# GOLDEN RULE

## A Tale of Texas

BY

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### CHAPTER I.

IN the year 18— a comparatively small village, situated on a high bluff, overlooked the Mississippi river. Having no railroad facilities, it derived its commercial prosperity from trade and traffic carried on through the agency of steamboats that plied up and down the "Father of Waters." Its inhabitants consisted of a few hundred people devoted mostly to mercantile pursuits. They were the medium of communication between the hunters and farmers of the sparsely settled country that lay in the rear, and the steamboat men, whose lives were spent in the navigation of the river. In those days no one could foresee the destiny of even the smallest village. The physical aspects of the site might seem rather to repel than invite immigration. But the demands of trade and civilization overcome all obstacles to progress, except those that bid invincible defiance to all human energy. Consequently, cities have sprung up in localities which the wisest human foresight would never have ventured to predict would become centres of civilization and

education. But such was the destiny of the village which constitutes the starting point of the present story. Without any special "boom," and without any physical attractions, but simply obeying the laws of commercial development, it grew and expanded till it attained to the magnificent proportions of a large city, now known as Memphis, in the State of Tennessee. Our story requires no pause to comment on the present relations and prospects of this beautiful city.

One morning in the year 18— a steamboat landed at the foot of what is now known as Monroe street, but which then had no existence, except in the possibilities of the future. A stranger, of remarkable appearance, with slow pace suggestive of dignity, made his way down the gang-board to the shore. His garb and general mien would have attracted attention in any crowd. He wore a long, black gown that reached almost to his feet. He was more than six feet in height, straight as an Indian, and walked with an air that indicated courage and perfect self-possession. No razor had ever touched his face, so an observer would have supposed, for long whiskers flowed down to his waist. Equally unfamiliar with the barber's art were the locks of his head that hung down to his shoulders. Both ornaments were flecked with a considerable sprinkling of white hairs. The closest inspection would not have pronounced him more than fifty years of age, while, in fact, he had passed three score. With the air of the giant Goliath of Gath he strode along, the "observed of all observers," the street now called

"Front," though at the time it was really nothing more than a respectable highway. The merchants came to their doors and stared at this strange figure, but he moved deliberately along, seeming utterly unconscious of the attention he attracted. Suddenly halting in front of a merchant, he asked, "Is there a tavern in this place?"

"Yes," replied the person addressed; "you see that two-story building down the way? Apply there, and you will find accommodation."

Without further ceremony the stranger moved on till he reached the structure, over whose front door these letters in rude form gave the traveller all necessary information as to the character of the house: "Entertainment for Man & Beast." Approaching the inn-keeper, he said, "I want accommodations for a gentleman and lady."

"One room?" inquired the landlord, glancing hastily over the stranger from head to foot.

"Two rooms, if you please; one is for my daughter, the other for myself."

"When do you want the rooms?"

"Immediately. My daughter is on the boat, and will be here as soon as I can return from the landing."

"How long do you wish to occupy the rooms?"

"I do not know. Circumstances will control my movements. I will engage the rooms by the day."

"Very well," replied the landlord. "They will be ready by the time you return."

The stranger made a courtly bow, leisurely turned,

and with the same slow and long strides made his way back to the boat. After a short time, he was again seen on Front street, followed by a lady plainly dressed in black. At a respectful distance a porter, dark as ebony, perspired and panted under the burden of a goodly-sized trunk. As the man and his companion paused near the rude counter the landlord said, "Will you please register?"

The stranger bowed, took the proffered pen, and wrote in a bold, but elegant chirography, *Lorenzo Dow II. and daughter.* During the brief space the stranger was writing, the landlord inspected the personal appearance of the woman as closely as etiquette would allow. He beheld a female of unusually symmetrical proportions, but of a type that defies all mental efforts at calculation of her age. Evidently she had passed out of the "teens," but to what extent she had advanced he could determine nothing, except the fact, demonstrated by her general appearance, that she was not old. She could very easily pass for a young lady whose marriage with a young man under thirty would be considered no violation of the proprieties. In a word, the inn-keeper dismissed that feature of his conjectures with the conclusion that she was not far from twenty-five, on either side of the line. He next hastily directed his attention to an examination of her facial features. He observed that her complexion was very fair to look upon. As he was a man whose education ran but a short way in the department of poetical figures of a high standard, he could think of no better

comparison than an intermixture of red roses and snow, or, perhaps, coming nearer to the objects with which his vocation made him familiar, he thought of a white peach tinged with delicate blushes—a species of fruit which attained to perfection in the country that lay in the rear of Memphis. The next peculiarity that struck him with force was the brown eyes with a mild and melancholy expression. Her jet-black hair, neatly dressed, without the slightest elaboration, crowned a shapely head, which the merest tyro in phrenological science would have pronounced faultless; and such, in brief, was the daughter of the man who had just registered his name as Lorenzo Dow II.

The two were shown to their respective rooms. In the course of half an hour the stranger descended and expressed a desire for conversation with the landlord.

"I am at your service," quoth the tavern keeper, who, to tell the truth, had no small degree of curiosity in regard to his two guests.

"You will please favor me with your name," said Mr. Dow.

"I am called Jones, at your service."

"And I am called Lorenzo Dow, though, I confess, that is not my real name."

"Why do you travel under an assumed name?" inquired Mr. Jones.

"Because it suits my purpose," replied Dow, with perfect *sang froid.* "But the fact which I have just revealed ought to convince you that I have no sinister designs in coming into this community. It was not

necessary that I should voluntarily give you the information that my present name is assumed. I tell you this for the protection of my honor; because if my identity should ever become known, my fellow-men cannot say that I deceived them."

"I should never suspect that a man of your appearance could be guilty of evil designs."

"Thank you, brother," answered Mr. Dow, with a bow.

"I presume you're a preacher," said Mr. Jones.

"On what do you base that presumption, brother?"

"Why, sir, your peculiar dress; and then you call me brother. Nobody could do that unless he were at church—at least, that is the fashion in this country."

"My brother," answered Dow, with great kindness, "we are all brothers before God. He made us all, and placed us in this world to act towards each other as though we were all related by direct ties of consanguinity. In other words, we should comport ourselves as if we were blood relatives."

"What you say is true, Mr. Dow, but—"

"You would please me much better if you would call me *Brother* Dow," interrupted the stranger, with emphatic cordiality.

"I cheerfully comply with your request, Brother Dow," answered Jones, with a smile. "But will you permit me to ask what denomination you belong to?"

"To none of the denominations of the present day, Brother Jones."

"Aren't you a preacher?"

"No, not in the common acceptation of the word, but I may say I am a preacher in my own way."

"Will you allow me to ask what is your way?"

"Now you have come to the point to which I desired our conversation to lead. This is Saturday. To-morrow, I suppose, your people will all be at leisure, and I want to make them a talk. Will you give me your aid in securing a congregation?"

"Do you intend to take up a collection?" quickly asked Mr. Jones.

"You are suspicious of your fellow-men I see, like all the rest of the human race," answered Brother Dow, in seeming sorrow, but with an air of compassion for his auditor.

"Knowing some of them as I do, I have the right to be suspicious; they have given me reason to be—not all, but some of them. But I meant no offence to you, sir."

"I have taken no offence at your insinuation, brother, though I flatter myself that I have sufficient sagacity to comprehend what is implied in it. You are wrong in your suspicions so far as I am concerned. I shall leave more money in your village than I shall take out of it. If you think I am a knave, and that I intend to impose upon you, I will now pay my board and that of my daughter till Monday morning."

