispering this moment in that young man's or that young woman's ear, to defer, to put off this call. Don't listen to him, or he will have your souls damned to all eternity, before you know it!

"Turn to the Lord Jesus while He is here waiting! *Do you hear? Jesus is waiting to defeat the devil!* He will not wait long. *Turn now, I say!—turn now, or be damned forever!* If you reject Him now, 'He will mock at your calamity and laugh when your fear cometh!'"

He vociferated loudly, he gesticulated wildly. He



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in love with her already. I can't say what will be the consequences if I continue to meet her every night for a month.

"Seriously, Kyn-Dhwen, — I do love that girl terribly!

"You know my heart is not easily affected, and those seminary flirtations were mere idle pastimes.

"But the idea of flirting with Miss Whitney! Why I would as soon think of flirting with an angel from heaven!

"I believe a man realizes the first time he sets his eyes on a girl, whether she is destined to be his wife or not.

"I always thought I should fall in love at first sight with the one I was to marry, and now, Kyn-Dhwen, I'm sure of it!"

Poor Kyn-Dhwen was thankful that the gray curtain of night concealed his emotion, and hid from his dear friend the alternate flush and pallor which passed over his face while these thoughtless words were uttered. He felt that he could never aspire to the hand of that lovely being, through whose living breath he had been raised from death, re-incarnated into life again, and to whom — according to his Oriental faith — he thought himself spiritually united through time and eternity.

How could he school his susceptible heart to see her sought and won by another? how hear those words of love, even from his dearest friend, without a pang akin to death?

Gerald was profoundly ignorant of the sacred depths he was stirring in the fervid, mystical bosom of the poor Sinhalese. He believed Kyn-Dhwen to be above the power or influence of the ordinary emotions of life, little dreaming there was beneath that calm, self-poised exterior, a slumbering volcano, ready at a moment to burst out in destruction and death. After a moment's silence he exclaimed, —

"Yes, I shall hereafter have a double interest in life: to lead sinners up to heaven, and to win an angel down to earth."

"And I," added the Sinhalese sadly, "must also prove my faith in the brotherhood of mankind. As I once freely offered my life a willing sacrifice for a life, so now I must add to my Karma by freely giving 'my heart for a heart.'"

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. WHITNEY called at the school-house on Friday afternoon, and found Faith anxious to return to the peace and quietness of her own home after the mental strain of the past week. She told her father all about the "revival" or "protracted" meetings, and how the excitement had frightened her.

At first he was quite angry, and determined she should at once give up the school, denouncing all such means of gathering people into the church as "taking undue advantage of their fears, their credulity, or their ignorance. — As if," said he, "religion were contagious, like measles or the whooping-cough."

After a few minutes of silence he became more reconciled, and continued, "My daughter, I have tried for many years to shield you from such pernicious influences, and I have succeeded, I believe. But you are now a woman, assuming the duties and meeting the necessary experiences of human life, and must exercise your own good sense and judgment. As long as these meetings are held in your school-house it is perhaps best that you should attend and play the melodeon for them. You will soon learn the hollowness of professions and the evil of excitements. These excitements retard the growth of rational and pure Christianity, and the promoters are deserving of our pity rather than our contempt.

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"With what delight did I emerge from my childish dresses: now how happy would I be to return to those days of my childhood if I could thus escape the duties and troubles of life! The trying experiences of the past few weeks have quite unnerved me, and I am sometimes almost ready to shrink from duty. Perhaps I would be happier, at least more contented, if I tried to believe as those around me do, and thus drift with the current. It is hard to associate daily with those whose religious ideas are not in harmony with our own. But every day I feel more and more the duty of asserting my own individuality. Every human being must stand in his place, and, having convictions, it is but duty to assert them. Faith Whitney, — you can never be a hypocrite!"

The next day she felt more contented and sat down to enjoy her old pastime of painting. She was engaged in putting a fancy sketch on canvas — a child with bright sunny hair and transparent skin — when her mother opened the door of her studio.

"Daughter, the young Sinhalese has called and is in the parlor."

Faith was not in the least disturbed, but, dropping her brush, went at once to meet him.

Kyn-Dhwen was standing by the small centre-table, with his hat in his hand.

"I hope you will not think me presuming, Miss Whitney; but for a long time I have wished to talk with you, indeed from the first time I saw you — or rather felt your presence — until I met you at Teeter Hollow."

"Please be seated," said she; "I am glad you have called," — and she spoke her true feelings.

She really wished for an opportunity to talk privately with an intelligent minister, who maintained the doctrines announced by the presiding elder in her school-room, — one who, presumably, sanctioned the

manner of their presentation, — and to ask him how he could justify the wretched scenes enacted there.

"Miss Whitney," he resumed, "I felt quite sure from the expression of your face that you were suffering during the exciting meetings at your school-house the past week."

(Ah, thought she, he has come to convert me, to convince me of my sins, and bring me within the saving grace of the church.)

"I can hardly be mistaken, for I have recently passed through similar unpleasant experiences; and I come to you, to-day, to say that I sympathize with you deeply."

Thinking he might have been recently converted, she made no reply, and indeed knew not what to say. He continued, —

"I was not only taken away at an early age from my home and the belief of my fathers, but have since been diligently instructed in another faith, which seems to me not only unreasonable, but unnatural and cruel;"

Faith looked up at her visitor in astonishment, saying, "I fear I do not quite understand your meaning."

"I will speak more plainly. I was brought to America by Christian missionaries in order to be converted from heathenism to Christianity, educated in orthodoxy, and finally returned to my native land to teach my benighted people this new faith. I was fifteen when I came; but thanks to the careful teaching of my father, who died a year previous to my departure, I had at that early age a pretty clear idea of the Buddhist faith.

"These missionaries denounce our whole Eastern worship as idolatrous and heathenish, — they no doubt have been taught to believe it so, — and they preach the Christian religion as the one only and true gospel of salvation.

"They assert that all who do not embrace this faith will be forever damned to an eternal hell of fire and brimstone; and they add that this condemnation embraces all in past ages, who never heard of the doctrine, however pure their lives.

"It has been a severe trial for me to hear the old Buddhist religion of my country called idolatrous and all our devout worshippers condemned as heathens; but I have held my peace, desiring to learn this modern faith in full, so that I might compare it intelligently with that of my fathers. I believe I have done this in all fairness."

She now regarded him with added interest and wonder, and, being deeply interested in all he had said, replied, —

"Please tell me what is the Buddhist faith?"

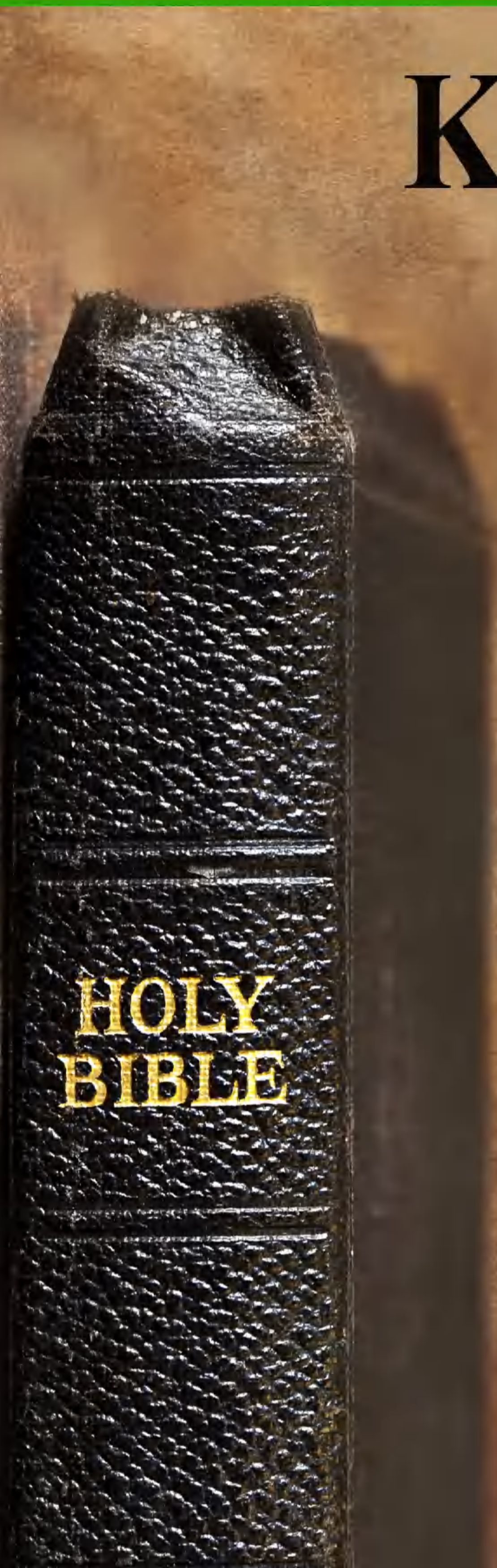
"I cannot tell you," said he, "in one afternoon. But to give you an idea of the fundamental doctrines of that faith, as I understand them, they are:

"First,— a belief in One Creative Power or Spirit: *universal, all-powerful, unapproachable;* rarely named, but, when spoken, called 'OM'!"

Faith started! Where had she heard that strange word? Then she remembered how solemnly he had uttered the exclamation, "OM!" when recovering consciousness, after being drawn from the water; and for the first time she knew that in his dying moments his thoughts were upon God!

"Second"—he continued —"the Buddhists believe that according to their pure lives on earth, or as they term it, according to their good 'Karma,' — the life-record which they make, — they are capable of advancing hereafter, until at last they may reach the celestial 'Nirvana.'

"Third — they believe that all mankind must of necessity be re-incarnated many times, until their 'Karma' or character shall be so purified as to fit them for a higher life.



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tianity teaches the *forgiveness* of sin; Buddhism that sin cannot be forgiven, we must pay the *penalty* of every wrong action. Christianity teaches the *fatherhood* of God; Buddhism, the *brotherhood* of man.

"It is easy to see how strongly Christianity appeals to the human heart and to human sympathy, through the doctrine of the forgiveness of sin. But the Buddhist would say, that, to forgive sin and reinstate the sinner, without repentance and consequent *improvement in life and conduct resulting in an improved 'Karma'* or *character*, would be a *re-creation*, in fact, of the whole man, incompatible with the law of cause and effect, and the principle underlying the creation of all things. Our faith, while not perhaps so comforting to the sinner, is more philosophical, — in other words, more in accordance with Supreme Justice and Wisdom. No man's death-bed repentance can wipe out a bad Karma, nor make a good one; but it would doubtless go a long way toward the end aimed at in a future incarnation, since there is no hope of heaven except by purification of life and heart, which it may require many incarnations to accomplish.

"So you see, Miss Whitney, how unjust it is to term Buddhism a 'heathenish superstition' which debases mankind. On the contrary, it elevates man to the belief that through a pure '*Christian' life* only (if you prefer the term) can he ever hope to reach either Nirvana, or the Christian heaven. For *that*, and *that alone*, life is given him, and no pardoning power can change the law of cause and effect. Buddhism has never founded inquisitions, has no damning prejudice against other faiths, nor has it ever persecuted other faiths, — its whole doctrine being entirely foreign to such a thought or to any effort to proselyte."

"What you have said of the Buddhist faith seems elevating and reasonable; but do you think the

doctrines taught at your university, and what we hear from the pulpits, do justice to the teachings of our New Testment?"

"By no means," replied Kyn-Dhwen; "the churches preach orthodoxy and creeds. They have wandered a long way from the simple teachings of Jesus. Christianity I respect, bigotry I despise."

"But are you not to be a minister of the orthodox faith?"

"I shall certainly not promulgate the dogmas I have learned at the university. I shall return to India, study at greater length the religion of my people, and then decide what I shall preach. I came here to-day to set myself right in your eyes, and to ask you a few questions in reference to your own views. You seem to stand alone, apart as it were from the other people I meet here; and from what I have learned of your life, your opinions, and your experiences, I think you must be totally different from those about you. I have been thus explicit in regard to my own convictions and my history in the hope that you would grant me the privilege of asking the same of you."

Faith felt that she could not withhold her own history, since he had been so candid, though she disliked to speak of herself. "I am aware," she replied, "that I am somewhat different from other people. It is no fault of my own that I should be so, nor any merit that I can see. I suppose I was born different. I cannot remember the time when I was not surrounded by forms or outlines of people, real to me, but unseen by others. They converse with me, tell me things I never heard of before, and at school they helped me in my studies, and thus enabled me frequently to solve problems and write compositions that otherwise I could not have done."

Kyn-Dhwen gave rapt attention. Faith knew

that he had come for an explanation of her painting, and she continued, —

"The portraits in my studio, for example, I painted from faces as they appeared before me. Although I have never had any lessons, I paint with ease and tolerable accuracy. The one of your mother is the exact likeness of a face I saw; but I did not then know her name. She appeared a day or two after you were rescued from the water. I have always lived in the country, and have never heard of such things before. While I am very happy with my occupations and my invisible companions, I am shocked to know that the world thinks them so strange, and even wicked, for I am sure I cannot help what seems to be a gift of nature."

Kyn-Dhwen caught every word. Her simple unaffected recital touched him, and at last he said,—

"What you say about the painting does not astonish me in the least. I had already arrived at a similar conclusion. But there is something further which I do not understand. How did you discover that Mr. Livingston and I were in the water the day you rescued us?"

"Why, I saw you very plainly, and I saw that you were drowning!"

"You were then on the bank of the lake near us?"

"No indeed! I was far away in our meadow-field sitting under the trees in the tall grass, reading, out of sight of the lake altogether."

"And yet you saw us drowning?"

"Certainly! As plain as I see you now. I did not know who you were; but I saw a vision — perfectly pictured before my eyes — of two human beings struggling in the water and an overturned boat near them. I called my father and we ran to your assistance."

There was another point which he was desirous to

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"Oh, yes," he replied; "I may derive some benefit from the experience. I shall certainly learn something of human nature; and, besides, I shall have the satisfaction of knowing in the future that in the audience there is one at least in whose valued opinion my views will not be considered entirely rank heresy.— Good-day, Miss Whitney!"

Faith felt more confidence in herself after this interview and greatly cheered in spirit. She could now return cheerfully to her work and perform her duty at the meetings with a feeling of sympathy, as well as sorrow, for the credulous people. But she still felt a depressing under-current of sadness when she reflected that the intelligent, manly Livingston believed those narrow dogmas, and that his life-work was to teach and propagate them.

"How can he be so blind? Why does he not listen to his Sinhalese friend? The ramparts of orthodoxy which hedge him in seem insurmountable."

Faith's resolution and her self-confidence were to be put to a still more severe test during the ensuing week. The presiding elder succeeded in stimulating the excitement of the meetings to its highest pitch. Men and women lost all control of themselves. They screamed, they shouted, they walked up and down the floor in a frenzy of overwrought feeling. Many of the more excitable sisters, becoming exhausted with the nervous tension, dropped upon their knees, or sank upon the floor unconscious.

This, the elder apparently enjoyed, and rubbing his hands together shouted, "The power of the Spirit is upon you!"

Faith clung to her melodeon corner in fear. She felt that some one ought to interfere: for certainly the people were losing their reason in this terrible excitement and strain.

She was relieved, however, when the meetings

closed each evening to see the brethren and sisters recover so quickly and enjoy a half-hour of pleasant social intercourse. Then Gerald always flew to her side, and reluctantly left her when it was time to go home. His voice was very musical in her ear, his smile winning, his conversation bright, witty and agreeable, and his manner fascinating. It was not remarkable therefore that she found herself thinking of him every day and hearing his sweet tenor voice in her dreams every night.

And Gerald also felt that in all his life he had never been so strangely and so strongly drawn to any one as to this simple young teacher, — the mystery of so many weeks.

CHAPTER XVII.

FRIDAY NIGHT came again, and again Faith enjoyed the quiet and rest of her father's fireside.

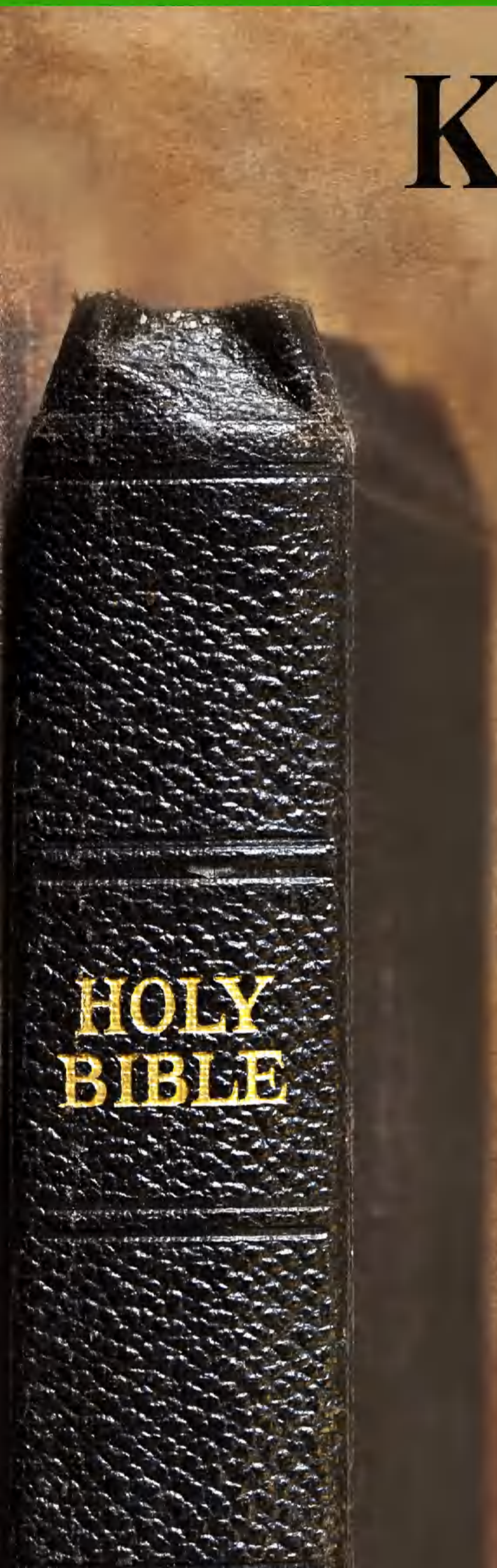
About two o'clock the next afternoon, as she sat in a comfortable arm-chair reading, and listening to the merry sleigh-bells as the cutters dashed rapidly by her window, she saw Gerald Livingston drive up to the door in a pretty turn-out and fasten his horses. She did not go to meet him as she had met Kyn-Dhwen a week before: for her heart beat violently and her hand trembled.

Gerald entered, and greeting her with a friendly air of self-possession, which put her somewhat at ease, said gaily, "I have come, Miss Whitney, to see if you wouldn't like a sleigh-ride this bright day. You are so much confined through the week that I thought perhaps you would enjoy a little recreation in the open air."

"I thank you very kindly, Mr. Livingston, for thinking of me," answered Faith. "I would indeed enjoy the air very much this lovely day. I will get my wraps immediately and not keep you waiting."

In a few minutes she returned, — the picture of health and beauty. A warm shawl thrown gracefully over her shoulders, and a fluffy "fascinator" about her throat, gave her in Gerald's eyes the dignity of a queen.

"Are you sure you will be warm enough? This country air is quite deceiving."



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must be his, and kiss over and over again those blooming cheeks! But Prudence with warning finger told him he must wait and gradually bring her mind to think of him.

Faith also enjoyed a delicious sensation of happiness. She had never been alone in the company of a young man before; and now Gerald Livingston — of all persons in the world! — was close by her side. His warm breath came into her face, and she vaguely wished she might ride on thus forever, with the music of the sweet bells and with such an agreeable companion. Still, in spite of this feeling of sweet content which she experienced, there crept over her an indescribable sensation of regret, — a sense, as it were, of self-condemnation, — a feeling that she had no right to be there, that she ought not to encourage Gerald's attentions; and she carefully guarded her conversation lest she should betray her real feelings.

Presently they came in sight of "Finn-Water," now a white frozen plain, in the midst of which rose gloomily the dark cedars of Tim's Island. They passed just opposite the spot where Faith and her father had rescued the two friends, when Gerald reined up his steeds.

"Miss Whitney," said he gravely, "I shall ever regard this place as sacred: for it was here I first met you."

Faith's only reply was her beating heart!

"You may not know that we searched the country up and down for weeks afterward to learn your name, and by a fortunate accident only we came upon you at last at Teeter Hollow."

Faith was greatly embarrassed, but, to conceal her feelings, replied as carelessly as she could, "I am not very well acquainted about here."

This reply did not turn Gerald's thoughts; and he said instantly, "Miss Whitney, do you know why I have sought you so long, and why I am so happy, now that I have found you?"

The sequel to this sudden question flashed upon Faith's consciousness with painful reality. Yet she dare not remain silent, and therefore said, —

"I suppose you felt grateful for my assistance in saving your life."

"The life you saved, dear Miss Whitney, will be of little consequence to me or anybody else unless you continue to prolong and support it!"

He was fast forgetting his previous resolution to bring her mind gradually to think of him. The precious present engrossed all his thoughts, and he continued in passionate yet tender tones, —

"Faith, my dear Faith! why need I longer keep back the truth? I love you with all the fervor of a man's first love. God only knows how deep, how powerful it is. Can you not, *will you not* reciprocate it, dear Faith? *Do not say No!*" And as he said these passionate words, he laid his arm across the back of the cutter, almost tonching her shoulders.