"No, no," cried Jones, springing to his feet. "I meant nothing of that sort. But the truth is, some preachers pass this way, now and then, whose principal business seems to be to take up collections for some

purpose or other, and we never know what becomes of our money."

"I shall take up no collection, Brother Jones, and shall ask not a single favor from your fellow-citizens, except that they give me a patient hearing."

"If that is all, Mr.—no—Brother Dow, I can see no objection to what you require, and I will gladly aid you. I am anxious myself to hear what you have to say. You have aroused my curiosity, and I may as well confess it. Will you preach to us any new-fangled doctrine?"

"I shall not preach at all, brother, but shall simply talk to your people about their highest interest. I have no new doctrine either; but one which was recognized thousands of years ago, but has never been brought into practical life. It was enunciated even by Confucius, but it seems never to have made the impression upon his mind which its importance deserved. But," continued Dow, breaking off suddenly, "I will explain it all to-morrow if I am favored with an opportunity."

"And that you shall have," exclaimed Mr. Jones warmly. "I will try to get all our people to turn out; they have nothing else to do."

"Thank you, brother. All I ask of you at present is to notify those who enter your tavern of the meeting to-morrow. Hold out such inducements to attend as you may deem best. But be sure to inform them that they will hear no ranting harangue about repentance and the fires of eternal damnation."

So saying, Mr. Dow donned his hat, took his staff in

his hand, and majestically strode from the door. He stopped at every mercantile establishment, and in a few words informed the inmates that he would make a talk the next day on a subject in which they were all interested. "And," he added with a bow, "no collection will be taken." This information seemed to elicit a smile from all who heard it, but they promised him that they would be sure to attend. People gazed at the strange figure as he moved along, seeming to be totally oblivious of his surroundings in the deep abstraction of his own thoughts. When he had made the rounds of the village, he felt certain that on the next day he would have an audience of attentive listeners. He had followed the method which he had adopted some years before, and which had never failed of success in collecting a congregation. When he re-entered the tavern Mr. Jones tried to engage him in conversation again, but he preferred to retire to his own room, and was seen no more till called to his meals. As to the young lady, she was seen at her parent's side, both at supper and breakfast, but no one heard her speak, except the servant who waited on her at the table. But when she left the dining-room the universal exclamation was, "How beautiful!"

## CHAPTER II.

THE next morning dawned in all the splendor of July. Birds chirped and caroled in the groves that lay back of the village. The sun rose from his eastern bed and cast his bright rays over field and forest. The Sabbath opened propitiously for the purpose of the remarkable man, who the day previous had created a sensation and awakened lively curiosity among all the inhabitants of the little town. A little before eleven o'clock they began to assemble in the grove which is now called Court Square. There was no building in it, and no seats, except the soil covered with green grass. In half an hour several hundred villagers were sitting under the luxuriant foliage of the trees as close as they could conveniently get to the broad-spreading oak, which had been selected for the speaker's stand. There was not even the rudest platform or pulpit, as he was not expected to preach a regular sermon. By his side on the grass sat his beautiful daughter, who was, for the time, the centre of observation. But bearing a strong resemblance to her father, both in internal and external features, she seemed to take no notice of the fact that all eyes were eagerly scanning her lovely countenance. Evidently she was accustomed to such scenes. Presently she

arose, and, without introduction, stood before the little sea of up-turned faces, animated with an expression of the greatest curiosity and expectation. For a brief moment, she looked even with a degree of sadness over her audience. Then her rosy lips parted, and there issued forth a voice whose dulcet, mellifluous tones absolutely thrilled the listeners. Ah! what singing! The people had never before heard anything like it. They were hushed into the profoundest silence; they were entranced. The full, rich voice filled all the grove with its volume, and rose and swelled till it went beyond the crowd and reached to the brink of the bluff that overhung the river. They held their breath lest a single intonation should escape unheard. Yet it was clear that the singer was utterly regardless of the impression she was making. She had a far-away, upward look, as though she were communing with beings that inhabited the clouds. When the song was ended, she again took her seat on the grass without acknowledging the burst of applause that fell unheeded upon her ears. Mr. Dow slowly arose, as soon as the last notes had died away and the applause had subsided, and said:

"Brothers! I call you all brothers. I am your brother and you are mine. God made us all to dwell together on this terrestrial globe as a family, and we should, therefore, treat each other as brothers. Before I begin my talk I ask you all to bow your heads and join with me in a prayer to the great Architect of the universe."

This was said so solemnly and reverently that the

crowd at once passed into a frame of mind in unison with the outward aspect of the speaker. He knelt down before his respectful audience, the whole situation reminding the devout thinker of the poet's declaration, "The groves were God's first temples." And surely there is something to inspire one with a feeling of reverence in the sight of a worshipping assembly bowing under the forest trees roofed over with the broad, blue canopy of heaven. The very tone and manner of the leader of these devotions on this occasion had a tendency to arouse such a feeling; for, though he betrayed no emotion, yet his voice was deep, rich and solemn. The whole attitude of the man was impressive. But he prayed as Socrates might have done, or any other philosopher of ancient times whose reason had rejected the absurdities of heathen mythology, but, for the want of something more tangible and solid, was still blundering in the darkness of superstition. Mr. Dow in simple, yet elegant language, addressed his prayer to the Sovereign of the universe; there was not, however, the least show of fervor in it. He prayed as a philosopher, and made no confession of sin or sinfulness, and asked for no forgiveness, and implored no divine mercy for short-comings and neglect of duty. But few in his congregation noticed the absence of orthodoxy. His words fell upon their auricular organ, but impressed little or no devotion upon their hearts; in fact, most of them regarded it as an adjunct of the service and a prelude to the expected speech. The prayer being ended, he rose to his feet, looked with an

expression of pity into the faces of his hearers, and began his sermon—or whatever else it might be called—and spoke with ease and grace and dignity of manner:

"Brothers! I make no pretensions to oratory, but as Mark Antony said, 'I am a blunt man; I only speak right on, and I tell you that which you yourselves do know.' I am going to make you a talk without any attempt at logical arrangement of my remarks. I come to you with no new doctrine, but shall present for your consideration a single principle which lies at the bottom of religion. Some denominations have what they call protracted meetings and camp-meetings, and in these meetings the preachers work upon the feelings of the people till they arouse them to the shouting point. When they can induce a man or a woman to yell or scream, they call that the very essence of religion. I do not want you to understand me as censuring them or making sport of them: it is their method, and they are honest in it—at least, I give them credit for all sincerity. Neither would I say that there is no religion in it. That depends upon their conformity to the principle which is the foundation of my religion and the basis of every form of religion that commands the approval of God. I see from the inquiring expression of your faces that you want to know what it is. I shall not keep you in suspense. The sum and substance of religion is the *Golden Rule*—'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' I have seen people shout and go off into a kind of trance, emerge from it,

and express themselves as ready to fly away to paradise if they only had the wings. Their experience of what they had undergone, as they related it, was beautiful to hear. It excited almost a feeling of envy in my breast. But the subsequent conduct of most of them overturned every hope I had entertained of reaching their state of exaltation in my own experience; and I will not conceal it from you that I had lofty and sincere aspirations to attain to their seeming state of rapturous joy. But I observed that, even a brief time after these exhibitions of ecstasy and sublime consecration, many of them fell back into their old habits; and they cheated their fellow-men, and shamefully lied in order to advance their material interests. I soon discovered that their so-called conversion was based on no solid principle. Their short experience of religion was but the outgrowth of animal feeling aroused by pathetic appeals of the preachers to the coarser sensibilities that belong to all human beings.