While he was thus pouring out his heartfelt expressions of love, Faith had remained silent, bewildered and frightened; but now that she felt his arm so near her, she started and exclaimed, —

"Oh, Mr. Livingston, don't, please don't say any more; indeed, I cannot bear it!"

A sudden faintness crept over Gerald. "She loves another," thought he as he withdrew his arm.

"I beg your pardon, dear Miss Whitney, if my rashness has offended you, — your heart may be already engaged."

"No, Mr. Livingston, I have never loved."

* * * * * * * *

Encouraged, and almost beside himself, by the admission that he had no rival, he urged his suit anew. "Then why, dear Faith, will you not try to think of me, to love me ever so little? Will you not be my wife? Will you not let me hope?"

Faith had become very pale, and was now strug-

gling with contrary, powerful emotions, and she replied slowly and sadly, "Mr. Livingston, it can never be! I am sorry, very sorry you have spoken thus. It pains me to hear you speak of feelings which I cannot reciprocate. I can never be your wife! Think of it no more."

Gerald, who was also by this time pale and agitated, replied pleadingly, "Why, dear Faith, oh, why can you not become my wife? How can you treat me so, without an explanation? without allowing me to hope?"

After a moment's thought, she replied slowly and deliberately, —

"Mr. Livingston, I could never be the wife of a minister unless I felt myself entirely in sympathy with his religious belief."

"Oh, is that all, dear Faith?" he asked, greatly relieved; "that can surely be arranged satisfactorily."

"No, Mr. Livingston, it cannot be! Our lives lie as wide apart as the poles. You should never marry one who is not in sympathy with your religious views."

"But, dear Miss Whitney, any little difference in our religious opinions could surely make no difference in our happiness, — the heart alone should be consulted."

"Our difference is not little, — it is vital. Your wife, Mr. Livingston, should be in full accord with you in your religious duties, — should work in entire harmony with you in sustaining and spreading your religious faith. This I could never do. In the endeavor to aid you I would have to live a lie. I should be a stumbling block in your way."

"You speak as if your religious convictions were settled, unchangeable. What are they?"

"I have none, except such as experience and reason have taught me; but no power on earth could make me believe the doctrines which have been taught you at the university."

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"Ah, my friend, *all is wrong. All is wrong.* She has refused me!"

Kyn-Dhwen was speechless! Gerald related the substance of his conversation with Faith, closing with, "*Right or wrong, my friend, I'm a ruined man.* No reasoning, no effort of mine, no lapse of time, can ever efface her image from my heart."

"My dear Gerald, don't talk so despairingly. It is a terrible blow, to be sure; but disappointment should make us show our true metal, by bearing it patiently. Consider a moment! Has not Miss Whitney something to endure in all this? Is it not a terrible ordeal for a young girl to be suddenly called upon to decide between her heart and her conscience: for I am sure the loftiest motives alone influenced her."

"No doubt, Kyn-Dhwen, it is a matter really of conscience with her as she views it; but her heart cannot be touched, otherwise a difference in religious belief would not separate us. — Oh, my dear unselfish friend, won't you help me? She has confidence in you, she will hear you. Won't you see her, and talk her out of that foolish notion that such a trifle as a difference in religious belief should separate hearts that love? I cannot, will not give her up."

"I promise you, my dear Livingston," said Kyn-Dhwen, his voice sinking to a tremulous whisper, "to do all I can for you, but on one condition only, — that you will not mope and lose your health if we fail."

"I will bear all a man can bear," replied Gerald dejectedly. "It will be impossible for me to go to Teeter Hollow again, at least for a few days. It would upset me completely in my present state of mind."

They clasped hands silently, as heart spoke to heart; and Gerald withdrew.

"Ah," said Kyn-Dhwen after his departure, "poor

fellow! he thinks his lot hard to bear. That *it is so*, there can be no doubt. Yet, he can talk of his love, can have the sympathy of friends and their influence in his behalf. And then, — has he not the sweet assurance that he is not indifferent to her? But *my* fate! — What is *my fate*? * * * With dumb lips to love! to worship! to adore! * * * To be bound by invisible chains! * * * To be separated by an impassable chasm!"

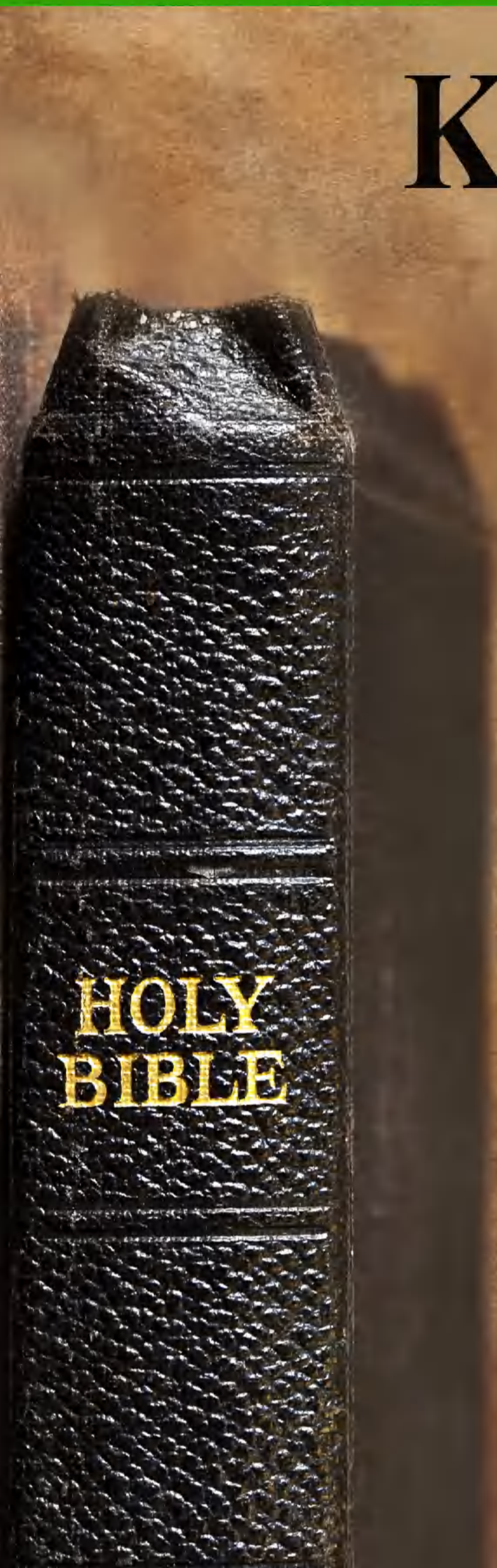
CHAPTER XVIII.

If Gerald was unhappy and miserable after the sleigh-ride denouement, Faith was scarcely less so. It had been the rule of her life, her religion, never to wound the feelings of the most insignificant person, when in her power to prevent it. And now, in refusing the hand of Gerald Livingston whom she had come to esteem very highly, if not really to love, she had not only suffered a severe pang in her own sensitive heart, but at the same time realized that she was inflicting a great pain and mortification upon him.

She thought over and over again all the conversation that had passed between them, and earnestly asked herself if she was justified in her own heart in the course she had pursued, and her conclusion was always the same. "I have done what I know to be right: any other course would have been a violation of my conscience."

She determined therefore to efface the whole affair from her mind and to think of Gerald Livingston no more.

She had not spoken to her parents of his proposal, believing it a matter to be settled first in her own heart. She now felt it would be very awkward to meet him again at the school-house services, and therefore asked her father if he could not come for her every evening and drive her over every morning for



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The older children were closely occupied with their books and did not notice her; but little Belle Coons, who sat near a window, looked into the yard and saw something that frightened her. Starting up she turned round in her seat and gazed at the teacher in evident alarm.

The other children sitting near, seeing Belle's puzzled look, peeped outside too, and whispering together, they turned about and looked curiously and anxiously at the teacher also.

"What's the matter?" whispered Julie Pilbean, whose attention by this time was attracted to the strange looks and actions of the children. "Why," said Belle in an excited whisper, "just look out there in the yard! There's our teacher walking up and down the path, and here she is, too, asleep by the table!"

"Yes!" echoed the others; "look, there she goes again!"

Julie turned in the direction of the window, and, sure enough, there was a lady passing leisurely back and forth, along the smooth path trodden in the snow.

Her dress was white; but her step, her appearance, her form and the expression of her face were all the exact counterpart of Miss Whitney.

She grew alarmed as she looked from the figure outside to the teacher within, who still remained with her head resting on the table, asleep, evidently unconscious of all that was transpiring around her.

Tears stood in little Belle's eyes, and in her childish confidence that "teacher" could solve all problems, she ran over to her desk and pulled her dress. "Say, Miss Whitney, be you sick?"

Faith started and looked confusedly about her a moment before she realized that she had been asleep. Then, rising up, she said kindly, "No, no, dear child, there is nothing the matter; run to your seat."

She seemed so natural and cheerful that the little ones soon forgot their alarm and went about their lessons again.

Julie, however, was not so easily calmed. She turned again to watch the strange counterpart outside, but it had vanished.

When school was out, Mr. Whitney was waiting at the door, and Faith, telling Julie again to take her place at the melodeon in the evening, was driven home. The little girls now gathered around Julie, asking her many questions about their "double teacher"! "I wonder where she went to," said one. "Do you suppose Miss Whitney knows her? Ain't it funny that she was just precisely like her and had on the same dress too, only white!"

"Yes," chimed in another; "she was bareheaded too! I wonder she didn't catch cold!"

Julie listened to this chattering apparently unconcerned; but all they said only deepened her conviction of the mystery. "It couldn't have been imagination," she reasoned; "for several different children saw the same thing, and the strangest part of all was that as soon as Miss Whitney awoke, her second self disappeared and she knew nothing about it."

At heart Julie was really glad that Faith had gone home, for she would have been afraid to sleep with her that night. "How terribly frightened I should be," said she, "if I were to see that figure parading around our bed while the teacher was asleep! I believe I'd really go into spasms."

She was so much agitated with these reflections that she did not notice that it was the presiding elder who opened the door for her on reaching home, until he asked brusquely, —

"Why, Julie, where's your teacher, Miss Whitney?"

"She has gone home to-night," replied Julie, "and I'm to play the melodeon this evening."

The elder appeared much chagrined that Faith should thus absent herself from the meetings without notice to him, as she was by far the ablest musican at the Hollow; but nothing more was said on the subject until the family gathered around the supper table, when regrets were freely expressed at her absence, to which was added a hope that she was not ill.

Mrs. Pilbean remarked in her motherly way, "She's been kind o' droopy like, o' late; I guess she ain't none of the strongest! Did she complain on a fever, Julie?"

"No," replied Julie, "she said nothing about being sick. But I think she ain't very well, for a very strange thing happened this afternoon."

They all started and demanded in one breath, "What was it?"

Julie thought best to tell the incident, for she knew the other girls would tell their parents as soon as they reached their homes; besides, the family or the elder might be able to explain it: she therefore detailed the affair just as it occurred.

Every one dropped knife and fork in astonishment and gazed at each other. Then looking towards the elder, they awaited his opinion before expressing their own.

His lips tightened, his face grew stern, and turning towards Mr. Pilbean he demanded, —

"Who is this teacher, brother Pilbean?"

"Why, she's the daughter of Solomon Whitney of Jansenville and niece of Mr. Winchester of G——," replied Mr. Pilbean, pleased to be able to give so much information, and he added, "She's the only schoolma'am who ever dared to tackle our school in winter."

"What!" said the elder in great scorn. "Is it the daughter of Whitney, that unbeliever, that heretic?"

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know it, sir! — I know it! Haint I told you frequently that the devil is a wily critter?

"Why, *this messenger* (for he often sends young and pretty women as his messengers) has wormed herself into the good opinion of all the people in the *Holler*. She don't care a snap of her finger for all the preachers or churches, but is seeking all the time to deliver you over to Satan! What, in the name of all that is holy! did the children see walking in the garden but the devil in *her* shape, lying in wait to catch their young and innocent souls?" And the elder looked defiantly round the table for an answer.

This last was quite overwhelming to the Pilbean family, and Julie, partly through pity for Faith, and partly through fear that it might have been the devil sure enough, left the table sobbing hysterically. Mrs. Pilbean got up to soothe her daughter, but, in her efforts to do so, broke down herself and cried like a child. The other children began crying also, and the house was soon in an uproar.

"Presidin' Elder, see here!" exclaimed the father; "this is gittin' serious. The women 'll all go stark mad!"

"Not so mad as they will be if you keep that devil's imp in your neighborhood!" snapped the elder.

Mr. Pilbean was now quite alarmed. — "Wife! Julie!" he cried, "don't take on so! *We* ain't in no danger. The Lord's on our side yet!"

"Come back and finish your supper!" suggested the elder in a milder voice, who, so far from relishing cold victuals, had commenced eating. "Come back, and I 'll tell you what to do!"

It was fully ten minutes before quiet was restored and the chairs again drawn anxiously up to the table.

The elder spoke solemnly and slowly, —

"My friends, my advice is that at the meetin' tonight the trustees draw up a letter dismissin' this

teacher 'fore any more damage is done. She won't be present and you can settle the hull business 'fore she gits back."

This seemed quite a proper proceeding to Mr. Pilbean, although he could not mention the name of the beloved teacher without a pang of remorse, for he had become attached to her; still the welfare of the school and the church was paramount, and, without reasoning upon the matter, he accepted the elder's advice for the best.

The evening meeting was very small. Faith was absent, Julie had a sick-headache, Kyn-Dhwen and Gerald did not come over, and even Bert Rising, who had become one of their most promising converts, was kept at home by a sick horse.

The elder was either provoked because his supper was spoiled, or disappointed in the small attendance: at all events, he was gloomy, sour and tyrannical.

As Julie had foreseen, the little girls had told their parents all about the apparition in the school-yard; and *that*, instead of the revival, was the all-absorbing topic of discussion amongst the excited people before the service began.

Many and various were the theories put forth to account for it: some said it was a mistake of the children, others that it was some neighboring visitor; but it was not until the presiding elder gave his astounding version, that they thought of it in the light in which he viewed it. In spite of his wholesale denunciation, several members essayed to speak of the teacher's good qualities, how she was beloved, and how her wonderful influence had improved the scholars.

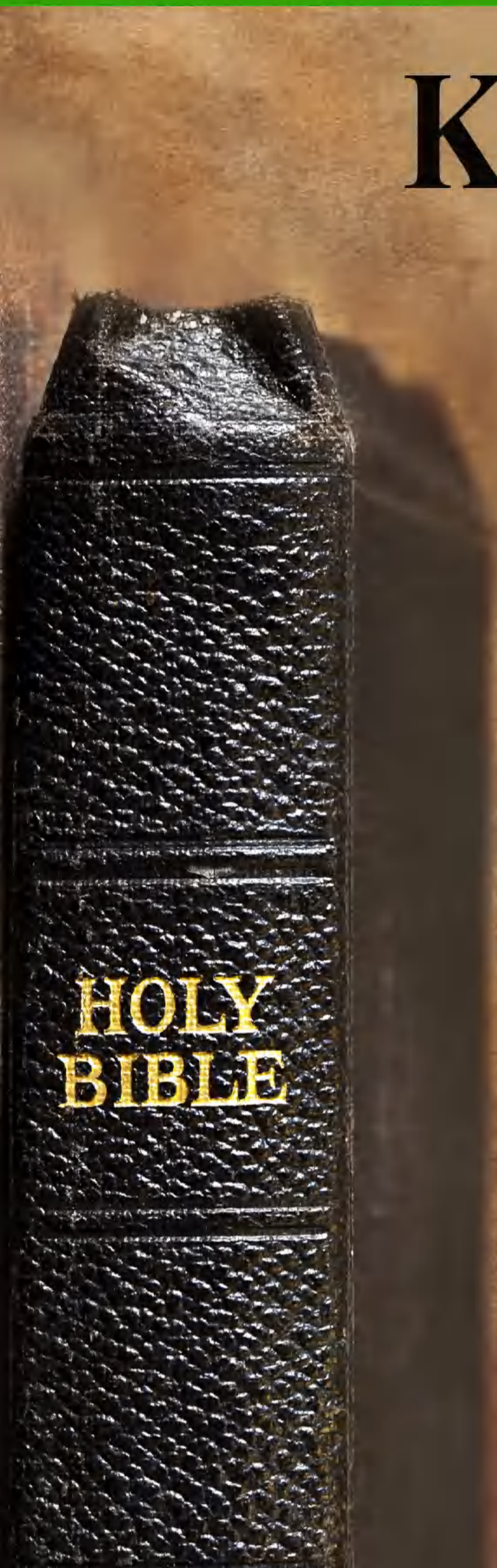
The presiding elder soon put an end to their "vacillating sentimentalism," as he called it, by exclaiming, "Well! if you wish to place your children in the devil's jaws because he coaxes and flatters 'em, why, go ahead, and when you find their souls are lost, blame yourselves and not me!"

This settled the fate of the poor teacher, and when the meeting was dismissed with the elder's earnest prayer to God, that *love*, *charity* and *forgiveness* might more generally abound among men, the following letter was laid in a conspicuous place upon Faith's table, directed to her: —

"MISS WHITNEY, — We, the undersigned Trustees of Teeter Hollow District School, find your influence over the children is pernicious.

"We can't allow the devil to loiter round our school-house in disguise, nor employ a teacher in league with him; so, for the protection of our children *'gainst* the wiles of Satan, and to guard their future salvation, we hereby dismiss you. Inclosed you will find the balance due on your wages, $4.25.

(Signed) "J. PILBEAN.
"H. COONS."



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the floor in a swoon like one dead, her white face turned toward the door!

"Oh, Miss Whitney!" he cried, and almost staggered to the prostrate figure.

"Miss Whitney! Oh, my teacher! What is the matter?" As no answer came he moaned, "My God, she is dead!"

Tenderly raising her, and half kneeling, with her head against his shoulder, he cried for help but no one heard him. He could not leave her; but intuitively reaching with one hand for the water-bucket behind him, he dipped his large rough hand into the water and wet her forehead. She breathed, she sighed, her lips moved noiselessly, and she revived.

Julie now opened the door. "Here, Julie!" said Bert in a hoarse, excited voice, "sit here and hold her head while I run for a doctor!"

"No," came faintly from Faith's lips. "I shall be better presently. Don't get a doctor; don't!"

She raised her hand to her head, when the fatal letter fell at his feet.

Picking it up, he was about to make way for Julie to take his place; but seeing Faith feebly trying to rise, he lifted her in his strong arms and placed her in a chair.

"Stay with her, Julie; I will be back presently."

Running out to the wood-shed, he took out the letter she had dropped, which he instinctively felt was the cause of her so suddenly fainting away. Sweeping his eye rapidly over it, he leaned for support against one of the cobwebbed beams. He uttered not a word, but bit his lips until a drop of blood fell on the open paper. As it spread out and colored the white surface of the sheet, he crushed it in his tightly clenched hand, muttering, "Every drop in these veins would I gladly shed for that dear teacher." Then stuffing the fatal missive into his pocket again, he ran across the street to Mr Pilbean's barn.

The cowardly trustee was standing in the door, and seeing Bert rushing toward him all hatless and coatless, he retreated quickly inside, for he felt mean and guilty.

Bert hailed him before he could get out of sight, and although he believed Mr. Pilbean was mainly responsible for the gross outrage which had been perpetrated upon Miss Whitney, in discharging her for such a cause and by such an infamous letter, he had no time for epithets. He demanded of Mr. Pilbean his fastest team and cutter to drive Miss Whitney home.

Much relieved that Bert said no more, he replied with alacrity, "Yes! yes! certainly, with pleasure; I will have them ready instantly!"

When Bert re-entered the school-room, he found Faith and Julie talking sadly together. Julie had already told her, as mildly as she could, all that had taken place and the reason for the letter of dismissal.

Faith, though calm, was very pale. Now that she understood the matter, and knew that it was no act of her own that brought about her dismissal, she became more composed.

Julie lovingly wrapped her up for the long, cold ride, and before leading her to the cutter, that was now in waiting, threw her arms affectionately around her neck, and kissed her over and over again. Tears trickled down her face as she said, "My dear, dear teacher, I shall never believe a word they may say against you! I love you with my whole heart!"

Faith with difficulty controlled her own feelings, for she appreciated greatly the warm sympathy of her pupil.

"Don't cry for me, dear Julie! Be a good girl and give your next teacher as much help as you have given me. Good-by!"

She took her seat by the side of her stalwart pupil, who, wrapped in his shaggy overcoat, looked a man of twenty-five rather than a boy of nineteen.

They rode in silence for several minutes, Bert only inquiring if she were able to ride so fast. They were both too busy with their own thoughts to indulge in any idle conversation.

Faith was returning to the home of her childhood with a feeling of anguish that she was usefully, socially, and professionally a failure. All the fond dreams of her early womanhood were dissipated, all her early ambitions blasted, and now, sadpand dejected, she was seeking a refuge under her father's roof, her future aimless, her life a blank.

Bert, with his lips compressed and a burning fire glittering in his eye, was mentally cursing the church, the trustees of the school and the whole Hollow, and wondering how he could best serve his teacher and punish her enemies.

The horse soon came to a walk, and he relaxed his hold upon the reins. One moment he turned and looked into Faith's face, whose pallor even the frosty air had not relieved. Then, as if with a great effort controlling his words, he said slowly, "Miss Whitney, this is a mighty outrage! A *damnable outrage!*"

"Bert!" said she gently, "don't speak so!"

"I'll shout it from the very highest house-top in Teeter Hollow! I'll —! I'll ——!"