"Brothers! a religion without any fixed and firm principle to guide it is no religion at all; it is only mental hallucination."

At this point the speaker paused for a moment, and during the interval Mr. Jones, the tavern-keeper, said in a low tone to a young man at his side, "He has spoken my sentiments exactly."

The young man made no reply, and Jones, glancing at his face, was struck with the intensity of his expression. He was gazing with his very heart in his eyes at the girl who had entranced the whole crowd with her

singing; but she was not looking at him nor any one else. She seemed to be absorbed in the contemplation of some object on the horizon beyond the Mississippi river. Jones seemed to divine his infatuation, and whispered, "It's no use; better let her alone."

The young man started, turned his head, and was about to reply when the speaker again disturbed the monotony of silence:

"Brothers, there can be no true religion unless it has its foundation in the golden rule. The book from which the preachers take their texts says, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.' That is the golden rule in another form, or in different phraseology; for you cannot love your neighbor as yourself without doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. Have you ever thought what a different world this would be if every one would subject his conduct to that rule? If it were universally practiced there could be no possible use for such codes of laws as we now have. No crime could be committed. Hence jails and penitentiaries and prisons would never stand as a reproach and a disgrace to human society. No such gloomy structure as the Bastile, which once stood as a sad commentary on the morals of France, could ever have been built. Every prison is an insult to humanity. It is a grim reminder of the meaner passions of human nature. It is an obstacle to the progress of the highest form of civilization. Just think what a glorious aspect the whole world would present if the

golden rule were practiced by all mankind. You could travel wherever you wished without official passport and without fear of molestation. You would be received everywhere as a brother. Your steps would not be dogged by governmental detectives and police officers as if you were bent upon depredation or robbery. Suspicion would find no dwelling place in the human heart. If misfortune of any kind overtook you, in your travels through the world, you could secure needed assistance from every person with whom you would come in contact. No one would question your motives, nor suspect you of evil intentions. People, animated by the principle of generous hospitality, would everywhere throw open their doors for your accommodation. In sickness, even among strangers, you would be nursed with solicitous care and attention. Our merchants would not be under the disgraceful necessity of keeping great iron safes to secure their funds and valuable documents. All business houses could be stripped of locks and bars and doors; for there would be no disposition in any human being to steal or rob. You could all sleep with your windows up and your doors wide open, without the slightest fear of having your slumbers disturbed by the burglar, or your pockets rifled by the sneaking thief. You could rely with implicit confidence upon the word of your neighbor, for no one could be guilty of misrepresentation or falsehood."

Mr. Jones, who had been listening intently at the discourse, could contain himself no longer, and almost

involuntarily cried out, "How will you ever get men to do all that, Brother Dow? But I beg pardon for interrupting you."

"You need not make any apology, Brother Jones," replied Mr. Dow blandly. "I would be glad if any of you would ply me with questions; it will afford me pleasure to answer them. I am pleased, Brother Jones, that you feel sufficient interest in my subject to make an inquiry. However, I would soon have come to that point of my doctrine, or theory, whichever you may please to call it. You ask, Brother Jones, how I would ever persuade men to practice the golden rule. I answer that this rule alone is sufficient for the regeneration of human society. The human race will, of course, have to be elevated in the scale of morality, and must be taught to live up to higher ideals than they now have. The golden rule is a dead letter in society as it now exists. There can be little confidence between man and man so long as they regard each other as capable of deception. They must have the most perfect trust in each other's honesty."

"How can they ever have it?" exclaimed Mr. Jones, in a tone indicating some excitement.

"I am glad, Brother Jones, that you take such decided interest in my remarks. I will answer your question, if you will only give me time. Men must be shown the beauty and utility of the golden rule, which was appreciated by philosophers ages ago, and which has lain as a dead letter in all ethical codes, because men have not enjoyed a fair opportunity of putting it

in practice. Every man can foresee what would be the consequence if the golden rule controlled the motives of every human being. There can be no question that this world would be converted into the very paradise that is described in your Bibles as the original abode of the first human pair, whether the story be true or false; and I will candidly say to you that I regard it as only a beautiful allegory designed to demonstrate the capabilities of the moral man. There is nothing more in accord with the dictates of human reason than the golden rule. Every man can foresee the glorious state of society to which its universal practice would lead."

Brother Jones again spoke up and asked, "But, Brother Dow, how in the world can you induce men to practice this rule?"

"Your very pertinent questions, Brother Jones, will enable me to abbreviate the talk I had intended to make; because they bring me straight to the point. You ask how I will persuade men to put in practice the golden rule? Well, the force of reason coupled with the hope of a higher destiny in the eternal world is surely a sufficient incentive. The world has been trying the efficacy of the Christian religion more than eighteen centuries, and you all know that it has made little impression upon the great masses of mankind. It was your own Christ who said, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' According to the belief of his followers he sought to enforce his teachings by the performance of miracles, and by appealing to men's consciences, but mostly to their fears. But in

spite of all the terror which garbed his instructions, it must be confessed that his religion, while it has not proved a total failure, yet it has by no means achieved the purpose he intended. Christianity, as we can all see, is fast losing its hold upon men, if indeed it ever had any upon the roots of their hearts."

"Will you allow me to ask a question?" inquired an old man who had been honoring the speaker with the most rigid attention.

"Certainly, brother; and I will answer it to the best of my ability."

"My question is this: How do you expect to succeed where, as you say, Christ has failed?"

"As I have just intimated," replied Mr. Dow, "Christ did not appeal to man's reason so much as to his fears. He threatened people with punishment in flames of eternal fire if they were not willing to resign everything and follow him. You remember the story of the young man who came running to him with the record which few of you can make, that he had kept all the commandments from his youth, and asked what more he could do. Christ, instead of encouraging him to persevere in his efforts to lead a moral life, repelled him with the astounding words, 'Go sell all thou hast and give to the poor.' It was a blow at the very golden rule which he had insisted upon himself; for if that requirement were generally obeyed, it would make progress and civilization an impossibility."

"Sir," quietly interrupted the same man, "if you will pardon my impertinence for saying it, there is

sophistry in what you have asserted; but we are willing to hear you through. Please inform us more definitely how you will improve the moral condition of men."

"Brother," answered the speaker, without any manifestation of anger or even annoyance, "this is not the first time I have aroused opposition. I take no offence at your grave accusation. Certainly, if I had nothing better to propose, or, rather, nothing more to do than make talking peregrinations over the earth to insist that my fellow-men should obey the golden rule, I would not have the most distant hope of any reformation. But there is tangibility in the scheme which I conceive it is my mission to inaugurate among the children of men. The golden rule is nothing but a mocking abstraction if men have no opportunity to reduce it to practice. I am, therefore, giving a small portion of them that opportunity, in the confident expectation that this portion, insignificant as it is at present, will be a germ that shall grow and expand till all mankind are regenerated and united in the strong ties of universal brotherhood. The thought of this grand result is thrilling to my heart; it is the one object of my whole life, to which all my energies are devoted.

"Now you would like to know who I am. I will partly gratify your curiosity by telling you that I am not a native of this country. It does not matter in the least whence I came. I have so little of the elements of ambition that I am perfectly willing the personality of the individual should be lost in the magnitude of

the glorious scheme which will result in the reformation of the whole human race. Some years ago I secured a large grant of land from Santa Anna for the accomplishment of my purpose, in a splendid portion of the country which is now called Texas. A town has been established; but agriculture and cattle-raising are our chief occupations. We have more than five hundred inhabitants, all of whom are practicing the golden rule whose beauty and utility I have been trying to show you. The name of our town is Golden Rule. The state of affairs which would follow the universal adoption of that rule, exists in our community. We are all living as a band of brothers. There are no quarrels and wranglings and bickerings among us. We have no such laws as you have; for you all know well enough that if every man would do unto others as he would have them do unto him, he can have no need of any other restraints. We exact no pledge of any man except that he will carry out the golden rule in all his transactions and dealings with his fellow-men.

"Now I have come here in search of recruits. If any of you are dissatisfied with your present condition, and desire to make a change, I offer you the opportunity. If you want to till the soil, which is rich prairie, I will furnish you as many acres as you can cultivate, at the original price, and you can take your own time to pay for it; or if you wish to adopt some other vocation, you may choose your own location on your own terms, provided only that you will agree to be governed by the only law we have, which is the golden rule. At this

time we especially need two well-educated teachers for our school, and I will guarantee good wages.

"Now, brothers, I have detained you long enough. As briefly as I could I have given you the outlines of my scheme, which has long since passed out of the region of speculation into assured success. If you can find any one who would wish to become a member of our community on the terms which I have briefly explained, please send him to me for any further information that may be desired.

"My daughter, if you wish it, will again sing, after which you may consider yourselves dismissed."

"Let her sing, by all means!" exclaimed the young man who was sitting by the tavern-keeper's side. Mr. Jones glanced searchingly into his face and significantly smiled, but had no opportunity to make any remark, as the young lady immediately arose, and began to sing. It is needless to say that the villagers sat with open mouths and ears as they did at the commencement of the service, and that the song made, possibly, a profounder impression than did the first one. It was honored with the same applause. When it had subsided the young man hastily sprang to his feet, and, grasping Mr. Jones by the arm, excitedly said, "Please introduce me to your two guests."

"Yes, I see," answered the tavern-keeper, with a knowing smile, "but I would advise you, in the language of Washington, to avoid all entangling alliances. It's no use; but come on."

While the two are advancing we may here properly

say that this young man was destined to play a part in the history of Texas which will long be remembered.

"Brother Dow, please allow me to present my friend, Mr. Dickinson."

Mr. Dow bowed with courtly dignity, at the same time extending his hand.

"Miss Dow, I beg to acquaint you with Mr. Dickinson," said Mr. Jones.

The lady bowed with a grace far more charming than that of her parent, and, to Dickinson's surprise, offered him a soft and shapely white hand, which he eagerly took into his own.

"May I call this afternoon, Miss Dow?" he said. "You will have a rather lonely time at the tavern, where I understand you are staying."

"Certainly, Mr. Dickinson. I shall be glad to see you, though I give you notice that you will find little pleasure in the company of such a wretched creature as I am."

"You slander yourself," exclaimed Dickinson, with earnestness.

The lady answered with an icy indifference that sent a chill through his heart: "Come, then, this afternoon, if you wish, and see for yourself."

He bowed, turned away and mingled with the dispersing crowd.

The story shall not be stopped to detail the many comments which the villagers made on the "talk," as they made their way to their homes. They were puzzled by it, and had various opinions of it. Some of

them pronounced Mr. Dow's scheme an "idle dream of an idle man." Some called him a crank. Others wisely shook their heads and said they would withhold their judgment till they were favored with further information. There was but one opinion, however, in regard to the young lady's singing—*it was divine.*

## CHAPTER III.

ABOUT the middle of the afternoon Dickinson called at the tavern, according to his engagement. It may be easily surmised that the young lady had made a decided impression upon his heart. We cannot undertake to say, at this juncture, whether it was one of those effervescing impressions which are characteristic of youthful susceptibility, and from which the young heart soon rebounds, unless it is deepened by subsequent encouragement. Anyhow, it was an impression; and this Jones, who met him at the door, discovered in the grove.

"Dickinson, my boy," he said with a little laugh. "I know, without being told, that you have come to see her. But I caution you, beware. I have my idea about these people, and I tell you as a friend, you would better not seek any closer acquaintance."

"What is your idea, Mr. Jones?"

"I shall keep it to myself for the present."

"Well, Mr. Jones, I do not need your warning. I think it is due to the young lady that some respect should be shown her by the young men, and I have called merely for that purpose. Will you have the kindness to inform her that I am here?"

"Certainly. She left orders to admit any one who might call."

"Did she mention my name?"

"No; she said not a word about you or any one else in particular. But I suspect that you have made an engagement with her, and I will inform her of your presence."

Dickinson entered what was called the parlor, and in a few moments Miss Dow came in and extended her hand with more of a motherly air than with the timidity of a blushing maiden.

"I told you I would be glad to see you, Mr. Dickinson, and so I am," she said with easy familiarity, which was really perplexing to the young man.

"I certainly reciprocate your gladness, Miss Dow," said Dickinson cordially.

"You will do me a favor if you will not address me so formally. Please call me Sister Peggy."

"What," cried Dickinson, thrown off his guard to the extent of sacrificing common politeness. "Peggy Dow! What a name! but I forget myself: I beg your pardon. Please excuse my want of good manners. But your name is so out of harmony with its environments: its want of euphony does not suit your personal appearance."

"If you think so, brother," she said with the most imperturbed tranquillity imaginable, "I will relieve any annoyance you might feel at my name by informing you that it is assumed. I am not ashamed of the name at all, but I do not want my acquaintances to form an unfavorable opinion of me on account of two words that distinguish my personality—two little

words in which there is no meaning. What are words that suggest no ideas? The rose would smell as sweet by any other name."

"It is so said, but I have always doubted the truth of the saying. But no matter, Miss Dow—no—Sister Peggy," said Dickinson, with an ill-concealed smile. "But will you pardon my impudence, if I ask if you are a Roman Catholic?"

"Far from it, brother; but why do you ask?"

"Because the nuns are called sisters."

"Can we not be brothers and sisters without the religion of the Christian world?"

"I should be glad, if such were the case."

"Father and I are trying to make it the case: we will succeed, too, if there is any efficacy in honest and earnest effort."

"I surely wish you the most abundant success. But tell me, Sister Peggy," he said, with a lurking smile, "begging you to pardon my impertinence if you so consider it, why do you travel under an assumed name? What reason can you have for taking shelter under a pseudonym which is lacking, too, in every element of euphony?"

"My name seems to affect you very disagreeably," answered Sister Peggy. "Have you never heard it before?"

"Yes; there was an eccentric preacher in this country by the name of Lorenzo Dow. Are you related to him?"

"Not in the most remote degree, except, perhaps, the

relationship which grows out of common descent from our original progenitor. But that man is now preaching in England. Father heard him frequently, and took a fancy to him on account of his eccentricity, and when he came to this country, he called himself Lorenzo Dow II., and requested me to change my name to Peggy, which was the name of Mr. Dow's wife. I hope this explanation will soothe your annoyance."

"It is satisfactory; but the mystery still remains why you assume it at all."

"If that mystery were entirely removed I fear it would prove disastrous to my father's scheme, to which I am consecrated heart and soul."

Feeling that it would be a violation of all etiquette, Dickinson asked no further question in regard to Sister Peggy's history. He said, "I heard your father's talk this morning, and I was deeply interested in his subject. Surely it would be a great blessing to the human race if his views should be generally adopted and his theory should be the main element of religion. Certainly the golden rule as a motive of human conduct is free from every possible objection."

"Do you live up to it?" bluntly inquired Peggy.

"I certainly appreciate its excellence, and I carry it out, or at least try to, as far as the circumstances of society will allow."