"Don't be so violent, Bert, I implore you!" — laying her hand upon his sleeve. "I firmly believe they have acted as they thought right."

"But it's *damnable!*"

"Oh, Bert, don't use such words!"

"Right or wrong, they shall undo it! They shall if I have to ——!"

"Dear Bert! If you have any regard for your teacher, who always thought you one of her most promising pupils, and who hopes and believes you have a bright future before you, promise her you will never do anything rash, anything hasty or violent, anything unworthy of her or yourself." She took his hand in

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CHAPTER XX.

NEVER in the history of Teeter Hollow had there been such a congregation as that which greeted the presiding elder on the evening following the dismissal of the young and popular teacher.

The story of the apparition spread far and wide during the day, "kindling as it flew" with all the usual embellishments and exaggerations, and before night a report was in circulation that his Satanic majesty appeared at midday disguised as a beautiful young maiden walking round and round the schoolhouse, endeavoring to entice the children out to join her, failing to do which she finally rose up into the air and sailed away.

Another one contradicting the first, asserted that he appeared in person in his old well-known form, with horns, cloven feet, dragon tail and all, scorching flames of fire spurting out of his eyes and nostrils, and without doubt he would have carried off every child in the school under fifteen (especially the girls) had not the presiding elder fortunately arrived and with a tremendous prayer driven the enemy of mankind back to sheol again howling and roaring, the noise of which was heard for miles as he passed out of sight.

No event had ever occurred in Teeter Hollow to compare with this or to excite the people to such a degree, unless it was the murder of a young girl

under very distressing circumstances forty years before by "old brute Pollak," for which he was hung at the Cross-roads Tavern,— a cross marking the spot to this day.

Young and old crowded the house. The windows and doors were blocked, and the grounds about were filled with crowds of excited people.

* * * * * * * *

Gerald had told Kyn-Dhwen early in the afternoon that he intended to go over to the meeting that evening; for he felt that he must look upon that angel face once more, though forever after it should be to him the face of a stranger. They knew nothing of the excitement, and Kyn-Dhwen proposed to accompany him.

Bert Rising also determined to be present, bound and hampered as he felt himself to be by his promise to keep the peace. He had spent the day in listening to the ridiculous and foolish gossip of the people, combating their prejudices and nursing his wrath; and before the house was quite filled he stalked in, cold and stern, and stood up in a distant corner.

The "presiding elder" opened with a hymn appropriate to the occasion, which he drawled out with great unction, as if he felt in the words his justification, while the congregation sang the lines as he read them: —

"I'll wash my hands in innocence
And round thine altar go."

When the first notes of the melodeon rose upon the hushed assembly, Gerald knew there was another's touch upon the instrument, and turning to look in that direction was astonished to find that Faith was nowhere to be seen, and that Miss Pilbean was occupying her place.

"What does this mean?" was the whispered exclamation of both young men, who were sitting side

by side. They had heard nothing of Faith's dismissal nor of the affair of the preceding day. They could imagine no cause for her absence but sickness, and determined to inquire of Mrs. Pilbean the moment the service was over.

The presiding elder now arose to make the opening prayer, and they were not long in learning the whole story from his lips.

His heart was so full of the subject, and he felt so elated at the victory he had gained over the power of the evil one, that his prayer became eloquent, and he elaborated upon the account of the dismissal of the poor teacher, the emissary of Satan, through his efforts, with dramatic skill.

As he dwelt upon the "obsession" of this beautiful young creature by the Prince of Evil, with the evident purpose of dragging down to perdition all those young souls in her charge,—*the dear children of his hearers*,—he grew pathetic, and a tear squeezed out for effect glistened upon his sallow cheek.

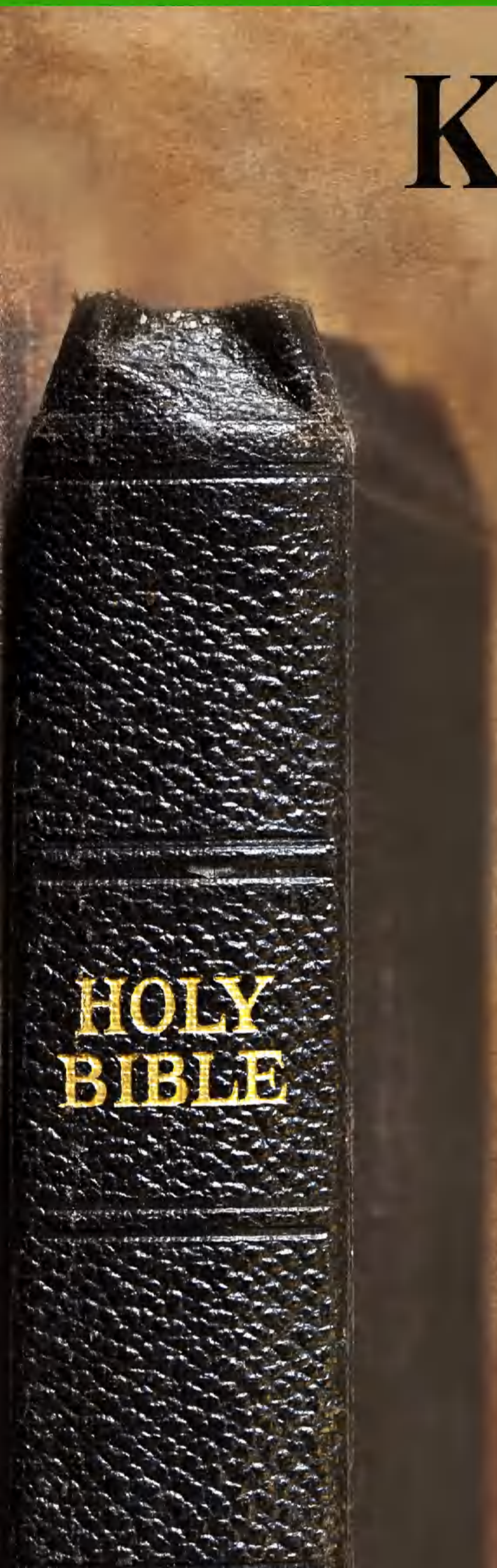
Sighs, sobs and groans responded from different parts of the house where the afflicted parents were sitting; but few, we fear, were uttered through sympathy for the poor persecuted teacher.

The elder, having finished his prayer, called upon the brethren to assist in the service, and turning to Gerald invited him to speak; but the latter only glowered upon him with an icy impenetrability and shook his head.

At length some one in the rear of the room was heard to clear his throat preparatory to speaking, and the elder's face brightened again.

All were now sitting in silent expectation when Bert Rising's deep voice fell like a crushing avalanche upon the quiet-like submission which up to this moment had prevailed throughout the assembly:—

"Men and women of Teeter Hollow! Where is your common-sense? where is your boasted religion? where are your hearts?



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mean to leave Teeter Hollow early to-morrow morning and seek a home in some other land!"

Then, turning scornfully toward the elder, he put on his hat and strode out of the house.

This terrible arraignment fell with a stupefying effect on the whole congregation alike.

The elder put his hand to his head and tried to reply, but language failed him.

One of the brethren ventured a hiss; but this only exploded the boys, who loudly applauded Bert Rising. Then all — large and small — immediately jumped to their feet and ran out, regardless of all attempts of their elders and parents to restrain them, crying out, "Bully for Bert! Hurrah for Bert Rising! Hurrah for the teacher!"

The older members tried to keep their seats and "sing down" the excitement, but in vain,— a general movement to disperse began.

Gerald and Kyn-Dhwen were indignant at the treatment Faith had received, and would gladly have spoken in her defence also, but they feared their efforts would be misconstrued by the ignorant people and thus more harm than good be done by anything they might say. They therefore wisely held their peace, but fully indorsed in their hearts every word the young hero had said.

Without a word of farewell to any one they shook the *snow* from their feet and quietly left Teeter Hollow.

As they drove away the young "Teeters" were still making the air resound with cries for "Bert Rising," with an occasional "*Hoorah* for our teacher," showing the drift of young America's public opinion.

Early the next morning Bert took an affectionate leave of his mother and young sisters, telling them to be of good heart, that he was going West to secure a better home for them, and comforting his mother with the assurance that the memory of her love and

the example of his dear teacher would ever remain in his heart and shield him from every evil thought.

Amidst their tears and kisses he departed.

Kyn-Dhwen called upon Miss Whitney at her home the next day, and found her not only willing to see him, but much less disturbed than he had expected.

"I felt sure you would come," said she; "I wished particularly to talk with you."

"Oh, I know it all!" he replied, supposing she intended to speak of her school troubles; "we were over there last night." He then gave her a brief account of the meeting, and the impassioned defence made by her young champion, Bert Rising, which affected her deeply.

"Mr. Livingston was with you, then, at the meeting?"

"Yes, and he feels for you, very greatly."

"I thank him for his sympathy, but he cannot help me."

"Can I?" said Kyn-Dhwen, remembering her words of welcome.

"Oh, thank you! I find myself much braver than I thought. It was not of my school troubles that I wished to speak to you to-day, but of myself. I do not understand the phenomenon which it is said the children witnessed. I am quite as much astonished as they were, and I cannot blame their parents for their fears; and the decision of the trustees, also, could hardly have been otherwise in view of their religious opinions. It is, of course, a great disappointment to me to be obliged to thus give up my dear school-children: for I had become very much attached to them, and was greatly interested in their mental and moral development. I was so depressed, such a feeling of despondency came over me after I returned home, that I was quite ill. But pardon me, I did not wish to entertain you with my school

matters, but I wished to ask you if you could explain this *double self*,— what it is and what it means."

"Well, really, Miss Whitney," replied Kyn-Dhwen, "I know but little about such phenomena, although I believe the subject is understood in India. I recollect having been told by my father that the soul had the power, under certain conditions, to leave this body and appear in an astral body,— a similar though intangible *self*, passing from place to place at will with the velocity of thought. He believed that all human beings possessed this astral body as they possess the natural body, but that few ever attained power in this life to disunite or separate the one from the other. I have always believed that the power of dissociating these two elements of human existence belonged only to those who, by the rigid observance of abstinence, deep meditation and the entire purification of the physical being, became able to control the fleshly covering. Such are called "Mahatmas" in India; nor was I aware that this power was ever attained by others. In your case the astral form seems not to have been of your own volition, nor were you conscious of the separation."

"No! I was unconscious of all that transpired. I was asleep and dreamed of rambling in the woods and fields as in my childhood days. I had been much troubled in mind for some time previous, and on that day particularly was suffering severely from an unusual depression of mind. That may have brought about the '*catastrophe*,'— as I suppose I must call it."

"Not a '*catastrophe*,' by any means," replied Kyn-Dhwen, "except so far as the stupid people of Teeter Hollow have made it so by their blindness and intense ignorance. It is rather a Divine gift, which is vouchsafed to few upon earth, and which should have filled the souls of the people with love and admiration for you, rather than blind fear and bigoted hatred."

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purity which you have been the means of scattering over the fresh young soil of Teeter Hollow will germinate and take root, no matter how far ignorant and unskilful gardners may try to choke their growth. The stoniest soil cannot resist such influences, such genial sunlight; and flower and fruit must bless the effort of the unconscious sower."

"Poor Kyn-Dhwen!" said Faith after his departure. "What a beautiful and unselfish character! In all my distress I have not suffered as he has. I have my dear family ties of love and friendship, while he is without friends,—an orphan amongst strangers, with hardly a single soul in sympathy with him.

"If all Sinhalese are like him, it cannot require a very great advance to reach the sanctity of the 'Mahatmas' of whom he speaks. Life to him means the highest development of truth,—Divine Truth,—words but little understood, and least, perhaps, by those who assume to know them best.

"O Kyn-Dhwen! Whilst they are striving to impress you with their narrow views of Christianity, how far have you advanced beyond them, in all those higher spiritual attainments of self-renunciation and spiritual aspiration!"

And yet Faith dreamed not of his greatest abnegation,—the renunciation of that hopeless love which filled his soul.

Her thoughts now turned naturally to her lover, Gerald, his bosom friend; and she sighed audibly as his name crossed her lips. "So far to go, so much to learn. Oh, it can never be! It can never be!"

CHAPTER XXI.

GERALD lay stretched upon his friend's bed awaiting his return. He was pale, nervous and worn, from the intense strain of the past evening and the sleepless night which followed.

He started at every sound, — dreading, yet anxious for, the return of his friend with the news he would bring. His heart said, "On whom should the duty devolve, in this hour of affliction, to offer to Miss Whitney the consolation and sympathy of friendship, if not on me? Yet I dare not attempt it."

"Bearing up nobly, my dear Gerald," exclaimed Kyn-Dhwen as he came in with hopeful tidings. "Bearing her troubles like the angel she is, with a remarkable buoyancy of spirit, — her greatest lament being, that she can no longer continue to do good to her little flock."

Gerald started up in an instant. "I must see her. She must understand me. Such devotion, such purity of sentiment, such a heart, cannot be indifferent to my suffering. Tell me, Kyn-Dhwen, will she see me? Is there any hope?"

Full of pity, full of sorrow, Kyn-Dhwen answered, "Yes, Gerald, I am sure she will see you. But I cannot give you hope."

"Enough, I must see her!" And he rapidly passed his friend in the doorway.

Gerald scarcely knew what to say when, an hour

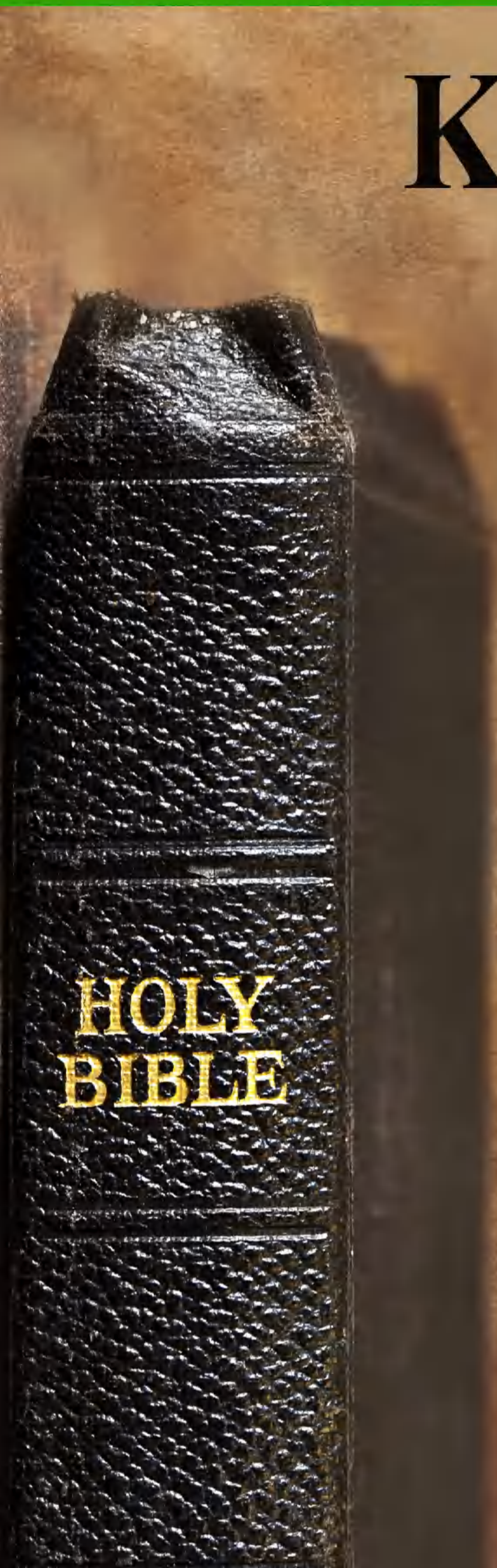
later, Faith opened the door for him to enter. She had seen him approaching the house and was striving hard to keep her beating heart still.

There was so much he longed to say, so much he longed to hear, and there seemed so little time in which to speak or hear, — that for a minute he sat overcome and speechless. At last he recovered himself and spoke passionately, —

"My dear Miss Whitney, I have not come to make a formal call and to say that I do not believe a word that has been uttered against you, but to assure you of my continued esteem, my devotion, my love! I know you to be influenced by a rare purity and singleness of purpose. That others censure you is to me as the idle wind. I believe in you, and I wish now to sustain you in the face of all the world. I love you, my dear Miss Whitney, as I have ever loved you, fervently and devotedly, and I come to ask you again, earnestly, to take me for your husband. Will you not be my wife, dear Faith, and allow my strong arm to support you amidst any and all the persecutions of life? Will you not let me place you before the world in your true and noble character? Could you not be happy with me, dear Faith?"

Poor Faith looked sadly at him as he uttered this impassioned appeal. The answer which she felt herself impelled to make sent a thrill of anguish to her heart and brought a flood of tears.

"Mr. Livingston," she at last found words to say, "I ought to be the happiest woman in the world, to inspire such unselfish, noble love; but, oh, my dear friend, I am the most miserable. If I could not be your wife under happier auspices, how impossible is it now, with a reproach resting upon my name? — Go, Gerald," she sobbed, "for both our sakes! Go! we must part forever! But through all my solitary life there will always remain the silent, proud memory of this moment to support me!"



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nervous strain, that, when all the duties were over and the relapse came, might prove fatal to her also.

"Oh," she said to her sister the evening of their arrival; "how much more poignant, how much more distressing seems death when our beloved ones are taken from us without a word, a pressure of the hand, a look of affection, a last expression of trust in our Heavenly Father and a hope of meeting beyond the grave! Nothing is left us but memory and the sense of an awful void in the heart."

Faith forgot herself and her petty troubles in the presence of this overwhelming sorrow, — a sorrow keen to her: for, next to father and mother, her uncle was the most beloved friend on earth.

Mr. and Mrs. Whitney returned home after the interment in the village cemetery; but Faith remained with her aunt, who had broken down completely, and was now in the hands of her physicians.

Mr. Winchester's affairs were not difficult to settle. Outside of his home property his estate consisted of safe investments. There was also a heavy insurance upon his life, which he had carried for many years. This was at once paid over to his widow. Except a modest legacy to Faith, everything passed to Mrs. Winchester by will.

It was several weeks after the death of her husband before Mrs. Winchester recovered from the severe nervous prostration which followed the terrible shock, and fully realized her great loss. She was so much broken in health and her spirits so much depressed that at a council of physicians her condition was pronounced serious, and a change of air and scene deemed urgently necessary to preserve her life.

With much difficulty she was brought to listen to this advice.

"What! leave the home of my widowhood, of my life," she replied, weeping bitterly, "around which cluster all the memories of my once happy days?"

"It is because of these associations, my dear madam, that you must go," replied the doctor emphatically.

"But where, doctor, where can I go?"

"Anywhere, madam. Across the ocean,— where change of scene, of air, of people, will divert your mind and enable you to return to us a restored and sensible woman, to be the joy and delight of your friends for many years to come. And you, Miss Whitney, should accompany her by all means, if it be possible for you to leave home."

And so it was arranged.

Mrs. Whitney came over to get the travellers ready, while Mr. Whitney made all the financial arrangements; and in a week Faith and her aunt parted with their friends on the pier at New York, and left on one of the mammoth iron steamers bound for England.

As the huge ship moved slowly out of the harbor and they stood gazing sadly back to the home they were leaving, an incoming vessel, dark, dingy and weather-beaten, passed close by them.

Their attention was first attracted to the strange and uncouth appearance of the vessel and the passengers who crowded her decks. On looking at the flag flying at the top of her foremast they saw the word "Indra" thereon, and then Faith knew it must be the ship that Kyn-Dhwen expected would bring the precious mementoes of his dear mother "Hai-Sai."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ship Indra, as Faith had surmised, brought Kyn-Dhwen his packages from home, and brought also a fair Sinhalese girl, sent to the stern climate of America in response to the letter from the professors written some months before.

"Uhl-Wah"*— for such was the soft, musical name of the girl — was the most available one in the schools of Ceylon who could be persuaded to leave her friends and home.

The letter which Dr. Moonson sent by her to the faculty was not a very encouraging one: —

"You must bear in mind," said he, "that our ministrations here are confined for the most part to the lower classes or *castes*. One, ignorant of the social customs of India, would find it difficult to comprehend the extent to which 'caste' influences and controls the entire community. It is rarely the case that we make converts from the higher classes or castes, even of the males (the females being almost impossible to reach). Indeed the converts we have heretofore made from the low castes are so shunned and ostracized after embracing Christianity that they can hardly gain a livelihood and are often obliged to depend upon us for support for a long time after their conversion.

* Pronounced *Ool-Wah*.

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trunk was declared ready, it was filled with a rare assortment of the cast-off dresses of the lady missionaries, that had been tightened or loosened as required, each one representing a fashion of its own.

In the opinion of this simple Sinhalese girl, who knew nothing of the Western World, its styles or its fashions, she possessed a wardrobe of exquisite beauty; and her feminine heart swelled with pride when bits of ribbon or scraps of lace were gathered together and added to the collection.

The voyage to America was full of interest to her, and she was neither seasick nor homesick. She was never lonely, being in charge of a missionary lady, who, broken in health, was returning to her native land to recuperate if possible her shattered constitution.

On arrival she was placed at once in Professor Savoir's school, where she soon became homesick enough. She cried, begged piteously to be taken back, and declared she wished to die.

It was no wonder the poor homeless orphan was sick and miserable. Everything was so different from her dear Oriental home. She could not relish the food, and the pale, stiff girls of the school were so cold that her warm, affectionate heart yearned for the Sinhalese companions she had left behind.