"What circumstances forbid your carrying it out fully?" asked Peggy with energy.

"Why, I am perfectly willing to live up to it, if my fellow-men would suffer me to do so."

"How can they prevent you, brother?"

"Why, Sister Peggy, you are surely not totally ignorant of the corruptions of human society! Depravity is so evident in all ranks of society that I cannot but suspect the motives of nearly all with whom I have any dealings. They cheat me if they can. If I were to treat them just as I would wish them to treat me, they would laugh at me and call me a fool. To carry out your rule fully I would have to confide in my fellowmen perfectly, even receiving their falsehoods as truths. It would be a violation of your religion, if I understand it, to even suspect them of duplicity. Hence, they would impose upon me and strip me of my earthly possessions. I would be but the prey of tricksters and sharpers."

"I acknowledge there is truth in what you say," replied Peggy sorrowfully. "But your error lies in the assumption that human nature is inherently and innately depraved. That, I do not believe. I am convinced that men are born without taint of iniquity. As the child grows he comes in contact with the corruptions of society. He discovers by observation that there is treachery, deceit, hypocrisy, and other ignoble traits that have been acquired, and now shape the character of men. They are not naturally dishonest. But they are forced into evil practices by the pressure of poverty. I firmly believe that men would meet all their pecuniary obligations if they could, without toiling and moiling out their very lives to do so. The struggles which the poor are compelled to make have a

tendency to sap every inclination to good that lies undeveloped and dormant in their hearts. Hence, the necessity for my father's beneficent scheme. It will destroy the very tap-root of dishonesty; for only remove the ills of poverty that grind the laboring masses into the dust, and there will be no temptation to what we call evil."

"A beautiful dream, Sister Peggy," replied Dickinson, with a laugh which was promptly checked by a frown on the lady's face. He began to think that every propensity to mirth had been eradicated from her nature.

"Call it a dream," she said recovering her normal appearance of cold tranquillity," and that proves you are not prepared to practice the golden rule."

"You are very hastily jumping to conclusions, Sister Peggy," quickly answered Dickinson. "I have told you already that I recognize the excellency of that rule, and I would make it the guiding principle of my life if the conditions of society would let me. But I called it a dream because your father is not the first man into whose benevolent heart it has entered. You remember the volume entitled *De Optimo Reipublicae Statu, deque Nova Insula Utopia?* The island was called Utopia because it could possibly have no existence. Such a state of human affairs as your good father is trying to realize has been the dream of poets, especially modern, and they have given us the picture of an Arcadia of simplicity, peace and prosperity. Their fond dream finds no counterpart in this world."

Sister Peggy looked at him thoughtfully.

"Where were you educated?" she asked abruptly.

"If educated at all," replied Dickinson, "it was at Yale. I am an alumnus of that institution."

"Please excuse me for interrupting you, brother. Go on with your objections."

"I hope you will not call them objections; for I am only mentioning facts that lie in the very foundation of human nature. I am not controverting your religion as to original depravity. Grant that you are correct, though you are not orthodox, from a Christian point of view; but admit that men are born with all their inclinations to good, it is evident that they soon lose them—I mean as a general thing. But you say they are overcome by the ills of galling poverty, and so are made dishonest by the circumstances of their situation. The truth is, there is a very unequal distribution of the world's wealth, and poverty has always fallen to the lot of the vast majority. Certainly this ought not to be so, but it is, however much we may lament it. I see no way of destroying all distinction between the rich and the poor."

"That is not necessary," answered Peggy. "The practice of the golden rule does not require the possessor of wealth to reduce himself to beggary; but it does sternly demand the destruction of inordinate selfishness, which is the cause of the oppression of the poor. No poor man, if he were guided by the golden rule, and he should suddenly become rich, would think that he ought to give up all his wealth in order to practice the principle."

"No; but in the days of his poverty he would think that his rich neighbor ought to divide with him."

"Certainly he would think that his rich neighbor ought to give him help, and so he ought; for no man has the moral right to accumulate immense wealth merely to serve his own selfish ends."

"I am speaking of what is, and not what ought to be," answered Dickinson. "I will cheerfully admit that the rich ought to have more consideration for the poor. But you know their disposition as well as I do. So, I fear your father's benevolent scheme, which does credit to his and your heart, is of rather a Utopian character."

"If you will spell the word Utopia with an E preceding it, you will transform the dream of the poets, as you call it, into a glorious reality. Eutopia exists, as my father told you this morning, in Texas."

"But he did not enter into particulars."

"No; but he will do that when he finds a person willing to join him in the execution of the scheme. He informed you that it was a success."

"Why, then, does he want help?"

"He does not want pecuniary help, I want you to understand," replied Peggy with severe dignity; "it is moral and intellectual help he desires."

"But if the scheme is already in successful operation, why does he need aid of any sort?"

"It is useless to explain that, unless you were sufficiently interested to furnish practical help."

Dickinson bestowed upon her beautiful face a search-

ing and inquiring look as though he did not understand her. But she vouchsafed no further explanation, and he did not ask any. She slowly turned her head and gazed through the window with that far-away look which has already been described. The truth was Dickinson was infatuated, in spite of himself and the warning which Mr. Jones had given him. But she was an enigma. He longed to know her history, but he durst not ask for it. He justly inferred from the fact that she was travelling *incognito,* she did not wish her real name to be known. But who was she? He asked himself that question a dozen times while she was talking. Certainly she was widely different from all the women he had ever met. She seemed to have little in common with her sex. She was a philosopher and an enthusiast thoroughly committed to her father's wild delusion, as he regarded it. She made him think of Sappho, or some of the goddesses of heathen mythology; and there was a sinking sensation at his heart when he compared her to Diana. She moved with the elasticity and grace of a fairy, but at the same time exhibited the stern thoughtfulness of a masculine scholar. He could not discover one particle of triviality or frivolity in her manner, a little of which he thought would bring her down to the level of feminine humanity without detracting materially from her dignity. Who was she? Would he ever know?

"Sister Peggy," spoke up Dickinson very gently, even tenderly, "I see you have fallen into a deep reverie, and I think I would better take my leave. May I call again?"

"Certainly, if you wish," she replied, arousing herself at the sound of his voice. "I have enjoyed your visit and am grateful for it. The next time we meet I may reveal the thoughts which came to me in my reverie, as you call it."

She again extended her hand with a patronizing, motherly air, which made Dickinson almost determine that he would never see her again. He abruptly quitted her presence. He encountered Mr. Jones as he was going out, who again looked searchingly at him, and said in a low tone, "Ah! boy, you'd better let her alone. She's a riddle that defies all my guessing."

Dickinson, without a word, walked away.

## CHAPTER IV.

MONDAY was a very busy day with Brother Dow. The commotion he created in the village with his strange proposition may be easily imagined. He was quite willing to talk about his scheme to any one, but he was dumb whenever another subject was broached. Mr. Jones tried with all the skill which he had acquired from temporary association with travellers or other transient visitors, to draw him out, but he made no impression upon the coat of mail in which this man had encased himself. So he gave it up, and confined himself to his own silent observations.

Tuesday Mr. Dow made it convenient to enter into conversation with a young, honest-looking farmer, with whose appearance he was pleased. We give it in order to show his manner of obtaining recruits.