Snow was never seen in sunny Ceylon, and here in the early March it was lying in heavy drifts everywhere, and she asked in her innocence, if this were not the North Pole, where ice and snow never melted.

But Uhl-Wah was young and strong, and soon recovered from the few weeks of sorrow and weeping to feel more keenly alive to the duties and pleasures of her new surroundings.

The young ladies of the school also began to manifest a profound pity for this strange, tropical flower transplanted in mid-winter to the cold North, and sympathy ripened into admiration and affection.

Her sweet quaint ways, her voice with its soft, musical accent like the rippling of water-brooks, soon won their susceptible hearts, and they declared her "*so* beautiful, and *so* unlike any one they had ever seen." They copied her coquettish manner; they even adopted some of the original styles of dresses she brought over with her, and many a slender Miss tried by artificial means to give her delicate form that voluptuous development which rendered the Sinhalese maid so captivating.

Her features were regular, and the warm tinge in her complexion only added to her beauty, while her dark eyes were full of that deep, fascinating mystery which distinguishes the Eastern nations from all others. Every effort she made to copy the peculiarities of her new associates only enhanced her own charming individuality.

The professors in the university were more than satisfied with their importation, they were elated, and only regretted there were not more of them. They were hopeful of good results, and lost no time in making known to the young Sinhalese students that a young lady of their own nationality had arrived among them.

At Professor Savoir's next *soirée* in the seminary parlors, not only were the young Sinhalese boys eager to attend, but the other students also were desirous to see this rare Eastern exotic of whom they had heard such flattering descriptions.

This first reception which Uhl-Wah attended was, in her excited imagination, like a scene from fairy-tales.

She appeared in a simple maroon dress of India crêpe, very inexpensive in that country, but rare and unique in this. It was innocent of overskirt and trimming; but its soft folds fell about her classic figure like the drapery of a Grecian statue, dimly concealing the graceful shoulders and swelling bosom.

Her long silken hair was plaited and dressed after the fashion of her own country, and the heavy coil formed a regal crown ornamented with a fluffy white feather.

When dressing, the seminary girls beheld her with enthusiastic admiration, exclaiming, "Oh, how lovely! how original! Why, Uhl-Wah! you will eclipse us all to-night." And one impetuous girl threw her arms around her slender waist and kissed her cheek.

Feminine vanity is not confined to American women. It has its place in all nations alike, and this young girl was no exception. She was beautiful, and she knew it. She had been told so, often in India, and now, with the indorsement and rapture of these American girls, her vanity was aroused and she thought herself incomparable! Madame Savoir overheard the girls' ecstasies and called to them somewhat sternly, —

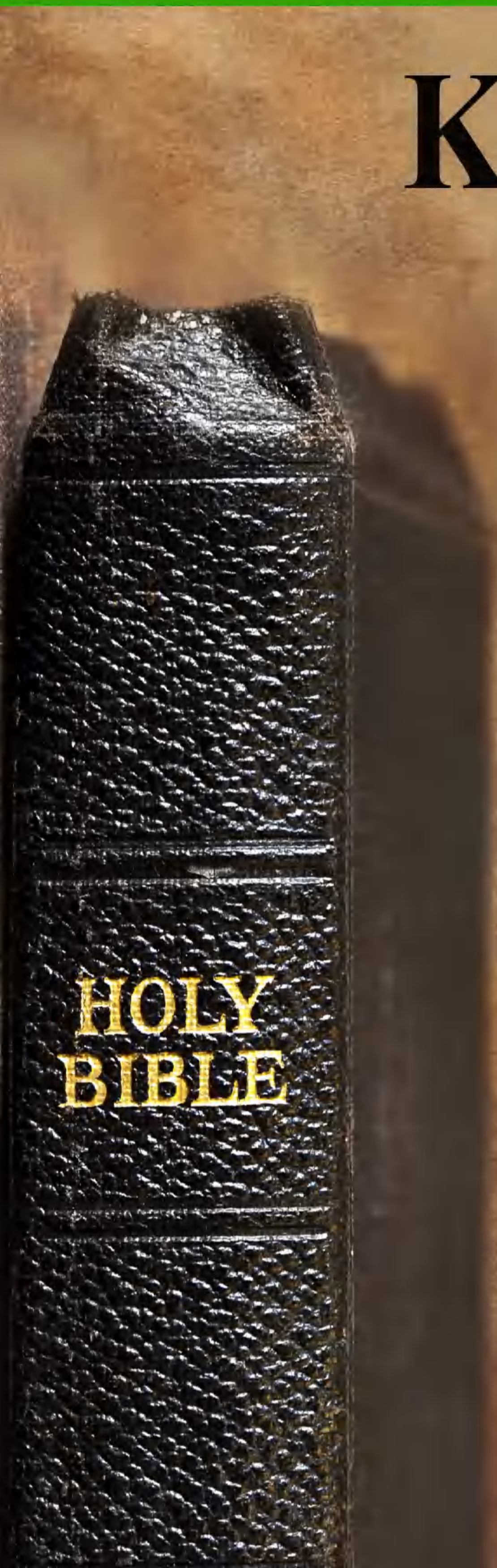
"Young ladies! do you wish to turn that poor girl's head with your silly flatteries and make her unhappy for life? I have half a mind not to let her leave her room this evening."

But the play could not go on without the chief actor, and Uhl-Wah descended at last to the parlors and was formally introduced to the guests.

Her school-mates expected to see her much overcome when introduced to the Sinhalese students, and anticipated a return of her homesickness. They were greatly disappointed when she scarcely noticed her countrymen, so dazzled and absorbed was she by the music and the excitement of so many strange faces about her.

The world was to her like a grand theatre in which she was an enthusiastic performer in the leading *rôle*.

After all was ended and she had retired to rest, she thought over and over again the events of the brilliant spectacle, and dropped asleep, dreaming she



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The Savoirs, with their usual shrewdness, found no difficulty in accounting for Milly's sudden departure, to the young ladies of their school; and she herself, in her subsequent correspondence with her school friends, had too much pride ever to refer to the subject.

She believed herself really in love with the Singhalese when she promised to elope with him. But it was a passion born of conceit and vanity, coupled with a love of excitement, on her part, and was soon forgotten.

Poor Thun-Gah could not so easily forget. He could not so readily suppress his sensitive nature: for he had sincerely, warmly and passionately loved. But he had accepted the inevitable, and now felt that his heart was dead, that love in him was crushed forever!

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE intelligence of Faith's sudden departure fell upon both Gerald and Kyn-Dhwen with a like depressing effect.

"I cannot tell why I feel this lack of ambition, this depression," said Gerald when conversing with his friend some days afterwards. "I ought to rejoice that Miss Whitney is removed from her disagreeable surroundings; and although she has told me that there is no hope for me in the future, yet the fact that the ocean is now between us makes me still more wretched. Do you know, Kyn-Dhwen, I believe when a man once truly loves and is disappointed, his heart never fully recovers from the blow. There are depths of feeling which no human sympathy can reach, no lapse of time obliterate. I can readily understand how a man may, after such a shock, get on in the world, how he may achieve worldly success; but the power to realize the highest sentiment of the human soul is forever gone. The skeleton has taken up his abode in the closet."

Poor Kyn-Dhwen did not need this assurance of his friend to convince him of his own life-sorrow, the deeper, the more depressing, because of its silence aud hopelessness.

With his mother's effects there had come to him, beside the few precious books which had belonged to

his father, a purse of gold in ancient, dingy, obsolete coins, but readily convertible.

His first impulse, on learning of Faith's departure and her final rejection of Gerald, was to convert this gold and hasten after her. His heart whispered, "There may be hope! She has already made me her confidant, why may she not after all accept me as a lover? I ought at least to make the trial. Her refusal could add nothing to my present wretchedness."

Tempting as were these suggestions, they were but hasty thoughts: for his sober reason, his feeling of brotherhood, his sincere friendship spoke to him with very different sentiments.

"What if, in a spirit of gratitude or of sacrifice, she should bestow her hand upon me? Is not her heart Gerald's? I could only possess her respect, her friendship, and these I have already. It is but selfishness on my part. I could never accept happiness under any circumstances at the cost of another human being's misery, and in this case Gerald would not be the only one to suffer."

These were trying complications for the young student, complications which required not only all his moral but his religious principles as well to sustain him.

"No," he said at last. "My 'Karma' shall never be tainted knowingly by a dishonorable action. The unavoidable mistakes of a worldly experience will make it bad enough, but never will I violate that sacred principle of my father's faith in universal human brotherhood."

He turned from these reflections to examine his father's books which lay upon his table; and if he had ever experienced doubts or misgivings as to the tendency of his religious thought, they were forever dispelled by a perusal of the "Bhagavad Gita," the "Upanishads," and other sacred books of his people.

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character that he received the following letter from the deacons in his father's church: —

"REV. GERALD LIVINGSTON.

"Dear Sir, — We understand that your duties at the university will soon be over, and you will then be ready for work. In order to forestall any other engagement, we write to invite you to the pulpit of the church where you received your first religious instruction. We need a minister thoroughly sound on doctrinal points, one who is ready at any moment to put his foot on all 'isms,' and that is why we want you. We shall hope for a favorable answer at once."

Gerald sat some moments with the letter open before him, without surprise or pleasure. He had often looked forward to a call like this, and pictured to himself his grand entrance into the old church at home with a lovely bride on his arm ready to cheer and support him.

Everything was changed now.

The woman he loved had refused him; separated from him by the very church which he fondly hoped would have drawn them together.

"Put my foot on all 'isms!' Then I must put under my feet Kyn-Dhwen with his Buddhism, and that other pure being for her Scepticism, — the only two noble, spiritual and truly Christian beings I have ever known.

"And for what?" he asked himself.

"To carry out the principles of the faith I profess?

"Never!" and he shuddered as the painful memory of the last evening at Teeter Hollow passed through his mind.

"*There* was an example of trampling upon 'isms.' And to what did it lead?"

Kyn-Dhwen entered at this moment, with a calm, dignified composure hard for Gerald to fathom.

"A letter from home? I hope good news."

"Yes;" and he passed it to him. — "Read!"

"Shall you accept the call?"

"I should do so without hesitation if I had never met you and Miss Whitney."

"What have we to do with the matter, Gerald; neither of us would ever interfere with you in the least, I'm sure."

"Unfortunately true. But it would then be my duty to interfere with you, which I could not do."

"But, my dear friend, if your convictions are as strong as an orthodox minister's should be, it would be your duty, your pleasure to do so."

"Don't be too hard upon me, my dear Kyn-Dhwen. Remember that all my human frailties are not yet subdued. That love, truth, charity, friendship are weaknesses which still cling to my heart. Alas! I am afraid your doctrine of human brotherhood is overcoming me.

"But really, my friend, I wish to have a serious talk with you. Don't be startled! It is not with a view to your more effectual conversion to orthodoxy, but to compare notes spiritual."

Kyn-Dhwen took a seat.

"It may have seemed to you," continued Gerald, "that either obstinacy or conceit on my part caused me to refrain for so long a time from talking freely with you on religious subjects. I have been closely studying your character, as doubtless you have mine, and only within a few days have I felt that I could speak to you on these matters with propriety."

"Ask me anything, my dear friend!"

"Tell me, then, what support, what hope, what *secret, powerful faith* it is, that makes you so patient, so trustful, so self-sacrificing? Tell me what lofty inspiration, what heavenly influence supports and

sustains Miss Whitney in all her trials? Tell me what is this abyss which separates our lives while our hearts beat in unison? Tell me, O my friend, for I am ignorant! Help me, for I am weak and miserable!"

"You credit me with far too many virtues, my dear Gerald. Like yourself I am very human, and the battles I have fought have been sorely contested. Thanks to my sustaining faith, every struggle grows easier."

"Speak! — tell me of that faith!"

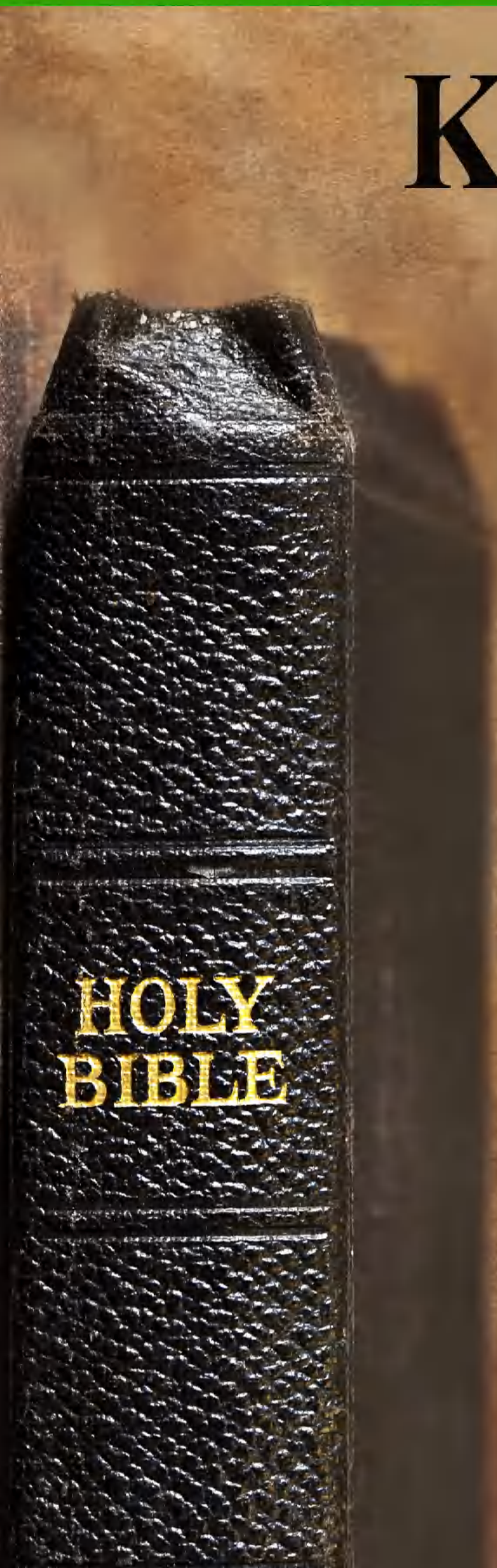
"It is not very different from your own, Gerald, in many respects, but viewed from your standpoint it is as widely separated as day from night.

"You deny to reason, judgment and even common-sense, the most remote influence in qualifying or shaping your belief. In my opinion they are paramount and should have the freest scope.

"Do you believe that outrage at Teeter Hollow could have taken place, if the most *reasonable* reason, the *commonest* common-sense had been allowed to influence those people?

"Throw aside the prejudices of your early teaching and let us talk for a few minutes as reasonable men. You believe that God created the world and rules it in love and wisdom. Can you believe He would have allowed it to exist for thousands of years (not to say millions), with human beings multiplying and developing upon it, to give only a portion of them, in these latter days, the power to reach heaven; and, to the millions or billions who never enjoyed the means of grace, an eternal hell of fire and eternal banishment from that heaven?

"He has given to every human being an innate sense of justice and truth. Is this *sense* not a part of Himself? Can man use these powers with one judgment and God with another, — since from God cometh all knowledge of justice and judgment?



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"Karma — or, literally, action — is the record of one's earthly life. This record determines the condition of one's entrance into earthly life again.

"Now, don't be horrified, my dear Gerald, at the thought of returning to earth again after having passed from it by what is termed death!

"It is really the only rational manner by which the inequalities of human existence can be accounted for and their results harmonized. Besides, a single existence on this earth is not long enough to accomplish all one's ambitions, to fulfil all one's desires, and to perfect one's soul. This earth is but the beginning.

"We must return to school again and again, and take up our lessons where we leave them off.

"If our previous work has been well performed we shall resume life again under more favorable auspices; but if we have wasted opportunities, or buried our talents in a napkin, our weary steps must be retrodden and our Karma made anew.

"This law of Karma is a fearful thing — '*As we sow, so shall we reap!*' From its retributive justice there can be no escape.

"Our human lives are so interwoven together with the lives of our brothers that we must, to a great extent, rise or fall together. We are meshed in an intricate web, from which no personal, selfish efforts can entirely extricate us. Many incarnations, many years of struggle, therefore, may be necessary to bring our poor souls into the final state of harmony and spiritual perfection.

"From the first inception of life, up to God — to Nirvana, is a long and complicate journey; but it is the journey which all humanity must make, the road which all must travel, each progressing according to his powers and opportunities."

"Well, Kyn-Dhwen, this is all new and strange to me; but I have long since determined to investigate

for myself these great human problems, and neither accept nor deny any man's theory without examination. But will you tell me: how is the record of this life — this Karma — preserved?"

"It is preserved in the spiritual character of each individual soul, indelibly stamped upon it; and can be improved, or changed for the better, only by better living in another incarnation, — which is graciously permitted that a better Karma may at last be established, and sin and misery abolished. It is also believed there is an invisible ether — an aura — surrounding us, on which is reflected or photographed every thought, every action, every event of our earthly existence. This may be, and perhaps is, the "book of life" referred to in your Scriptures, in which every good or evil deed is said to be recorded.

"This ether or astral light is invisible to mortal eye, save in rare cases; but many feel, at times, its silent impression, its mysterious influence, as if the surrounding air were permeated with the thoughts of other minds. I have myself felt, at times, when passing through these silent halls, as if my youth had left me, and I was really but an aged tutor, with countless generations and countless pupils behind me."

"What, then, are your views," asked Gerald, "in regard to the religious belief of the future?"

"I believe a more comprehensive understanding of the philosophy of Eastern faiths and a more intelligent conception of the Creator of men and worlds will ultimately bring mankind upon a more rational, solid and common plane of philosophical and religious thought, divested of bigotry, superstition and intolerance, and more in conformity with the advanced thought of the age."

"Tell me of Miss Whitney! What are her views?"

"She looks at the future life as you or I would if

we had been reared without bias or religious training. She is highly spiritual, and I sometimes think the veil between the two worlds is lifted occasionally to her vision. I think such things are possible, and many poets I have often thought possessed such powers; or it may be to their mental vision the veil becomes more transparent."

"There is much wisdom and truth also, no doubt, Kyn-Dhwen, in all you have said. My mind was awakened to these thoughts by the treatment Miss Whitney received, and I have felt contemptible ever since. When this letter arrived, saying they depended upon me 'to trample out all 'isms,' I realized how circumscribed was my position, — how difficult it would be for me to stand in a pulpit and advocate any such narrow dogmas. I am wretchedly unsettled and unhappy."

"I should censure myself very much, Gerald, if through anything I have ever said you should be drawn from a profession which gave you comfort or a restful hope. I should also feel very sorry if it were the unrequited love for Miss Whitney which influences you. Radical changes in religious opinions must come from sincere conviction or one's own experiences; otherwise we had better hug our errors, and like owls and bats shun the light and hang up in the dark."

"Don't reproach yourself, my dear Kyn-Dhwen; I freely acquit you of ever attempting to influence my religious opinions in the least. I must admit, however, that your life and character, and what I have learned of your Eastern faith, as well as Miss Whitney's example, have had the effect to turn my thoughts inward and to awaken many heretofore slumbering doubts, and I solemnly ask myself upon what reasonable ground can I or any of my church claim to be better fitted for heaven than other men? Alas! not any. Oh, Kyn-Dhwen! if you could only

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not insensible to his superior abilities, but had become conscious for some time that their grasp upon him was lost. He felt relieved somewhat when he learned that he would return at once to India, for he feared he might decide to remain in America, which was in violation of their rules.

Kyn-Dhwen made a final call upon the Whitneys and bade them an affectionate farewell; and, leaving his respects to be forwarded to Faith in their next letters, he was gone.

CHAPTER XXIV.

For the first few days on shipboard Mrs. Winchester was very sick. She attributed this, of course, to the "smell of oil on the machinery, and the nasty tar upon the ropes, from which she could never escape for a moment." The very coffee she tried to drink and the food she dared not touch were permeated with the nauseous odors. She had never been upon the sea before, and felt, as all novices do, that if the wretched ship would only stop a moment, until her stomach became quiet or she could get a breath of fresh air, all would be well again. But the "wretched ship" would do no such thing. It continued to battle with the waves and tumble from side to side and from end to end, regardless of consequences, and poor Mrs. Winchester spent a miserable week in bed, commiserating the passengers and dreading shipwreck in every roll.

But all things have an end, even sea-sickness, and she was at last able to venture on deck in her reclining chair. Then came the awful feeling of desolation on learning they were in mid-ocean, a thousand miles of water surrounding them and untold depths below, with only the sky above. The great ship seemed a presumptuous pigmy struggling for dear life in the hands of this great ocean giant. Sometimes the giant was uproarious with storm and tempest, and then the poor invalid expected every

moment to sink beneath the overwhelming waves. Happily, the steady shaft kept boring away beneath the sea, never ceasing, never tiring. To Faith the screw was a constant wonder. It seemed a living thing, with its ceaseless devotion to a single duty.