Dow explained his scheme, and dwelt with enthusiasm upon the advantages afforded by Golden Rule, which name applied to his whole tract of country, as well as to the one town it supported. The farmer listened attentively as any man will who is allured by the prospect of improvement in his material resources. He seemed to be thoughtfully considering the subject, but presently, looking inquisitively at the curious figure, he said, "Stranger, I can't understand why you

make such a good offer to me. What are you up to, anyhow? Sich a trade as you offer is all on one side. What do you expect to git out of it?"

"Have you such a poor opinion of your brother man," said Mr. Dow solemnly, "that you cannot conceive of a man who is actuated by nothing but a desire to practice the golden rule?"

"Oh! I've often heerd of the golden rule, but I've never yit knowd a man to practice it. I b'long to the church, stranger, and I've frequently heern our preachers exploit on that same rule, and I've of'en wished I could act up to it, but my neighbors won't let me. I don't mean that I return evil for evil, but people try to trick and cheat me, and it makes me mad. Whenever they offer me a trade which is to my advantage alone, or looks like it, I suspicion a trick. My experience is they're tryin' to git the upper hand of me, and I'm forced to do to them as they do to me."

"That is not the golden rule," quoth Mr. Dow.

"I know very well it ain't," replied the farmer, "but I can't help myself. It's ag'in' Scripter, but what am I to do? I can't make men honest, and I can't keep even myself honest without the greatest abundance of sustainin' grace, as our preacher calls it."

"Well, brother, I perceive that you have the germ of correct principles within your being, and all it needs is a favorable soil for its development. I offer you such a soil, and I beg you lay aside all prejudice and all suspicion, and give the matter serious consideration. You have asked me what advantage I expect to reap

from your acceptance of the offer I have made. I candidly tell you that I expect nothing but the approval of my own conscience. I am merely setting in motion a reformation which I have reason to believe will extend to the uttermost parts of the earth. When men see for themselves what happy consequences flow from the practice of the golden rule, I am persuaded that they cannot resist it."

"Well, stranger, I'm foot-loose at present, as I'm livin' on a rented farm, and can easily dispose of my crop. Now tell me egsac'ly what you want?"

"In the first place," said Mr. Dow, "you must promise that you will practice the golden rule in all your dealings. If you are not willing to do that, then your residence in our community, which is composed of honest men and women, would ruin my scheme."

"I can honestly make the promise," said the farmer, "for God knows I want to lead a Christian life."

"It is Christian life enough if you will only obey the golden rule. But if you will go with me, you shall have as many acres of rich, prairie land as you can cultivate, at the original cost, paying for it whenever you can."

"S'posin' I should conclude never to pay for it," said the farmer with a laugh.

"But, do you not see that you could not come to any such conclusion if you render obedience to the golden rule?"

"But s'pose I should never be able to pay for it?"

"That could hardly happen. But in case it should

I would do unto you as I would have you do unto me, and I would forgive the debt."

"Certainly, stranger, that 'u'd be 'cordin' to the golden rule."

"What do you say then to my proposition?"

"When do you expect to leave?"

"I am in no great haste. But I shall return to Golden Rule as soon as I can secure a few recruits. I do not want many from any one place for reasons which I have no need to explain."

"Stranger, I take your offer," said the farmer after a pause. "But I give you warnin'. I tell you, though I am a Christian, if I catch you tryin' to play any trick on me, you may look out," said the farmer, showing a hard, horny fist. "I can sell my crop to-day. But if I do it, what guarantee do I have that I'll find you to-morrow. I'm not right down certain about your game, and you must excuse me for protectin' myself."

"I have to humor the whims and suspicions of my fellow-men till they can be regenerated by the golden rule," said Dow, as if talking to himself. "What is your crop worth?"

"I'm offered two hundred dollars for it."

"Very well; if you will come with me, I will deposit that amount with Mr. Jones, and if I leave before you return, it is yours."

"In good money?" said the farmer thoughtfully.

"In gold, if you wish."

"I may take my wife and my child too?"

"Certainly, if she will consent to be governed by the golden rule."

"I answer for her, because she is a good Christian 'oman."

So the two made their way to the tavern, and Dow placed the money in the hands of Mr. Jones as a guarantee of good faith.

We have entered into the foregoing minute particulars merely to show how Mr. Dow secured immigration. It is necessary to do so that the intelligent reader may grasp the real object of the present story.

The next morning Mr. Dow was sitting in his daughter's room. She had spoken to no one since Dickinson's visit. Nobody knew how she employed the hours of those days in Memphis, but when her father entered he found her absorbed in *Antigone,* which she was reading in the original Greek. He manifested not the slightest surprise at her occupation, but said, "Come, Olivia, lay aside your book for a moment. I want to talk with you."

"You forget, father, that I am Peggy Dow."

"No, I do not forget."

"Well, take care that you do not forget in the presence of any of these people and disclose our identity."

"I do not have to be even on my guard, for I am so accustomed to the name of Dow that I hardly ever think of who we are. But I want to ask you what you think of this young man Dickinson? You had an interview with him on Sunday."

"Yes; I find him an interesting character. I take him to be an honest man. He is a scholar, too."

"In my opinion you have read him aright, and I have confidence in your judgment. Do you believe he could be persuaded to go with us and reside at Golden Rule?"

"I am convinced that he could—at least for a while," and she gave him a significant look.

"I understand you, Peggy; but our religion forbids all deception. Besides, Dickinson is a man of handsome appearance, and any great familiarity with him might terminate in a result which you do not suspect. The human heart is very weak, and sometimes yields to uncontrollable impulses."

Her lip curled with scorn.

"I thought you knew me better, father. Dismiss every fear, and never again let such an unworthy thought creep into your mind. There is not the slightest peril to me, and I would have a contempt for myself if I had any inclination to trifle with the young man's feelings."

"I am glad to hear you talk so. If you have no objection I will ask him to meet you in the parlor, where you can contract with him to accompany us as teacher for our school. We need two; I think I have found one."

"When do you wish me to see Mr. Dickinson?"

"Now. He is in the room below talking with Mr. Jones."

"I go at once," said Sister Peggy, and she descended into the parlor.

Mr. Dow approached the two men and said, "I beg pardon for interrupting you, brothers; but, Brother Dickinson, are you particularly engaged?"

"No, sir; can I serve you in any way?"

"My daughter awaits you in the parlor," said Mr. Dow, without the slightest embarrassment.

Dickinson made a violent start in spite of himself at this abrupt announcement. What sort of woman was this to invite him to an interview without knowing that he desired it? Was it proper? Was it modest? These questions flashed into his mind as he promptly arose and went into the parlor. Peggy was standing as if expecting to receive him.

"I am glad to see you, brother," she said with a manner, as Dickinson thought, of *nonchalance.* But perceiving a cloud on his face, she extended her hand with a cordiality that somewhat arrested the downfall of his hope.

"Be seated, brother; I have not waited for you to call again, for which permission you asked and which I granted."

"But I intended to avail myself of your permission, and afflict you with my miserable company again."

"You need not underrate yourself, brother. I assure you I enjoyed your visit. But dispensing with useless compliments, I sent for you to talk on a purely business matter."

Dickinson bowed with frigid politeness. Peggy did not seem to notice it and went on:

"You left me Sunday, as you said, in a reverie. I

told you that the next time we met I might give you the thoughts that constituted the subject of that reverie. I now candidly inform you that you were its most prominent figure."

"In what capacity, pray, did I have the honor to play a part in your thoughts?"

"What is your present vocation?" abruptly inquired Sister Peggy.

"At this time," replied Dickinson, with a smile, "I am a briefless lawyer, indulging, however, extravagant hopes of some day electrifying the whole nation with the eloquence of a statesman."

"A very vain ambition," said Peggy, with the air of a philosopher, "but one which is natural to every intelligent youth."

"Sister Peggy!" cried Dickinson with a laugh; "you talk as if you were my pious old grandmother! When did you emerge from the follies and vanities of youth? Here you are a young lady not a great way from the 'teens,' and you are talking to me as though I were nothing but a school boy. When did you acquire the wisdom that belongs to age?"

Dickinson said all this as mere pleasantry, but Peggy, so far from receiving it with relish, did not seem to even notice it.

"Did you ever teach?" she asked.

"Teach what?"

"School."

"Never."

"Would you like to?"

"That depends upon circumstances."

"Well, to come to the point, in my reverie, as you call it, I was thinking what an admirable teacher you would make for our school, and I now offer you the position. We need a professor of Greek, and if I am not much mistaken, you are proficient in that language."

"Do you live there yourself?" asked Dickinson.

"Certainly, I do."

Here was a field for reflection and speculation. Dickinson spoke not for a moment. He fell into a train of thought. He did not by any means eliminate the fact that he was desperately smitten with the charms of this mysterious young lady, notwithstanding her repellant air, and her seeming want of capacity to enjoy the lighter pleasures of life. Perhaps, in constant association with her he might bring her back to the joys of human existence. It struck him that she had met with some bitter disappointment. But if she were not totally different from all other women of Adam's race, she might outgrow it, especially if aided by a sympathetic, congenial companion. He could have no hope of inspiring her with affection at a distance. Anyhow, he was young, and could afford to spend a few years in quest of adventures in imitation of the knight of De la Mancha. The adventures might be laughable or sad, he could not tell. At all events, here was a living, tangible Dulcinea del Toboso, of dazzling beauty, who would give zest to his exploits or his employment. He would be bound to nothing but

obedience to the golden rule, which he anticipated no difficulty in rendering. So presently he said, "I accept your proposition."

"Thank you, brother," she said without any show of gladness or sorrow, but with the same imperturbable manner which had marked her from the first.

"We will start back in a few days, and I hope that you will be ready."

"I can make all my arrangements in an hour," said Dickinson with a laugh. "I have no cases in litigation, and no particular friends to bid farewell."

"Well, our interview is ended," she said as she rose to leave the room.

"Oh! stop," cried Dickinson with eagerness; "I desire to converse with you about something else."

"What else?" coolly demanded Sister Peggy.

"Oh! pshaw; do young people talk about nothing but business?"

"I beg to remind you that this interview was of my seeking, and under such circumstances it would be highly improper to detain you longer."

"Will you grant me permission to call again when there is no necessity for business?"

"Certainly, if it is your pleasure." So saying, she gave him her hand with a motherly air, and stepped out with the dignity of a queen—so thought young Dickinson. He sat still a few moments, holding a colloquy with himself.

"She is certainly the most remarkable being in the shape of woman with whom I have ever met. Some-

times she makes the impression upon me that she is utterly destitute of a heart. But that cannot be, if one is to judge from her dreamy eyes, intelligent face and magnificent form. She is capable of love if it can be only awakened, and love, too, of such intensity that it would keep the channel of a man's life free from all impurity. But how is it all to end?" he asked after a pause. He could not even conjecture, and he left the room in a state of perplexity of mind, such as is common to all young men in a similar condition.

In a few days after these events, Mr. Dow, Miss Dow, Dickinson, three farmers with small families, and a solemn-looking individual by the name of Pendleton, who for the present will be dismissed, but will appear on the stage later—all these took passage on a steamboat bound for New Orleans. Dickinson promised himself that he would have a pleasant voyage in the company of Sister Peggy, but he was doomed to disappointment. He had no opportunity of exchanging a word with her till they landed at New Orleans. She kept herself in the closest confinement, and so did her father. Dickinson asked himself more than once if he ought not to return to Memphis. But he could not recede from his contract without a violation of the golden rule, especially since a lovely woman gave a considerable degree of emphasis to the rule. So he determined to persevere.

At New Orleans, while they were preparing to cross the river, Dickinson found an opportunity of speaking to the object of his infatuation.

"Sister Peggy," he said softly as he approached her, "you do not practice the golden rule."

"That is a grave accusation, brother. Please furnish me the proof of your charge."

"Well, on the boat I was anxious to pass at least a portion of the wearisome hours in your company. You did not treat me as you would have wished me to treat you. I am sure I would not have avoided you as you did me. Why have you done so?"

"That is a gratuitous assumption, brother. I did not avoid you."

"But you kept yourself concealed, which amounts to the same thing."

"By no means," replied Sister Peggy. "I merely kept myself in my room. I was in ignorance of the fact that you desired to see me. You made no request for an interview."

"No; I did not wish to trouble you with my intrusions," replied Dickinson.

"What reason have you for using the reproachful word 'intrusions'?"

"The reason that you seemed to me to purposely conceal yourself."

"You are mistaken," she answered coldly. "I had no purpose in view, but was simply following the bent of my nature."

"That confession," replied Dickinson, "does you great injustice, or if it is true, you are in no frame of mind to fully practice the golden rule. Have you not told me that the rule requires some self-denial in order

to promote the happiness of our fellow-beings? And here you have been holding yourself aloof from all society, when your presence would have been like a sunbeam to at least some of them. Does the golden rule permit us to neglect our fellow-creatures when we could increase their happiness with, perhaps, a little inconvenience to ourselves? Oh! fie, Sister Peggy, is that your golden rule?"

Although Dickinson spoke in a pleasant tone he perceived a very faint blush stealing over the fair face of this splendid woman—and he was glad, though he did not know how to interpret this universal evidence of self-betrayal. But never mind, she had feeling of some sort which could be reached by skilful tactics.

"If that is your idea of the golden rule," she said, speaking with deliberation, "you have the right to rebuke me. But I must protest against your accusation. I am living in obedience to the rule. I do not believe you can understand me, unless you had my feelings, and I hope you may never have them."

"You confess to unhappiness, then?" said Dickinson in a more tender voice.

"Please do not ply me with questions of that kind; for I do not feel called upon to answer them. But I will say this, in order to atone for what you have construed into neglect, or a deliberate intention to deprive you of a little pleasure, I promise to converse with you whenever you may desire it."

"Thank you! thank you!" cried Dickinson, showing more emotion than he intended. "But here comes your father."

Accordingly, Mr. Dow approached, and informed them that it was now time to cross the river. After being ferried over, the whole party entered large wagons, which had been provided by Mr. Dow, and commenced the wearisome journey through the wilderness. It was a slow way to travel, but the country afforded no other means of locomotion.

Dickinson approached and conversed freely with Sister Peggy as frequently as circumstances would allow, and was never repulsed by any manifestation of displeasure. But his affection was nourished only by hope. He flattered himself that long and faithful devotion would at last break through the iciness of her nature.

They travelled on for quite a number of days over the beautiful prairies of Texas, feasting on wild game, which the three farmers delighted to bring into camp every evening. Few habitations broke the monotony of the route. But one day Mr. Dow informed the party that they had reached the borders of Golden Rule, and would the following day reach the end of their journey. Sure enough, late the next afternoon the wagons stopped in a goodly-sized town.