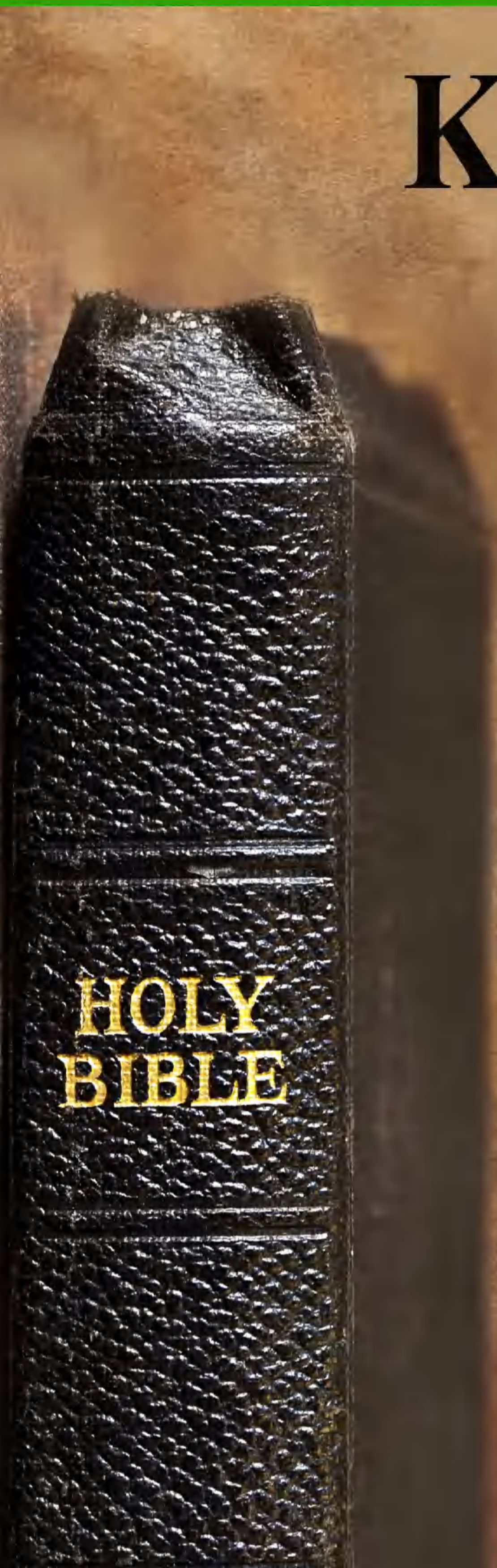
Pleasanter skies and more agreeable odors at length prevailed, and the sick were able to come on deck once more, to breathe the pure air and enjoy the amusing games in which the passengers engaged.

Then Faith and her aunt would sit for hours and silently draw inspiration from the far-off clouds, or watch the vari-colored waves tumbling and rolling over each other like children gamboling in the hay-field, tossing up grass, like the spray above their heads.

One night when they were indulging in sea reveries, Mrs. Winchester said she supposed every one experienced at sea, as she did, a feeling of the insignificance of humanity, with all its little passions, hopes and disappointments, — its fears, loves and hates, — when gazing over the great restless, boundless, unfathomable water, o'er-canopied with the vast firmament of sparkling suns and shining satellites.

"Yes," responded Faith; "to use an Americanism, one feels '*mighty small*,' and ready to repeat the words of the Psalmist: 'What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?'"

A steamship full of passengers is an epitome of the whole world, and this first experience of Faith afforded her an excellent opportunity to study human character in many of its phases. People from everywhere, of every profession, and of every shade of thought and opinion make up the numerous household — or shiphold. Lawyers, doctors, merchants, ministers, poor professors and poorer bondholders, ladies who cultivate the intellect, and ladies who



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Hence, '*Qui facit per alium, facit per se.*' The captain is clearly the party against whom this suit must lie, and not our innocent client, the poor suffering and half-starved father of a numerous family!" —pointing to him where he stood, with a friend dressed up in female apparel as his wife, bearing in her fond arms four helpless rag babies, made from the pillows of the bed.

The Chief Justice was evidently moved by the powerful argument of counsel, strengthened as it was by the presence of the afflicted family.

After a short consultation with his associates, His Honor discharged the culprit with a few feeling remarks and a gentle admonition to "go and sin no more." Realizing, however, the necessity of guarding against such "heinous offences" in the future, he found the eloquent attorneys for the defence "guilty of false pretences" and fined them sundry bottles of champagne. The senior counsel, while meekly bowing to the high dictum of the learned Court, took occasion to remark, over a glass of "Clicquot," that "in this case it was quite evident Justice was not only *blind* but *dry*."

The white sea-gulls began to appear, giving signs of land, and soon the headlands of old Ireland were visible through the glasses. All were delighted, and the ladies declared they were ready to kiss every blarney stone in the kingdom of Brian Boroihme if the captain would only put them on shore.

Travel was a novel experience for Mrs. Winchester as well as Faith. But the latter had read more upon the subject, was more worldly wise and quicker in conception, and it was evident that she must take the responsibility of planning their itinerary.

The more Mrs. Winchester saw of life away from her little village, the more she realized the wise advice of her physicians, "not to bury herself in her sorrow." She saw around her an ever-struggling

world, borne down by toil, poverty and distress, or rolling along in pride, selfishness and conceit, and while she felt it was hard to be separated from those we love and to be left alone in our old age, yet she saw misery and distress were everywhere. "I have enjoyed," said she, "a long life of comparative happiness, and ought not to complain now at my painful experience, but be ready and willing to devote my remaining years to bearing others' burdens and ministering to others' needs."

Faith was delighted with England, though sorry to be unfavorably impressed with the English people. She had always looked on them as her kith and kin, and thought they ought to be proud of their enterprising offshoot. She was therefore quite unprepared to hear them depreciate her country and speak of her pronunciation as that "horrible American twang."

They rode through the interior admiring the dainty farms divided by picturesque hedges, every inch under close cultivation, and wished that this industry and neatness could be transferred to the broad acres of their own expanded continent, which lay awaiting the true husbandman.

London was the concentrated world. Its immensity, its moving masses, its ceaseless roar by night as by day filled them with wonder and awe, while its churches, its historic places and its monuments made them proud of their common ancestry. From its massive bridges they watched the dingy Thames rolling its gloomy water to the sea, and hiding in its dark, mysterious bosom the secrets of past generations.

Scotland with its mountains and lakes renowned in song and story was full of interest; but they could not help feeling the injustice of holding such large tracts of land as they saw uncultivated, to be used only as hunting grounds for the wealthy, while so many landless were suffering in poverty.

In the old cemetery at Stirling they found upon the stones their family name, which Aunt Patience carefully copied, remarking: "How little interest Americans take in their genealogies. Many a child does not know the name of its own grandfather, and many are quite willing, if not anxious, to forget even their own parents."

From the old castle walls they traced the localities of great historic events, and their imagination peopled the distant plain with the blue bonnets of Scotland, led by the heroic Wallace or the impetuous Bruce.

The ruins of abbeys and cathedrals reminded them that the yearnings of mankind in all ages have been for a higher knowledge of the Infinite; gauging their devotion and their hope of future reward by the magnitude and richness of the structures they reared. The broken walls are all that remain of those puerile ideas, — abiding testimonies, however, that God is not worshipped in "sincerity and truth" through the erection of temples of brick and mortar to His honor, but in the building up of His spiritual temple in the human heart.

France was a surprise and a delight. The clear atmosphere and the deep-blue sky seemed as of another world, contrasted with the smoke and gloom which they had left on the other side of the Channel.

The manners of the people, too, were quite distinct. Here they were cheerful, polite and deferential, and Aunt Patience was wont to describe the French "as light, like their wines and desserts at dinner; and the English, like their own grim roast beef and substantial pudding."

Faith was delighted to find she could make such practical use of her French. She declared she must have heard the language spoken in childhood, as so many words came to her lips of which she had no recollection.

Paris was a veritable Paradise. Its dazzling boule-

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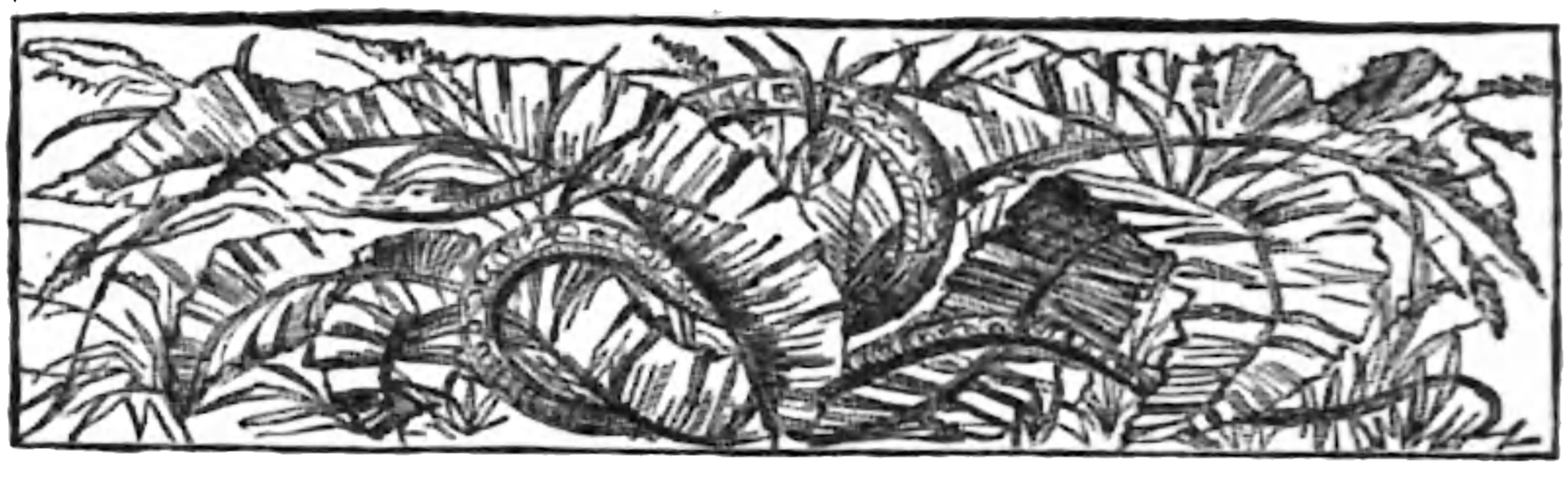


CHAPTER XXV.

Down through the beautiful Midi, following the swift and arrowy Rhone, they meet the rapidly advancing spring, its balmy breath already sprinkling the fields with the gay *coquelicot* and carpeting the earth with emerald, while the distant Alps are still gleaming in snowy whiteness far down their sloping sides.

From Nice they skim along the Riviera, beneath the Alpine spurs that here reach the Mediterranean. Sometimes they find themselves gazing down from an elevation of a thousand feet upon the blue water, dotted here and there with the lateen sails of quaint fishing boats, or, nearer, with gaily dressed yachts. Again the train dashes through tunnels and they emerge into strange old, walled towns, built upon the sea-shore by the pirates of the middle ages. Everywhere along the coast the road follows that built by Rome's great emperor, two thousand years before, when he invaded and occupied Gaul.

At Genoa "*La Superba*," the city of palaces, — claimed as the birthplace of Columbus, — our travellers rest for the night. They wander over her park-crowned heights and gaze westwardly across the moonlit sea, dreaming, as did the great discoverer four hundred years before, of the grand America beyond.

At Pisa — once the capital of a flourishing republic,

but now distinguished chiefly for its leaning tower and its charming Baptistery with strangely musical echoes — they stop an hour and walk reverently through its sacred Campo-Santo, filled with holy earth from Jerusalem, in which the bones of faithful devotees who have passed away rest so hopefully and peacefully.

Thence on to Florence, where the world-famous galleries of art instruct and delight them; and to Milan, whose great white cathredral with its wonderful pinnacles and towers crowned with statues is beautifully compared by a recent writer to frozen music or an Alpine glacier.

At Venice, like sea-birds on the water, our wanderers find rest and fold their wings. Here Faith should have been at the summit of enjoyment: at the Mecca of all romantic young ladies, — "lovely Venice, the bride of the sea."

But as the gondolas swept by her window on the Grand Canal, and the humming of strange barcaroles floated up to her ears, she sat with her head between her hands, sobbing as if her heart would break. In the midst of this strange city, surrounded by these romantic and fascinating scenes, her heart awoke, by a natural impulse, to thoughts of home, of friends, and of love! She longed for a companionship nearer than that of her aunt, — for some dear, sympathizing friend who could share her enjoyment and feel for her distress. Such an one would be Kyn-Dhwen.

How much she would now appreciate his wise counsel, his intelligent criticism.

The poor child did not know her own heart.

She dared not think of Gerald and his sincere and earnest love. She had felt it her duty to put that love aside, and had done so, once and forever. It had been a bitter struggle, and now, travel, instead of distracting or relieving her mind, had only inten-

sified her misery by its very contrasts; and thus came the contradiction, as it were, that the more she enjoyed, the more she suffered.

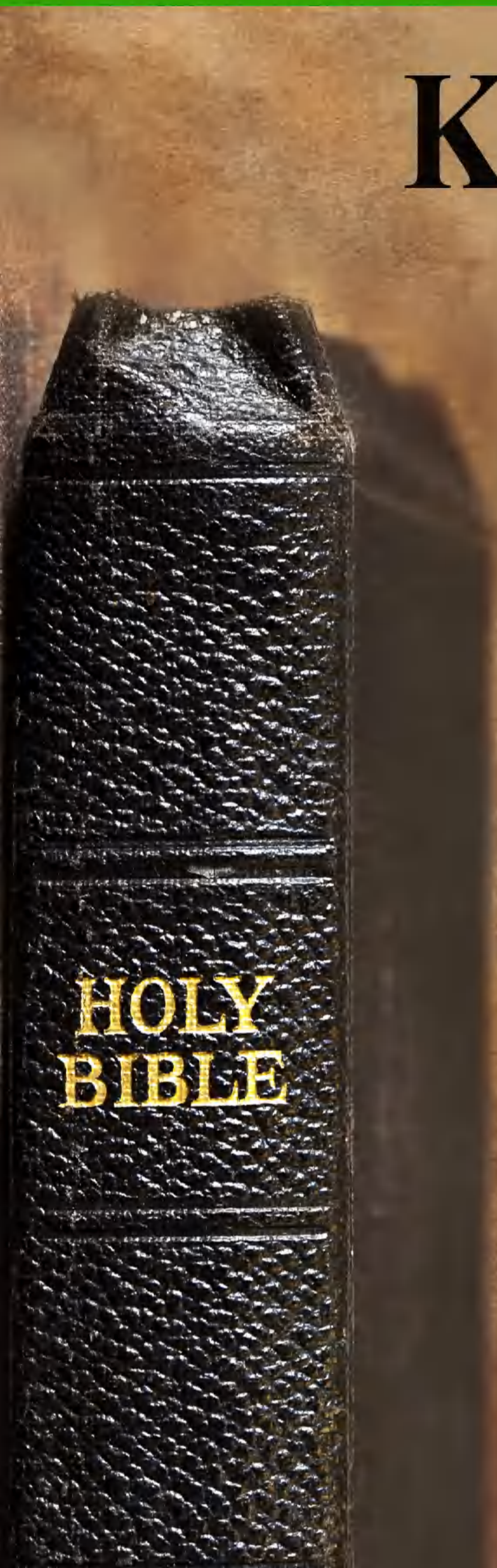
They rambled through the Palace of the Doges, over the Bridge of Sighs, down into the deep prison dungeons, and into churches lined with costly marbles and statuary. In one of the churches they saw the Virgin carved in wood, seated on a throne of state. She was dressed up in pink satin with white lace overskirt, and decorated with tawdry jewels. Many poor Italian women were prostrating themselves before this graven image, imploring protection from punishment for real or imaginary sins.

"If this be not idol worship," exclaimed Faith, "in the name of all that is sensible in religion, what is?"—and she felt more than ever thankful that she had been left free to exercise her common-sense in all such matters.

Rome spoke to them of the past with a sorrowful, silent tongue. They saw the tall arches of her ancient, time-worn and broken aqueducts by moonlight, as they approached the city, stretching far away across the Campagna to the distant Alban Hills, and looking like colossal sentinels guarding the past. Faith with her active fancy had no difficulty in again peopling the crumbling palaces with high-born Roman dames and proud patricians of the ages that are gone. "What are these monuments," said she, "of a semi-barbarous age, built and cemented with the blood and suffering of a conquered world, but evidences of the vanity of earthly ambition, and the menace of great wrongs inflicted upon humanity?"

From the tyranny of proud ambition to the tyranny of a proud ecclesiasticism there is but a single step. Rome emerged from the former to fall an easy prey to the latter.

Jostling aside the ruins of the past, St. Peter's



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the fascinating terror, as of old, toward which all eyes were constantly directed.

Faith and her aunt sat for hours, at night, upon this romantic terrace, watching the angry flames suddenly flash up into the sky, scattering showers of sparks and blazing stones in pyrotechnic display, threatening the very heavens, then sinking down beneath an illuminated halo to gather a fresh impetus.

Although several miles intervened between the monastery and the mountain, these sudden upheavals caused a wonderful illumination of the mountain peaks behind them, and for a moment one could read ordinary print. So deceptive, indeed, was the sudden glare bursting upon the midnight gloom, that the volcano appeared to be close at hand, as if one might cast a stone into the crater.

To their great annoyance, however, they found on retiring for the night that it was impossible to sleep. The alternate flashing of this weird light through their great windows, followed by pitchy darkness, kept up such an excitement that they could but watch it until the fiery glow gradually faded into dawn and at last merged into the rising sunlight.

"One can readily understand," said Faith, "how the ancients, with their mythological ideas, conceived these volcanoes to be the blast furnaces of Vulcan, in which were forged the thunderbolts of Jupiter. By a natural sequence they connected the volcanoes with the regions of Pluto, — the Inferno and the Stygian gloom. And so modern theology, with its hell of fire for those who oppose its dogmas, is but the aftermath of those ancient, crude conceptions."

From their favorite terrace could be seen the valley of La-Cava spreading out before them, claimed to be the veritable birthplace of Salvator Rosa and Claude Lorraine.

Salvator Rosa has been rarely, if ever, equalled in

his pictures of peasant and brigand life, and Claude is acknowledged to be "the Raphael of landscape painting," having produced the most marvellous effects in the warm and soft tints of his Italian skies.

It was quite plain to Faith that these unrivalled artists drew their inspiration at least from the sky, the sea and the air of this lovely valley, which was believed to be the favorite haunt of the nymphs and goddesses of classic fable.

It was her habit to rise at daylight and, seating herself alone upon the terrace, indulge her poetic fancies and enjoy to the full the lovely scene and breathe the spicy and delicious morning air.

She declared she could almost see, in the dawning light, the fabled Aurora tripping up this Arcadian vale, "with breath all incense and with cheek all bloom," shaking the dew-drops from her pearly finger-tips.

Above her, dominating over the scene, stood hoary old St. Angelo, with his head in the clouds, solemn, silent and grand, the bright-green slopes about his base glistening with myriad points, as if heaven had showered its stars upon the earth.

She could see the white chateaux and towns which dotted the distant valley just rising into view, like white-winged messengers of peace, as they shone beneath the "opening eyelids of the morn."

Then the monastery bells from the far opposing hill-tops rang out their delicious musical chants in response to each other; reminding her of the ancient sun worship of Egypt, when, at the rising of Osiris, the whole nation joined in adoration, shouting and singing in chorus from every temple: "The Lord has risen! Blessed be His Name!"

The day moves on apace. It is high noon, and Faith again indulges in her meditations.

The cattle are resting from their labors and quietly browsing the rich grasses by the roadside, while the toilers lie stretched upon the ground asleep.

All drop into the daily "siesta" at this hour, in field or shop, on the blistering deck or along the dusty highway.

Even nature seems to share this drowsy repose.

Old "*Ves-bius*" quietly snores, and breathes from his lazy throat the never-ceasing smoke, which floats quietly away, as if conscious of the hour.

Woman, alone, is tireless, sleepless! She spins, weaves, gossips, or guards her classic progeny, whilst her tired or lazy lord recuperates his energies.

Faith called the attention of her aunt to the mountain women, carrying enormous burdens up and down the steep inclines; by reason of which they are low of stature, with huge legs and bent bodies.

"Can we wonder," said Mrs. Winchester, "that deformity prevails to such an extent amongst this people as to shock the sensibilities of all who visit them, when such violations of the laws of nature prevail at the fountain head?"

"True," replied Faith; "but you know, aunt, women and donkeys are the cheapest beasts of burden in Italy."

The monastery bells arouse the sleepers. The siesta is over. Work is again resumed, and the hum of busy toil floats up to the terrace where Faith and her aunt are seated.

But soon the lengthening shadows and the concerted braying of watchful donkeys from every direction announce the approach of the "*ore reposarmi*," — the hour of rest.

Labor is over. Men, women and donkeys plod their weary way homeward, the latter cropping the stray thistles that line the road and giving evidence of thankfulness in bursts of donkey music. The tired women gather sticks along the way with which to cook the evening meal, while the men and boys secure the scattered droppings of the animals for fertilization.

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island of Ischia, the largest and in many respects the most interesting of all the beautiful islands which protect the bay of Naples. Ischia is, in point of fact, Mount Epomeo, as this mountain rises from its centre, in the form of a vast pyramid, to the height of three thousand feet. The island itself is twenty miles in circumference, and forms a vast plinth upon which the huge mountain column rests.

This island, the Inareme of the Greeks, was occupied by them long before the Christian era, and was in early days an active volcano. The Greeks brought with them all their mythological vagaries, peopling it as well as the neighboring coasts with their fabled gods. Typhon (or Typheus, after the Egyptian mythology) was confined beneath the mountain, and the earthquakes and eruptions which then prevailed were but the giant's struggles to free himself from the fiery hell in which the superior gods had confined him Homer and Virgil both describe the efforts of the monster to burst his prison bonds for the purpose of destroying mankind.

The commanding position of the island, the wonderful variety of climate attainable upon its mountain slopes fanned by the breezes of the Mediterranean, the medicinal springs flowing from its volcanic interior, together with its great military importance, all combined to make the possession of it the first object of every contending faction.

Faith was familiar with its history and traditions, and desired very much to visit it; especially as, in later years, it had been the resort of Michael Angelo, Ariosto, the beautiful poetess Vittoria Colonna, and many other poets and artists, who sought health and respite in its classic shades.

Acting on her wish, Faith and her aunt sailed out of the harbor of Naples on a bright morning, leaving behind them the busy city, its glittering roofs, its noisy traffic, and its cries of many voices.

Faith pointed out as they passed up the coast, the places of interest which crowd the hills.

"There," said she, "is the tomb of Virgil, near the entrance to the grotto or viaduct 'Di Posilipo,' through which at this moment is defiling a long caravan of donkeys bearing great panniers of vegetables for the city markets. That is the little island 'Nisida,' once the home of Brutus, whence he went to his death at Philippi, and where his loving wife Portia, daughter of Cato, died of grief or by suicide. There is Pozzuoli, where St. Paul landed on his way to Rome, and beyond are Baiæ and Cumæ. Baiæ was the great seaside resort, the Newport of Rome in the days of her glory, while Cumæ was the home of the sibyl, the famous oracle who astonished the world through her sibylline leaves.

"This whole coast," continued Faith, "is of great interest, and the ruins of temples, baths and palaces line the shore for many miles. Yonder, along that range of volcanic hills, lie the Phlegrean fields, where great battles were fought between the giants and the gods, according to classic history.

"The desperate conflicts which the early Greek colonists waged against the powerful savage tribes occupying the country, fighting step by step amidst daily earthquakes and fiery volcanoes to secure a footing, may well come down to us in tradition as a war between the giants and the gods. The smoking craters were an indubitable evidence of the fiery Phlegethon beneath,—the abode of Pluto,—while the deadly gases and the dark caverns and woods of Avernus pointed clearly enough to Hades, the gloomy avenues of Orcus, and the home of the Cimmeri. Here came Eneas to consult the sibyl, and Hannibal, at a later date, came to sacrifice to Pluto.

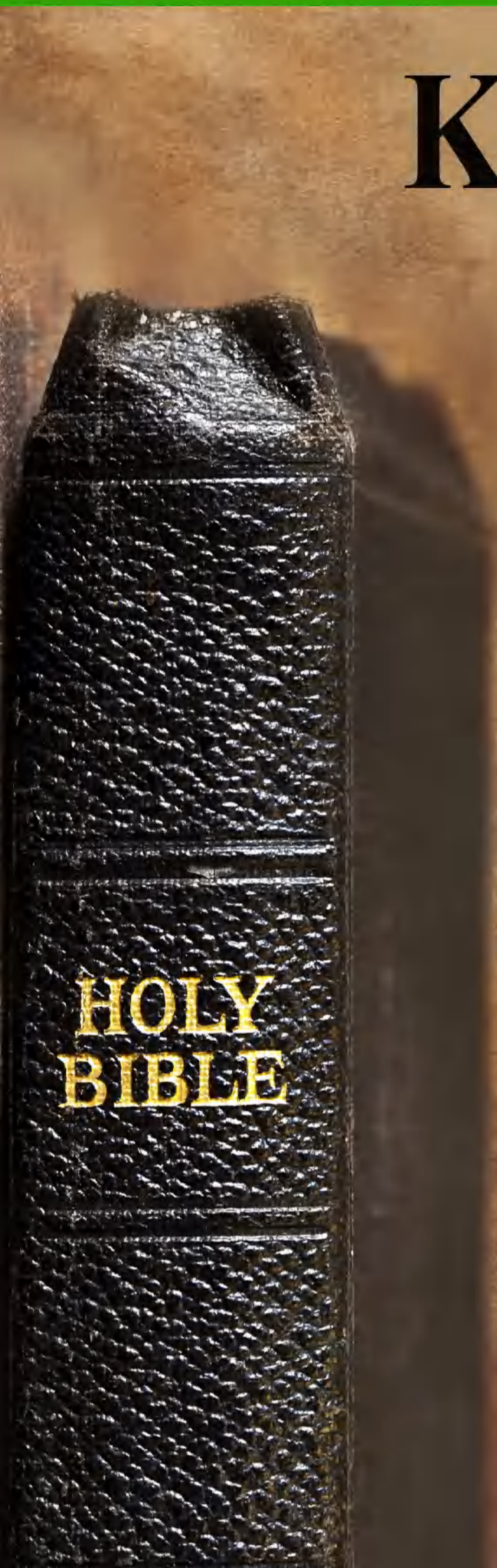
"You cannot imagine, dear aunt, how much I enjoy seeing this coast, about which I have read so much. Yonder bay of Baiæ, whose beautiful curving

shore you can see in the distance, was the theme of every Roman poet and artist. There came the luxurious emperors, military heroes, patricians, and all the wealth, fashion and talent of the empire, to recuperate their exhausted energies in sea-bathing, or in the hot sulphur baths of those volcanic hills which form the coast of the 'Campania Felix.' Every available spot was held at a fabulous value, and the shores were lined with palaces, private residences, and 'tabernaculæ' for public resort.

"One can readily imagine the blue waters of this placid bay covered with sailing parties and regattas, and upon great occasions strewn with rose leaves,—at night flashing back the brilliant lights from palace and temple, and echoing the music, the song and the dance. Now, those crumbling ruins alone remain to point the moral. The gayety, the excitement, the hopes, the fears, the ambitions, the plots which agitated the proud Romans of those days can only be conjectured. The ruins are mute, or answer only in rude echoes to the coarse jests of the passing fisherman or the screaming bittern that alights upon the solitary walls.—Silence prevails!"

The steamer soon landed our travellers at Ischia, beneath its frowning castle, at the little port of Casamicciola. Here are located the celebrated mud baths and hot volcanic springs which have been the resort of invalids in all ages. They found rooms in a beautiful villa surrounded with lawns and shrubbery, and commanding a fine view of the distant Vesuvius, of Naples and the intermediate bay.

With the faithful "Pasquelle," whose volante they engaged during their stay, they drove to all the most romantic and interesting parts of the island. The honest, simple and quaint women, with children proverbial for their bright, black, sparkling eyes and tawny skins, hung about them. These honest people interested both Faith and her aunt



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CHAPTER XXVI.

WINTER had lingered long in the lap of spring at the university, but at last its icy fetters were dissolved.

The trailing arbutus, fair daughter of the snow (the "*edelweiss*" of America), no longer protected from the ardent beams of the sun, had withered and given place to the sweet ferns, mandrakes and anemones; while the eager grass, anxious to make up lost time, had rapidly clothed the earth in nature's heavenly green.

The air had suddenly become soft and invigorating and the watchful farmers were astir, while mothers and maidens were actively engaged in brushing up spring and summer costumes and airing the long pent up rooms.

The students also shared this general awakening and soon blossomed out in light hats and gay neckties.

The bright, warm spring attracted them to their summer haunts and Finn-Water was once more black with excursionists, while new life, happiness and hope filled every heart.

The senior class alone continued to pore over their books unmoved amidst this universal excitement. They were too profoundly absorbed in preparing for the approaching commencement, in the hope of distinction, to be diverted for a moment by the attractions of the delightful season.

There was one of the class, however, who felt neither an interest in the bright springtime that so animated the juniors, nor in the studies of his fellows for the graduating exercises.

Gerald Livingston withdrew to the solitude of his own chamber after the departure of his friend and became deeply absorbed in the manuscripts left for his perusal. They proved to be selections from Buddhist works — the "Upanishads," the "Bhagavat Gita," and other sacred books of his country — made by Kyn-Dhwen and translated from the Sanscrit with his own hand.

Day after day his interest in these manuscripts deepened, and queries and doubts filled his mind. "Is it possible," thought he, "that such compositions, such elevated thoughts as these, existed before the Christian era? Is it possible that these people thought and wrote in the spirit of so pure a religion; a religion which comprehends the entire ethics of Christianity as well as the best and purest of its doctrines? I have been taught to believe this race heathenish and God-forsaken, and that it was my duty and mission in life to teach them the very truths which constitute the basis of their own faith, and to convert them to modern Christianity in order to secure their eternal salvation. There must be a grave mistake somewhere or we are wonderfully blind, ignorant and egotistical.

"For years I have been storing my mind with narrow dogmas, fortifying myself against heretical opinions, and really resisting knowledge.

"The pure and lofty character of Kyn-Dhwen, who, though educated in our schools, never embraced our faith, gives indubitable evidence that the faith of his native land exercises the highest moral and intellectual influence over the minds and conduct of its adherents.

"Oh, Kyn-Dhwen! my more than friend, my

spiritual 'Mentor,' thou hast been a lamp to my feet, guiding me in the paths of wisdom and virtue. How much am I indebted to thee for thy unselfish love and trust! Now that I have become sensible of thy worth, am I never to see thee more? Shall I never be able to open my heart to thee in person and to express in the fervent language of my soul the love and gratitude I feel for thee?"

* * * * * * * *

Gerald had deferred for many weeks his answer to the letter from the trustees of the church at home, and he now felt that it could no longer be delayed. He therefore wrote at once: —

"MY DEAR FRIENDS AND BROTHERS, — I thank you sincerely for the honor you confer upon me in inviting me to your pulpit, and I appreciate fully the kind feelings which prompt the offer. I am therefore the more pained to be obliged to send this answer, which I should be recreant to my sense of duty and self-respect longer to delay.

"First, then, I must decline positively your invitation. I should never be able to stamp out the 'isms' of which you speak, even if I thought myself justified in the attempt to do so. They are, in most cases, the matured opinions of thinking, reasoning men, as capable of ju n of the ways of God to man and of man's dutg itg God as we, and are no more to be stamped out to-day by any church than by the terrors of the inquisition in the past. The human mind must be free, or it is nothing. Through that freedom alone will the truth in time be made manifest.

"I have been for a long time coming to these conclusions through earnest investigation and thought, and my delay in replying to you only deepens my convictions.

"You will doubtless ask, 'Do I intend to preach

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Few persons are really aware of the silent they exercise upon others, through a seemingly and unobtrusive daily life. The example of rity, charity, brotherly love and kindness ma deeper and more lasting impression upon lifts up the race, and advances mankind rapidly toward that pure ideal (*or real*) for whi good men are struggling, than dogmatic sermon

Had Kyn-Dhwen preached his faith never s quently, his words would have fallen upon du censorious ears; but the unselfish purity of unspoken life was the still, small voice of convi power.

"Now that the barrier of my faith no longer st in the way," thought Gerald, "what is to preve renewal of my suit for the hand of Miss Whitne

"Alas! any declaration of a changed relig belief would be misconstrued, and ascribed to unworthy motives. I can only realize the happiness of feeling that I am gradually growing spiritually nearer to her.

"God knows," he sighed, "I am struggling only to reach truth. And so, perhaps! — ay, perhaps ——!"

* * * * * * * *

It was quite evident that the son who had been looked upon in some respects as the vicarious saving grace of the Livingston family would now be rather a stumbling block.

It is rarely the case that fathers who mark out future careers for their children find their hopes realized. Given the moral training, the education, and the physique, and the rest must be wrought out by the loyal right arm or the strong brain of the man. When "thrift shall cease to follow fawning," and men shall stand upon merit and capacity rather than upon popularity, fewer dolts will be found in the pulpit, ignoramuses in the forum, or clever

farmers and workmen in the chairs of Philosophy, Jurisprudence, and the State.

Love-making between the Sinhalese girl and the Sinhalese students progressed slowly enough; indeed, it did not progress at all.

The conservative professors were not insensible to the situation. Although it was the opinion of some of them that very little sentiment was necessary between a prospective man and wife, yet they could not quite ignore the fact, so patent to every one, that some silly things must be said and done, now-a-days, on both sides, before marriage was possible.

As the time drew near when Thun-Gah would graduate, and of necessity return to India, they felt more anxious that he should marry Uhl-Wah, and not leave the impetuous maiden on their hands.

After discussing the subject at some length between themselves, they determined to enlist Madame Savoir in the scheme and secure her valuable advice and if possible her services in this important matter.

Dealing, as she did, with young girls of every disposition, she was certainly a most proper person to bring about the desired result. Her long experience had given her a peculiar tact in probing and guiding the moving springs of the young feminine heart.

Madame Savoir needed but the faintest suggestion, on the part of President Dombrey, of the wish of the faculty, to comprehend the matter. The whole situation was clear to her at a glance, and she at once determined upon her line of action.

She had become quite fond of the artless and affectionate Uhl-Wah, and really felt sorry to say or do anything to interrupt the placid current of the oriental beauty's happy life.

Still, neither sentiment nor friendship should ever stand in the way of policy. This was, with the Madame, an immutable law, which she rarely violated. Accordingly, she made an evening call

upon her pupil at her room just before bedtime, shrewdly calculating that in the solitude of her chamber and at that quiet hour she would be able, if ever, to secure her confidence.

She found the young orphan seated at one of the low windows of her room, her face resting between her hands, thoughtfully watching the full moon slowly creep up above the trees. Her exuberant hair was spread out in glossy waves over her bare shoulders, and her rich red lips were just parting in child-like expectancy when Madame Savoir unceremoniously entered the room.

This beautiful picture, of oriental setting, so innocent and child-like in its trusting faith, smote the not-over-sensitive conscience of the bland mistress, as she reflected upon the object of her visit; but she controlled herself, crushing this remnant of youthful sentimentality, and inquired cheerfully, putting an arm round her fair pupil's plump shoulders and kissing her forehead, —

"What interests my pretty little sibyl so deeply this evening?"

Uhl-Wah, with her wonted softness and ease, replied, —

"Oh, I was just watching that glorious moon, and wishing I could ride upward on its placid bosom, and look down upon the great, bright world below!"

"I fear you would only behold wickedness and misery, my child."

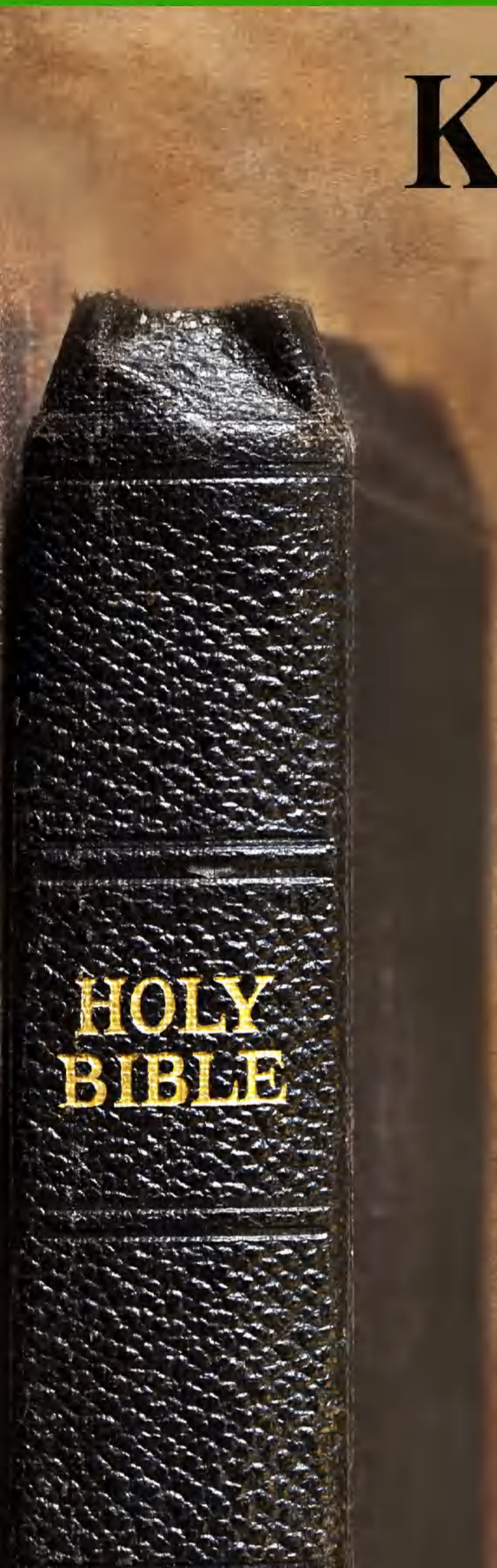
"No! Is there, then, so much wickedness in America?"

"There is wickedness everywhere in the wide world, my innocent."

"Indeed! Then I would rather stay here, where everybody is good and kind."

"True, my dear Uhl-Wah! I trust you are happy here?"

"Yes, madame; I'm always happy here!"



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"That I cannot tell, my child; you, no doubt, will soon be able to answer that question better yourself."

She shook her head, and the Madame continued:

"Don't you think Thun-Gah, now, for instance, a fine, handsome young fellow? The professors say he is a wonderful scholar!"

Uhl-Wah's bosom rose and fell quickly, and she pressed her hands tightly together without a word.

"He is very fond of you," ventured the Madame.

"Is he?" replied Uhl-Wah absently; "he never told me so!"

"Oh, young men in love, Uhl-Wah, are at first afraid to speak of it!"

"I should not be afraid to speak of it if I were a man!"

"I think," said Madame, dropping into an imaginative strain, "that he will tell you very soon."

"Oh, I hope he won't!"

"Why, my child?"

"Because I won't be his wife!" — pettishly.

"You must not speak like that," replied Madame soothingly, — but really vexed that her scheme was working so badly.

She arose to leave, saying, "Well! well! we will not speak of this any more to-night. You will perhaps think differently some other time."

"That girl will bear watching," was the inward conclusion of Madame Savoir as she closed the door behind her: "I must restrict her freedom for a few days. She has enjoyed too much pleasure. Nothing like a little wholesome restraint now and then to bring these misses to their senses. She will be glad enough to see any one after a short retirement, and I'll take care who that '*any one*' shall be."

With these reflections Madame dismissed the subject for the night.

While the above interview was taking place in

Uhl-Wah's chamber, a similar one in character was passing in President Dombrey's private study between himself and Thun-Gah, who had been sent for.

"My dear Thun-Gah," said the president gravely though pleasantly, "I have sent for you this evening to say what I think is due to you, that we are greatly pleased with your progress and your entirely satisfactory conduct since we had occasion to remonstrate with you a few months ago. We feel that you will graduate with distinction and be an honor to your people; and, my dear friend and pupil, I hope you will be happy," he added, as if to suggest a theme for prolonging the conversation.

"I shall always endeavor to do my duty," answered Thun-Gah evasively.

"Thun-Gah!" said the president courageously, "permit me to suggest that, in my opinion, you should marry; and, if possible, before you begin your work. A wife would be the greatest aid and support you could have. It is true you are going home, but your home will really be a foreign country to you, as you have been so many years away, and you will yearn for companionship."

Thun-Gah blushed, started, and looked up intently at the president! Could it be possible that he meant to restore his lost Milly to his arms? A momentary flutter of the heart and it was over. The same steel-like feeling again crept over him.

"Don't you think I am right?" asked the president blandly.

"I have no heart for affection," answered Thun-Gah.

"You are mistaken, my dear pupil. You have surely outgrown the bit of folly with that seminary flirt?"

"President Dombrey, I loved that girl!"

"At the time — yes! But you are wiser now. I respect sentiment, Thun-Gah, but let me — an older

man — advise you. Your life is all before you. Would you permit a silly disappointment at this early age to cloud your whole future?

"Forget that weakness, Thun-Gah! Live not in the past but in the future. Love is possible the second time. Youthful fancies are rarely the opinions of maturer years.

"Listen to me! Put this idea of a first love out of your head from this day. There is nothing the matter with your heart; only give it the opportunity and it will love again, just as strongly as ever."

"I wish it might be so," answered Thun-Gah hopelessly.

"But it will be so if you will only permit it."

"How do you mean, President Dombrey?"

"Call upon Uhl-Wah, that sweet girl of your own race. You cannot help loving her!"

"She is very beautiful," said Thun-Gah.

"I understand, through Madame Savoir, that she has already shown a decided preference for you," rejoined the president.

"But President Dombrey! would I do right to marry without love in my heart?"

"You would do right to marry: and as to there being a want of love in your heart, love comes as often after marriage as before.

"In your case, Thun-Gah, where so much depends upon your marrying a person of your own religion and race, you should concede sentiment to the higher call of duty!"

"I earnestly wish to do my duty."

"Depend upon it, my friend, what I have advised is your duty. I would not advise you ill. Make love to Uhl-Wah, and love will follow. Marry her, — here, if you choose, — and return to Ceylon equipped for your life-work."

"Assure me of one thing," said Thun-Gah solemnly; "that in taking this young woman for my

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CHAPTER XXVII.

Poor Uhl Wah was crushed, when, the next day after the interview with Madame Savoir, she was informed she could no longer play at lawn tennis with the students from the university nor with the other young ladies of the school.

Why this invidious distinction? Why should she alone be singled out and debarred from this recreation and amusement?

She had not failed in her lessons, nor had she transgressed any of the rules of the school, so far as she knew.

The reason given by Madame Savoir for this restriction, that she had become too fond of pleasure, seemed to her unjust, and incomprehensible. Certainly it would apply to all the other girls as well as herself.

She felt deeply injured and very unhappy.

She was very popular upon the tennis ground, and was usually sought as a partner; for, being a skilful player, her opponents were rarely allowed to win a game. In reality, however, her graceful movements, foreign air, and artless simplicity attracted so much attention from those with whom she played, that the game became a secondary consideration, in their admiration for the player.

"Laertes Lawson" in particular, a sunny-haired junior, allowed himself to be most ignominiously

beaten, day after day, by Uhl-Wah, and apparently enjoyed his defeat.

Madame Savoir herself showed a marked partiality for this popular youth, whose father was reputed to be immensely wealthy. She even played an occasional game with him, and declared she was quite delighted to find him not in the least spoiled by fortune, but on the contrary a model of gentlemanly courtesy and good behavior.

Young Lawson had never shown any special preference for Uhl-Wah in the presence of the other young ladies; but now that she was not present at the games, and day after day passed without her appearance, he naturally inquired the reason.

The young ladies told him they had been informed "that Uhl-Wah, having been too prodigal of her time, too fond of pleasure, was now devoting herself with greater energy to her studies, privately reciting to the Professor, that she might hasten her progress."

This announcement, while it raised Uhl-Wah in the young man's esteem, made his heart sink hopelessly.

His distress was so obvious to the young ladies that they really pitied him, but were unable to afford him any comfort or relief.

Laertes soon saw that upon his own watchfulness and sagacity would depend any hope of a further interview with his beloved, and he determined to make the most of any opportunity that might occur.

Every hour of separation and suspense only deepened his passion and increased his anxiety.

She was allowed recreation and exercise only when the rest were at their studies, and these lonely hours were usually passed by her in walking about the grounds.

Madame Savoir's conduct caused a bona-fide homesickness to rapidly creep over her pupil, and

from some cause — possibly from remarks made by the Madame herself — she had become impressed with the belief that her companions no longer desired her company, and therefore endeavored to keep out of their sight.

The fourth day of this banishment seemed to the girl an age. She wandered aimlessly about in the rear part of the inclosure for a time, and at last seated herself to rest on a huge bowlder, which lay at the root of a spreading elm whose pen n branches, drooping to the ground, concealed her from every eye.

The grounds terminated here, being divided from the adjoining premises by a tall board fence. What lay beyond this Chinese wall was a terra incognita to the girls. None had curiosity enough to explore it.

This was the end of the little world of the disconsolate pupil, and at this moment she wished her life might end here also. She was abandoned by Madame Savoir and her schoolmates, and her desolation was complete.

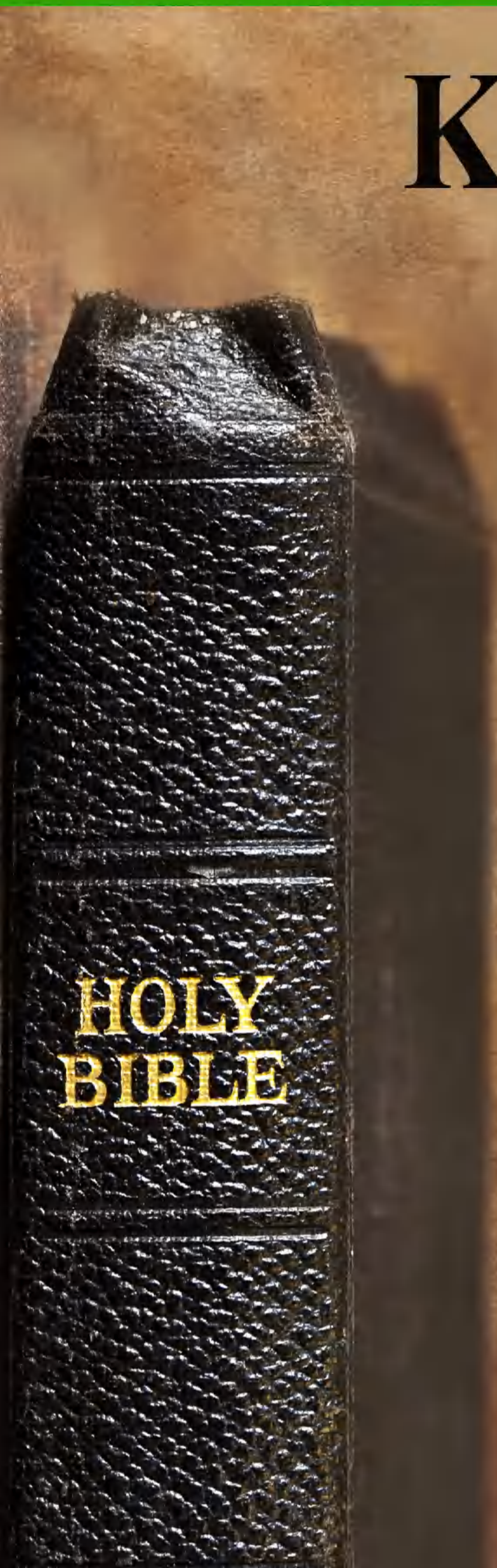
Leaning her head against the tree she sobbed aloud, and exclaimed: "Oh, Laertes, Laertes, my noble lover! why dost thou not come to rescue me? Why can I not leave this hateful place and go to thee, and give thee all my heart? My love! oh, my love!"

She raised her pretty hand and slipped a diamond ring from her finger, put it to her lips, and then hid it in her bosom.

In a moment she drew it forth again, holding it up between her eyes and the light.

"Ah, these tell-tale jewels, — they are brighter now!

"That's what my lover meant, the last day we played tennis together. He put this ring on my finger and said, 'Uhl-Wah, sweet one, these jewels are less beautiful than thine eyes! Should these



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school-days are ended! To-morrow I will go home and get my father's consent to leave, or I will run away, and carry you off to be mine forever!"

Poor Uhl-Wah uttered a low cry, and clung more closely to her lover, as she heard the voice of Madame Savoir in the distance calling her name.

This put a speedy termination to the sweet *tête-à-tête*, and Laertes again leaped over the fence and disappeared.

"I will now tell Madame Savoir," said she bravely, "why I must remain in America. She has told me I must marry, and she will be delighted when she hears my story."

That evening the confiding Uhl-Wah told her simple tale of love to the astonished, indignant Madame. Told it between bursts of tears and happy laughter, — told it as a trusting, loving daughter would tell her mother, — and then, all breathless, she awaited her congratulations.

"A thousand times worse than I ever suspected," thought Madame; "with all my boasted knowledge of 'girls' ways,' I know them not. Every day they deceive me; every day they make me more a fool than ever."

A long pause ensued before she spoke, during which she matured her words. Then, taking the the orphan's hand in hers, she said softly, solemnly and impressively, —

"Uhl-Wah, I have told you that the world is full of wickedness, full of snares for girls' feet, and full of snares for their souls. You are pure and beautiful now, my child, but how quickly you can become hideous and sinful.

"This young man, Laertes, loves you not! He seeks to entice you to perdition. He wishes you for a toy, a plaything for a day, and then will cast you away forever!

"He would not make you his wife; he has no

thought of it. He has already other sweethearts amongst the pink-and-white beauties of his own set. To him you are but a pretty, rare creature, out of the usual way, and he would trifle with you. He wants your simple heart but to crush it under his feet. He has told this to his school-fellows. He has indulged in coarse jests at your expense, and has boasted of his power over you. Will you listen to one like that? Would you gratify his vanity, and become the prey of his base nature?"

* * * * * * * *

This was more than the poor girl could bear. Her heart ceased beating, she almost fainted away; but, controlling herself with wonderful calmness, she sat a moment, inwardly gasping between her closed teeth, —

"He has jested about me! Madame has said it!"

Then slowly, with a strange, powerfully suppressed manner, and a nervous fortitude, with lips bloodless and compressed, she arose and with eyes looking into vacancy exclaimed, — "Madame Savoir, I will go to my room!"

As Uhl-Wah swept proudly out, the wily Madame watched her poor victim with her keen, unrelenting black eyes peering beneath shaggy brows, and exultingly exclaimed, —

"We have conquered!"

The Eastern Princess of a day entered her chamber a poor, subdued and crushed soul.

The romance, the halo, the sunshine, which for a moment had surrounded her young life, was forever blasted. The pure and intense passion that to this moment had possession of her young heart was instantly blotted out, and its place filled with a still more intense feeling of hatred and remorse.

The spring of her young life was suddenly parched up and dried forever.

She did not swoon, she could not weep, but silently, sadly, walked the floor of her chamber for a time, then, suddenly rushing to her mirror, surveyed her startled reflection upon its polished surface, and exclaimed, —

"This face is hideous, for he has touched it! His Judas kiss has left its impress upon these lips! This head has been pillowed upon his guilty bosom!"

These words seemed to rouse the savage in her nature. Her eyes flashed fire like those of the tigers of her native jungles when about to seize their prey. She unbound her flowing hair and snatching a pair of scissors from the table cut away tress after tress, and flung them from her.— "They touched his treacherous bosom," she muttered as she ground her teeth together, "and shall defile my head no more."

With a maniac's frenzy she dug out the diamond settings from her ring with the point of her scissors —as if tearing her own eyes from their sockets — and, tossing them from her window, exclaimed: "Go to thy treacherous owner! Nevermore shalt thou be compared to my poor blinded eyes!"

Taking from her trunk a plain suit of black, which she had never worn before, she shook out the scant folds, — the aroma of eastern perfumes filling the room and bringing back recollections of her youthful days. Sobbing as if her heart would break, she exclaimed: "Oh, my dear Ceylon, thy poor Uhl-Wah shall never wear anything but black again! She has imperiled her soul, and must return to thee and die."

Then, throwing herself upon her bed, she wept herself to sleep.

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finally come to consist entirely of the top and bottom crusts, without the substantial middle class, who constitute, after all, the great world-builders of our race. Perhaps close class marriages might destroy the unity of the whole, and thus population become ultimately extinct."

With all the doctor's philosophy, however, the case in hand was pressing; something must be done to get rid of the Sinhalese girl at once, and in the future similar experiments could be avoided. Turning to Madame Savoir then, he asked: "How can we bring this marriage about?"

"If you are sure of Thun-Gah," she replied, "I will answer for Uhl-Wah. She is terribly crushed since my interview with her, and will, I have no doubt, do anything I may suggest."

"I must admit," returned the doctor, "that the affair has assumed very disagreeable proportions, but now that we have embarked on this troublous sea we must go through with the voyage. I think I can prevail upon Thun-Gah to wed the girl, but he will do so believing her heart free. He would look upon it in the light of a mean intrigue were he to learn that her affections were pre-engaged."

"This is an extreme case, President Dombrey. We must concede something to the great cause for which we are both so urgently laboring. And believe me, I am very sure that the young people concerned, if they live twenty years, will thank us for our interference."

"You may be right, Madame Savoir, and at any rate we have but one course left, and that is to consummate this marriage at once. In a few weeks Thun-Gah would graduate in the usual course, but I must anticipate the occasion and make out his diploma in advance. He shall call at the seminary this evening, and I trust to you to have the marriage pleasantly and speedily arranged."

"Leave all the details of that to me, President Dombrey. I will see that the wedding is both novel and impressive."

Madame Savoir departed in high spirits. "It will be a grand card for our school," said she; "better than any kind of a closing entertainment. I always like the young ladies to leave with something unique to gossip about. It draws others, and is the best advertisement we can have.'

Going at once to Uhl-Wah's room to prepare her for the visit of Thun-Gah, she found her sad and melancholy, sitting at her window, gazing mournfully at the sinking sun as if comparing its gradually declining glory to her own darkening life and the extinction of all her fond hopes.

"You are behaving beautifully, my dear," said Madame Savoir as she entered; "I am proud of you! You are more of a woman than I gave you credit for, and your feminine dignity would do honor to any American lady!"

(Uhl-Wah tried to smile, but ended with a sigh.)

"I have just seen Thun-Gah," she continued glibly; "he is coming to see you this evening."

(The poor girl turned aside with a slight tremor.)

"My dear child, he loves you with a noble and true affection. He will exalt you. He will make you queen of his heart!"

(The stricken soul made no response.)

"Uhl-Wah, you will not repulse him, I trust."

"Let him come, Madame Savoir," she at last replied sadly; "he is of my own race. Let him take me. Let him protect me, and carry me back to my home."

The poor orphan covered her eyes with her hands and wept violently, and the satisfied Madame, having gained her point, sat silently watching her unhappy pupil for a moment.

"Thus was my poor mother married," sobbed Uhl-

Wah; "they took her away from her lover and gave her to a stranger, and she died. But not before leaving a wretched daughter to inherit her sorrow."

She checked herself and added: "I will try, Madame Savoir, not to make his life miserable. I can be a true if not a loving wife. — Let him come," she repeated again, mechanically.

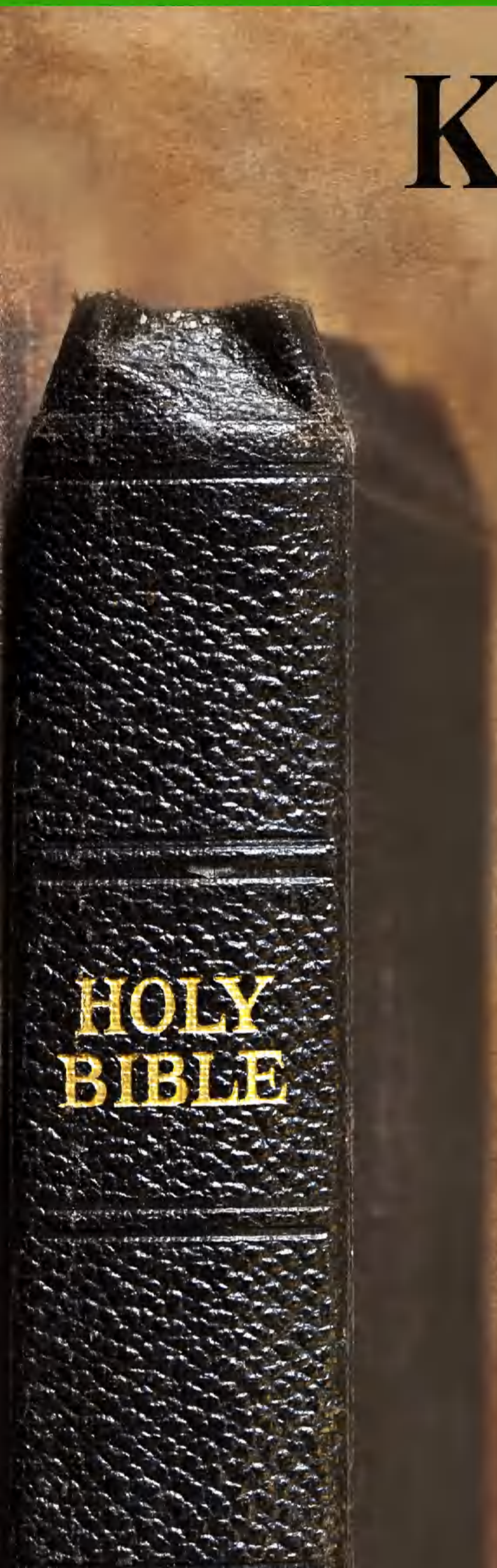
Madame Savoir kissed her forehead. — "There, darling! dry your tears; much happiness is yet in store for you."

* * * * * * * *

Thun-Gah had made up his mind to follow President Dombrey's advice and marry, but he was not prepared for so speedy a consummation. In an interview the next day after the president's suggestion, he mildly asked that a delay be granted until after Commencement; but, seeing the president was determined, he made no further objections.

The proposal was not so difficult a task as Thun-Gah feared it would be. Uhl-Wah's coldness and silence he attributed to her modesty and retiring disposition. She simply said "Yes," when he asked her hand, and he was spared the embarrassment of playing the role of an ardent lover. Never was there a colder or more formal marriage engagement. He was glad to find her so phlegmatic, so listless; for, since they must live together, she would not bore him with disagreeable attentions nor exact them of him. He knew her mind must be stored with learning by this time, and she would be a useful if not a loving companion. With these reflections he consoled himself for the step he was about to take.

They were married in the morning, and the preparations for the wedding were promptly and elaborately made. The young ladies of the school combined and purchased Uhl-Wah's bridal dress, which was of white India silk with modest and appropriate trimmings.



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her care. She concealed her emotion, but when her husband gently took her hand and asked her if she were not happy, she burst into hysterical weeping!

Thun-Gah endeavored to soothe her with caresses and kind words, but she only sobbed the more, and continued so long and so distressingly that it began to dawn upon him that perhaps she too had married against her wish and that her heart was elsewhere.

This conclusion seemed palpable when he reflected upon the conduct of Madame Savoir and the haste of President Dombrey to bring about the marriage.

For a moment contempt and anger toward those who had promoted such a scheme arose within him. But as he reflected, and began to understand the situation better, these feelings gave way to pity for the hapless orphan girl, the victim, and by far the greater sufferer.

As soon as she became quiet he said gravely, — "Uhl-Wah, a terrible truth is revealed to me. You have married without loving me!"

And then he remembered that he had never asked her the question. They were evidently the victims of a conspiracy, and no restitution, no reparation, was possible. He did not reproach nor remonstrate with her; pity alone filled his heart.

"Dear Uhl-Wah," he said, "we have been cruelly wronged; but I will be an affectionate brother to you. You shall be my dear sister, whose happiness I will forever guard."

The flying train stopped a moment, and a chorus of happy voices at the station interrupted the conversation. A crowd of lively, joyous people — a wedding party — entered a private car

As the train moved again, a shower of bouquets, old shoes, rice, and so forth, followed, amidst hurrahs and congratulations.

Two gentlemen entered the car in which were Thun-Gah and his bride, and sitting down directly in

front of them began a conversation which they could not avoid hearing.

Number one, — "A mighty lucky fellow that."

Number two, — "Well, yes; lucky enough to get married!" (He was evidently an old bachelor.)

Number one, — "She's a deuced pretty gal, and they say her dad has got the rocks. This station, you know, is called after him, — 'Humphreys' Station.' I'm told they are terribly in love with each other. Can't be out of sight a moment, you know, and all that sort of thing!"

Number two, — "Ha, Ha! That's very likely. Why she never set eyes on the chap 'till a month ago, when he came through the village selling goods as a travelling agent. But love's a queer thing nowadays! I hope the match won't turn out as such affairs sometimes do. Ebenezer Humphreys ain't the man to allow his pretty daughter 'Milly' to be badly treated; he'd go for the chap mighty quick, and send him to purgatory for reformation."

Why should Thun-Gah tremble by the side of his young bride? Why that ghastly pallor on his cheek? Uhl-Wah's quick sympathy was aroused! She felt she was clearly to blame. She had wounded his feelings by her weakness. She had blasted his hopes! She had driven him to despair by her coldness and her silence! "Thun-Gah, my husband," said she feelingly, "forgive me! I will learn to love you; I am your wife!"

He heeded her not, until she had covered his bloodless hands with her scalding tears!

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE evening following the interesting exploration made by Faith and her aunt, around the romantic island of Ischia, was one of unusual beauty and tranquillity.

The calm, blue Mediterranean, undisturbed by a ripple, glistened beneath the glowing *Stasera*, like a sea of polished *lapis-lazuli* mingled with fire, — such a sea as St. John may have witnessed in his vision on the Isle of Patmos, when the angels stood upon its glassy surface singing the song of Moses, with the golden harps of God in their hands.

So perfect was the calm, that the drowsy atmosphere scarcely responded to the human breath.

There seemed indeed to be a total suspension of all the active forces of nature, — an absolute hush, when even insect life, usually so musical beneath southern skies, had suspended its heavenly chant, as if paralyzed by some indefinable spell.

They were seated on the low veranda of their villa at Casamicciola, enjoying the scene, when Mrs. Winchester remarked upon the wonderful and rather overrich fragrance which lay dormant upon the sluggish air. It was the latter part of July; yet the exuberant flora of southern Italy had not begun to decline, and the evening aroma was almost oppressive.

"How I wish Kyn-Dhwen were here to-night!" said Faith.

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sensual, and leaves us in the presence of the good and beautiful, as it softens the outlines of these jagged ruins and covers them with its charitable vines!"

"Ah, yes!" said her aunt; "your youthful imagination weaves delightful pictures out of the useless fragments which remain of a people long since passed away."

"There must be something more than 'imagination,' dear aunt, that brings these impressions to my mind. I not only see them as they lived, but I feel as if I had been of them, as if I had struggled with them in their weaknesses and their strivings for a higher and better life. So strong are these impressions at times, that I am almost convinced I have occasional glimpses of a long-past existence, from which I have been re-incarnated again into my present life."

"And I," said Mrs. Winchester, "have also my yearnings and visions, but of a more practical kind. I have a keener desire to get nearer to, and to be of greater help to, my fellow-beings. I have also a clearer vision into futurity than heretofore, and a more hopeful trust in my Heavenly Father. But you, my dear child, are young, and should now have earthly hopes and aspirations. The time has not come for you to live in the past, nor yet in the far future."

"Ah, dear aunt. I feel sometimes very ancient! My thoughts and experiences, as you know, have never been of an ordinary character. But here I seem to be in spiritual sympathy with, and in the presence of, the great of past generations. I am sure that next to realizing the dreams of love and happiness which come at times to all our sex, my life here, amidst these ideal and delicious surroundings, is the most poetical and enjoyable possible."

The village clock was now striking nine, and tak-

ing a final look at the beautiful bay in front, whose subdued tints had now settled into a deep coppery-tinted blue, and turning once more with a feeling of awe to the frowning "Epomeo" which lifted its awful head into the heavens behind them, they retired to their apartments upon the ground floor, Mrs. Winchester remarking that such a close, ominously still atmosphere in America would certainly portend a violent thunder-storm before morning. But Faith was too full of her mystical thoughts, too much excited by the romance of her surroundings to permit sleep, and taking the life of "Vittoria Colonna" which she was reading, sat down by her little table and turning to the description of the sojourn of the poetess upon this island during her widowhood was soon deeply absorbed.

Suddenly she was startled by a frightful roar! At the same moment a violent commotion shook the house, and the doors and windows rattled as if a terrible hurricane or thunder-storm had suddenly burst upon them! Again a roar! The house reeled, the lamp was dashed to the floor, broken and extinguished, and instantly she was left in entire darkness! Springing to her feet she shouted to her aunt in the adjoining room, but hearing no reply feared she was killed. Before she could gather her thoughts to determine what to do, another and another violent trembling followed in quick succession, shaking the whole island to its very foundations.

Plastering and timber from the ceiling and walls began to fall, and in a moment she was prostrated to the floor.

Frightened, bewildered, stifled with dust and lime, though not yet fatally injured, she again rose to her feet and while groping about the room now heard her aunt calling faintly for help.

She screamed in reply as loud as she could, although hardly able to hear her own voice amidst the roar of

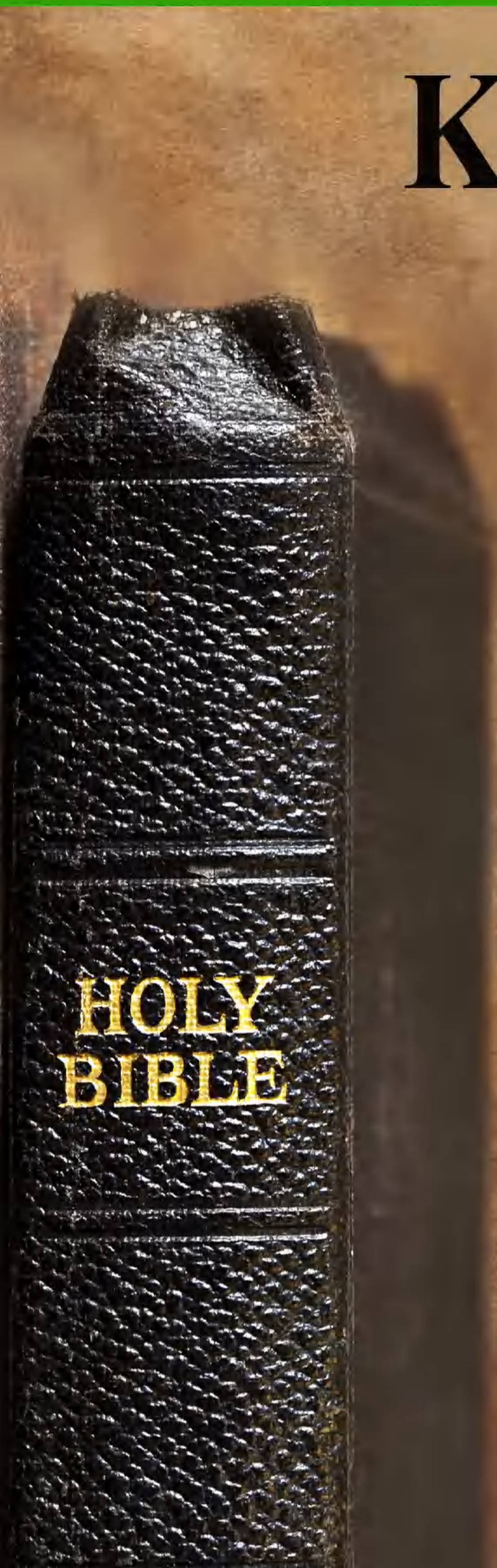
the crashing walls. "Oh, aunt! aunt! I'm trying to get to you! It's an earthquake!" and she continued to feel about the room in the darkness, in a blind effort to find the door.

The blackness was so intense, and the dust from falling timber, plaster and rubbish so suffocating and choking, that she could make no progress. In the frenzy of her excitement and fear she crawled along, close to the floor to escape suffocation, and at last felt the door and heard the groans of her aunt on the other side. But the door resisted every effort she could make to open it! She arose and threw her whole weight against it, but something had fallen upon it on the other side and held it fast.

The cries and groans of her aunt gave her superhuman strength, and feeling over the floor for something with which to break in, her hand fortunately touched a piece of timber that had just fallen at her feet, and snatching it up she dealt, in her frenzy, terrible blows that burst in the panels!

How this was done she could never tell; but through the opening she crawled, snake-like, to the side of her aunt, directed by her moans. In the impenetrable darkness she found the poor woman half buried in rubbish and held down by a piece of timber that had fallen across one of her arms! Throwing this off as quickly as possible, she tried to drag her aunt towards the side of the room where the door opened upon the lawn; but the continuous shocks, accompanied by the constant falling of plaster and *débris*, created such a terribly stifling dust that it was almost impossible to move or keep alive, and they could only avoid strangulation by keeping their faces close down to the floor, covered by their hands, while the house continued to sway from side to side as if tossed on an angry sea.

Faith knew there was no time to be lost and that the only hope of saving their lives was in finding the



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and summoning all their remaining fortitude to bear what might yet be in store for them.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs. Winchester, "why did we stay here, when it is so well known that this island lies over a slumbering volcano? If the treacherous earth does not open and swallow us before morning we may yet be saved!"

"I think, aunt, we are comparatively safe here on the lawn," said Faith encouragingly. "The falling stones cannot reach us, and it is this swaying to and fro like the waves of the sea which demolishes the houses."

Another terrible roar startled them, coming this time apparently from the interior of the mountain, and they expected an immediate discharge of lava; but again the crash of houses and walls only followed the shock. But their dismay and fear were increased tenfold, for now they realized the possibility of the mountain bursting forth at any moment in volcanic eruption and completing the entire destruction of the island, — vomiting forth vast streams of fiery lava or showers of red-hot stones, ashes and mud, such as had destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii. From this there could be no possibility of escape, for there was but a narrow strip between the mountain and the sea.

And so, with hands clasped tightly together, they remained upon the grass through the long, long, terrible night, trembling in an agony of fear and excitement, and shivering in their scanty clothing; for, as the time wore away, the sea air of the morning began to come in upon them damp and chill.

The shocks became less frequent as the daylight at last broke upon them, and they stood up, feeling a hope of safety as the morning breeze began to clear the darkness and the sulphur smoke away.

But a new horror burst upon them!

The poor people in the narrow, thickly crowded

streets all about them were not so fortunate as they. They had no lawns to flee to for escape, and were buried by thousands in the crumbled ruins of their houses; which, being built of cobble-stones terraced upon the hill-sides several stories in height and held together only by mortar, fell with the first shock, suddenly covering whole families of dead and dying in the cruel wreck.

As the dust cleared off and the roar of destruction subsided, the feeble cries of human agony and distress reached their ears from every direction. Moans, sighs and piteous appeals to the Virgin for help and mercy filled the air, yet they were powerless to render the least assistance.

They looked about them and saw that not a building was left standing; even the high and heavy walls which were built along the public roads and hill-sides were everywhere mountains of rubbish, rendering the narrow streets impassable.

It was nearly half a mile to the sea-shore, and it was evident their safety lay in reaching it at any hazard, though they must climb over the crushed houses of the whole prostrated city. For hours they scrambled over the pitiless ruins. From everywhere beneath, came up to their ears the helpless groans of the buried and wounded, blended with dying cries of "*Aqua! Aqua! Aqua! — pel morto de Dio!*"

They passed frantic mothers and wailing children, crazed with grief, vainly striving to roll away the mountain of cruel stones that lay so heavily on their dead.

At last, amidst all this misery, these poor women — the younger supporting, assisting and trying to comfort the elder — reached the sea, their scanty clothing torn into fragments.

Here they were obliged to wait another tedious hour for the arrival of the steamer from Naples.

The kind wives of the fishermen gave Mrs. Win-

chester a pair of worn shoes and some wraps from their scanty store, seeing she was in such sore distress, for their little huts along the shore had almost entirely escaped the general destruction. Her feet were naked, and bleeding from the sharp lava stones and timber over which they had struggled so painfully, and the rude offerings of these kind sisters were gratefully accepted, although she could repay them only with her tears, for everything they possessed was buried beneath the ruins of their villa. Faith had not fared quite so badly as her aunt. She had not undressed when the shocks commenced, and although her clothes were in tatters they served to cover her.

Crowds of terror-stricken and half-naked fugitives rushed on board the steamer when it landed, but the terrified captain would not wait a moment to hear the story of the night's horror nor endeavor to render any aid to the suffering, but wisely hurried back to Naples to secure assistance adequate to the great necessity.

On arrival at their hotel they sent for their banker and the American Consul. These gentlemen gave them every needful aid and attention, immediately telegraphing to their friends at home of their safety.

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she longed to return and aid, as far as she might, the poor sufferers, but could not!

"Poor Ischia!" she sighed, "were not poverty and ignorance enough to bear without this last great agony?"

Pitiful indeed was the method, or seeming want of method, employed by the government for the relief of the distress. With improper implements, unnecessary delays, want of active, immediative supervision, the frightened, superstitious soldiery made slow progress. Night succeeded night, and day followed day, yet many hundreds cried in vain for release from their living tombs.

At length, after the fourth day, when the cries and moans of those beneath the ruins had begun to grow faint and fainter, and the intense heat of the sun upon the dead had begun to make the island a terror to the living, fresh lime was ordered spread broadcast over the ruins, which soon put an end to the living and the dead alike.

When Faith heard of this appalling and horrible termination of the sad drama, she covered her face with her hands and wept at the utter helplessness of humanity in such great crises of suffering.

With Mrs. Winchester she felt that all they could now do was to visit the poor, unfriended and unknown wounded and dying in the hospitals, and minister to their comfort and relief in whatever manner they might be able.

Naturally, their first inquiries were for Americans or English, but they were told none had been received.

They then asked the privilege of distributing wines and delicacies to the sufferers, which was thankfully given, and in company with one of the kind "Sisters of Mercy" they went through the wards, bringing comfort to many a dying bed.

They had need of all their fortitude and resolution

in passing from cot to cot where the maimed and dying lay. The piteous lamentations they heard over lost families and friends affected them even more than the physical pain the sufferers endured so nobly.

Mrs. Winchester was so overcome by the sad scenes she witnessed that she was forced to return to the door, where she seated herself to await her niece.

Faith disposed of all the delicacies she had brought, distributing them where she thought they were most needed, and over many beds where approaching death rendered the occupants insensible to her presence she sprinkled refreshing cologne.

Coming to the last one she found she had exhausted all her supplies, even to emptying her bottle of fragrant water.

The cover was drawn up over the face of a poor stranger, and in order to place her handkerchief still wet with the delicious perfume at the head she gently raised the white spread, and softly laid the delicate lace upon the pallid cheek of—*Kyn-Dhwen!*

* * * * * * * *

A terrific scream brought the "Sister of Mercy" instantly to her side and she fell fainting into her arms.

"Great God! Is it fate? Is it fate? Can we never escape it? What spell rests upon us?

"Oh, why! why! was I spared for this?" she sobbed, as she clung to the bosom of the nun.

Kyn-Dhwen awoke, and no less excited and affected reached forth his wan hands towards the frightened women.

"Oh, my dear Miss Whitney, not fate but God hath sent thee!"

His words brought a strange calmness to her relief.

Turning towards him and taking his outstretched hands in hers, she recognized through her blinding

tears the portrait of his mother which she had painted hanging at the head of his bed. It had been recovered from the ruins, and now hung near him at his earnest request.

Mrs. Winchester, hearing Faith's screams, was soon beside them, and Kyn-Dhwen related the story of his experience on that terrible night.

He had landed at Casamicciola, the afternoon preceding the earthquake, registering at the hotel "*Piccola Sentinella*," which was but a few hundred yards from their villa. This was to be his last stopping-place before crossing to Brindisi on his way to India.

After tea he had gone out upon the terrace to admire the effect of the beautiful sunset upon the blue and placid Mediterranean.

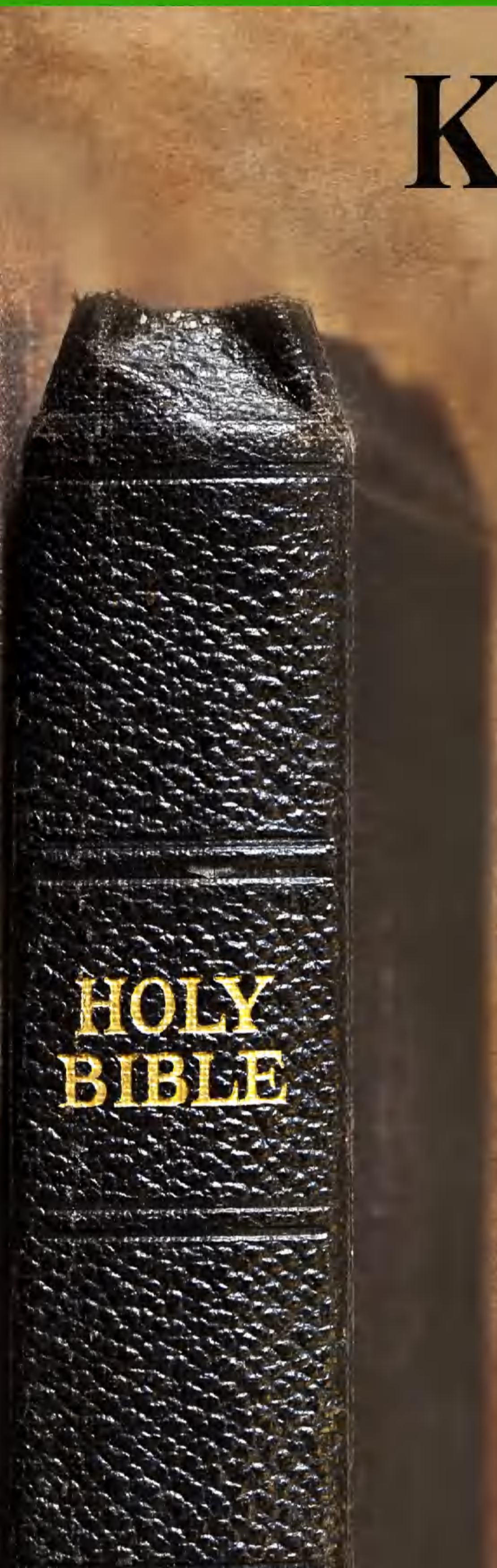
He sat for some time watching the glowing twilight gradually melt away into the sombre shade of the weird mountain that towered over the island behind him, when the shock came which prostrated the building in an instant. He was caught and held beneath the falling walls outside, while within the building fifty bodies were buried in the ruins.

With great effort he succeeded in freeing his right arm, and was then able to move away all the rocks except a broad, heavy one which rested upon his left arm and chest.

He was not alone in his misery. Many others lay around him stunned, many dead and dying. He contrived to liberate one by assisting with his freed hand, but the poor fellow was too badly maimed to render him any assistance in return.

From a poor little dog which was near him whining with pain he lifted a bit of timber and set him free, and the grateful animal crouched near him through the long and painful night and licked his hand.

The dawn for which he had watched so anxiously found him unconscious, and it was not until he was



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He told her that her image, though long unseen by his mortal eyes, was always before him by night and by day, and how singularly she had affected him when they met, and how her breath — that "breath of life" which had re-incarnated him — had been twice so nearly snatched away.

He spoke of her rare occult powers, of the strange similarity of thought and opinion which they both held, of their isolated lives, and finally of her *personal charms*.

Then it was that Faith comprehended — at first faintly, but at last surely — a thought that never before in all their long intercourse had even suggested itself to her.

"Kyn-Dhwen loved her!"

She did not shrink from him nor remit any of her delicate attentions. She felt that he was a superior being, that his love enobled her, although it must forever separate them. It was a love born of another sphere of being — a love of soul for soul!

She saw with a sinking heart that his face was becoming paler from day to day. She noted an increasing light in his eyes, as if the soul within were struggling for the mastery.

After a day of unusual languor and lassitude she left him early in the afternoon, hoping he would fall asleep and rest better through the night.

She determined to consult the physician the next morning and learn the patient's true condition and why this continued prostration. She reflected whether she ought not to write at once to Gerald Livingston. Kyn-Dhwen would never suggest it, but was it not her duty to inform the only friend he had on earth of his dangerous illness?

Gerald had no means of learning his friend's fate. The name of Kyn-Dhwen would never appear amongst the list of Americans here, and he had never been able to write since the accident. How

then could Gerald know that he was at Ischia? In the natural course of events this was impossible, and she determined to dispatch a letter at once. She thought it was a proper and necessary step, although she had a premonition that Gerald was on his way hither and that any day might announce his arrival.

Kyn-Dhwen fell asleep after Faith left him, and when he awoke in the twilight of the evening he was immediately conscious of a presence by his side. Thinking it was his guardian angel he called out, "Dear Faith!" in a soft and tender voice.

"Kyn-Dhwen, my dear boy! — I, your own friend, Gerald, am by your side!"

The Sinhalese raised himself on his elbow with difficulty, and instantly the two friends were clasped in each other's arms and with mingled feelings of joy and grief were weeping together.

A copy of the hotel register of the last day of the feud "*Piccola Sentinella*," the day of its destruction, had been telegraphed to a New York paper. It fell into Gerald's hands immediately, and contained the name of "Kyn-Dhwen" amongst the wounded.

Without a moment's delay, he was off to find his beloved friend or weep over his grave.

Thanks to his promptness he had found him alive and conscious! Could he leave him for a moment?

All night he sat by his pillow, and with anguish realized the awful change that was rapidly approaching.

The night — or the *light* — was not far off! What privilege it was that he had arrived in time to hold the dying hand of his dear friend in his and to tell him all he had thought during the long weeks of separation. To bless him for his unselfish aid and to assure him of the good his brave words of hope and courage had done him. To tell him that the strong chains of bigotry which had once bound him were sundered at last and that he was free. To tell him

that the example of his own pure life, of his charity, of his intellectual strength, were the influences which had brought him to a more earnest search for truth and a fuller recognition of the divine law of human brotherhood.

When Faith and her aunt came to the bedside of Kyn-Dhwen in the morning they saw Gerald there. Faith was not startled nor greatly surprised. From the moment she had determined to write to Gerald the evening before, she had become impressed that she was to meet him soon, and was prepared to see him at any moment. So powerful is the astral influence over sensitive hearts.

She was glad he had arrived, for it seemed natural and as it should be that at this sacred hour these tried and true friends should be together.

The meeting between herself and Gerald was neither painful nor embarrassing, for were they not meeting in the presence of one who loved them both, one who knew their hearts as they knew them themselves?

On an occasion so solemn no explanation was necessary. A grateful smile, a word of recognition, a pressure of the hand in which heart spoke to heart, and they turned to their patient.

Kyn-Dhwen's features wore a benign look of peace and happiness. Not a sign of pain was visible, but his clear glassy eye and the slightly pinched expression upon his face showed that the time was at hand.

Faith had brought with her a beautiful bunch of white lilies which she put in a glass and placed on the table at his head, and then looking into his face she saw the great change that had taken place during the night and with tears in her eyes she stooped down and kissed his forehead.

"I am glad thou art come so early, my dearly beloved," said he, as he took her hand in his.

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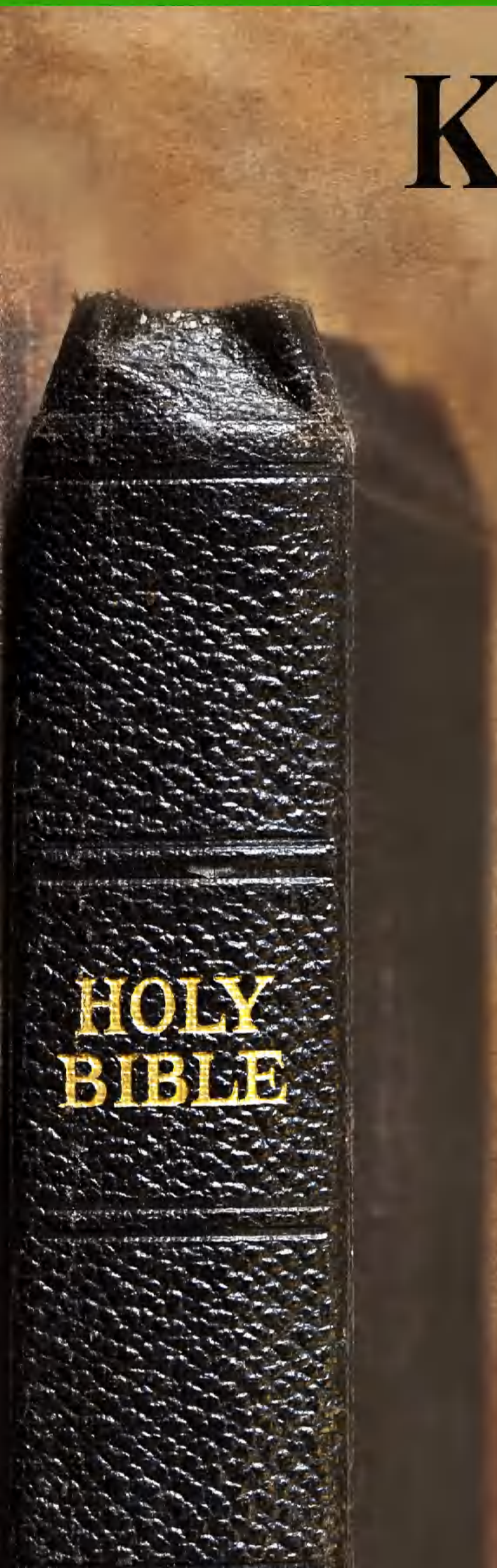

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