## CHAPTER V.

THE next day after the arrival of the party from New Orleans, Mr. Dow proposed to Pendleton and Dickinson a walk through the town, that they might see the peculiar attractions of the place, and also the practical operations of his scheme. Pendleton had been engaged as a teacher. He was on the shady side of middle age, and was withal a person of rather prepossessing appearance. He was, however, quite different from Dickinson, in one respect at least; for he was not specially gifted with volubility. Dickinson was a random talker, but Pendleton seemed to measure every word he uttered, when he spoke at all, which rarely occurred, except when he was addressed. He had the appearance of a preacher bent upon the one purpose of his holy vocation. But he could talk with great fluency and animation whenever a subject was broached which appealed strongly to his sensibilities. A passing acquaintance would have taken a false intellectual measure of him, if he had judged by the man's reticence; for while his thoughts might have seemed to be floating loosely in the clouds, or straying away into the rosy regions where devout poets are supposed to idle away golden hours, he was a man of profound observation, and had a clear knowledge of the principles of human nature.

And such, in brief, was Pendleton.

"But before we start," said Mr. Dow, "please step into my office and be initiated into the mysteries of our community."

"Are they of an Eleusinian character?" asked Dickinson with a covert smile.

"Judge for yourself," said Mr. Dow, as he took two bronze badges from his desk and pinned them on the lapels of the coats of his two candidates. "That is the whole of your initiation," he continued. "That badge entitles you to all the privileges of the community."

"Does the golden rule," inquired Dickinson, "allow class distinctions among your fellow-men? I thought all would be reduced to the same level."

"You must keep it in mind that our scheme is in a state of incipiency," replied Mr. Dow. "In the course of time, when our religion achieves universal empire, and all men are thoroughly imbued with the one principle of the golden rule, all the present conventionalities of society will fall into deserved desuetude. All men will then live and act on the same plane of brotherly charity and equality. But let us proceed with our walk."

As they stepped out into the street Mr. Dow paused and said:

"My grant of land covers twenty miles square. It comprises this forest of mostly oak, and that stretch of prairie adjoining it, which is devoted to agriculture and grazing purposes. This forest extends entirely across our possessions—I say *our*, for I no longer con-

sider them mine. The time will come when *tuus* and *meus* will lose their meaning. You see that noble little river, whose waters are as clear as crystal, dashing and singing as it goes on its glad way to the Gulf of Mexico? It is not very wide, but it is deep, and flows with great rapidity; and I judge from this that our possessions are considerably elevated above the country below us. Some years it rains very little here, and then we dam up the waters of the river, which is very easily done, and our crops and grazing grounds are so well irrigated that vegetation, both natural and artificial, never suffers for want of moisture."

"And this spot," spoke up Dickinson, "you have chosen for a second Lacedemon?"

"Lacedemon!" exclaimed Brother Dow. "I utterly abhor such a state of society as existed in it. Lycurgus was an execrable old tyrant, and instituted the most degrading laws that ever disgraced any statute book. The customs which he established developed only the brutish passions of his people. The very thought of his abominable government fills my soul with horror."

"And yet," replied Dickinson, "it is said that Lycurgus, passing through his country, was so delighted that he called the Lacedemonians a band of brothers."

"So," answered Brother Dow, "I might call that herd of cattle feeding on the prairie a band of brothers. His people were a set of savages and rogues, who had not the most remote conception of the golden rule. His men were a blood-thirsty horde of butchers, and his women were coarse Amazons, without modesty or sense

of shame. But let us walk on. You see these stores," he continued, as they halted in front of a neat building. "Let us enter this one." There was no one present, but the trio of visitors.

"Where are the clerks?" asked Dickinson.

"There are none," answered Brother Dow, with a slight show of pride, "and the owner of the goods is absent, probably attending to some other business."

"Who serves the customers, Brother Dow?"

"They serve themselves. I will show you how the scheme works. I have lost my pocket-knife, and I must have another. Here is one that suits me. This little tag contains the price, which is one dollar. I lay down the money, and take the knife, which now becomes my property. In like manner every article is marked, and you can take what you please by depositing the money in its place. Or if you have not the money and desire credit, you write your name in this journal, with a brief description of the article."

"But what," asked Dickinson, "is to prevent a customer from taking whatever he wants without paying for it?"

"Nothing but the golden rule. Did you not notice that inscription over the door—'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you'? No one can possibly cheat when that rule is the dominating principle of his life."

"True enough," replied Dickinson, "if you can only impress men with a sense of the importance and necessity of the rule in their transactions with each other."

"The New Testament, as Christians call it, contains some excellent axioms and maxims that were announced by the wonderful Rabbi. One is, 'With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.' That is true, as is demonstrated by all human experience. Hate your fellow-men, and they will hate you; love them, and they will love you; trust them, and they will trust you. The golden rule, in fact, underlies this declaration of the famous Teacher, and indeed runs through all his moral instructions."

Pendleton gazed hard at Brother Dow, but he said nothing.

"Men," continued Dow, "in their moral conduct have only to obey the golden rule, and they will fulfil the requirements of all ethics."

"I must say," quoth Dickinson, "that your system of government is not at all Draconic."

"Do not allude to that monster of cruelty," earnestly replied Brother Dow. "I hold that man's laws in detestation and abhorrence. There is absolutely no use for any law but the golden rule. If it should be adopted into universal practice—and it can be—you would hear no more about retribution, which the preachers represent as clinging to the offender like the fabled shirt of Nessus that drove Hercules to the commission of suicide. One who strictly obeys the golden rule will ever carry with him a conscience void of offence toward God and man."

"I see, Brother Dow," at last remarked Pendleton, "that you are somewhat familiar with the sacred Scripture."

"Oh! I have studied the Bible and every other system of religion of which I ever heard. I have investigated Buddhism and Confucianism and Mohammedanism, and every other religious ism of which the world is full. The best part of all of them can be reduced to the one principle, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' Moses meant nothing but that when he commanded, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' But we are digressing. I want you to observe that we have no court-house. A lawyer in our community would starve, if he were foolish enough to rely on his profession for a living. We have no litigation. We have no jail, no prison of any kind."

"How then," cried Dickinson, "do you dispose of offenders who violate the golden rule?"

"I have never known a member of this community to violate it," replied Dow with emphasis.

"But I have seen a few negroes and Mexicans wearing your badge," said Dickinson. "Do you expect them to be honest?"

"Why not? They are human beings, and have consciences implanted in their breasts like those of the Caucasian race."

"But you well know that some nations have a higher sense of moral obligation than others. I seriously doubt that you can ever convert the race of Ham to the practice of your faith."

"But my mind is afflicted with no doubt or misgiving on the subject. All men have issued from the same source, and the same physical and moral destiny awaits

them all. Of course, it will require education to inspire all of them with the proper sense of truth and morality, but I confidently believe that the whole human family can be elevated to a high standard of perfect honesty and rectitude. They only need a fair opportunity, and my scheme contemplates giving them that opportunity. I am called to this holy and glorious mission by him who framed the structure of the universe. Therefore, not a doubt of ultimate success troubles my mind. I am aware that it is a vast and stupendous undertaking; and yet, after all, the task is no greater than the Christian sects, with all their wide differences in doctrine, are trying to accomplish. Their hope is to regenerate mankind by the proclamation of a system of religion about whose principles they do not agree among themselves. My religion has the merit of simplicity to such an extent that there can be no differences of opinion about its meaning. The Christians merely produce confusion in the minds of men by their conflicting and clashing doctrines. I expect to send out missionaries, too, in the course of time. They will go with no elaborately-wrought system of theology, which it would require a professional jurist or a profound philosopher like Socrates to comprehend; but with one simple principle, which has its foundation in human nature itself."

"But," spoke up Pendleton, somewhat aroused by Brother Dow's charges against Christianity, "you have admitted that the golden rule is one of the tenets of the Christian religion."

"Certainly," replied Brother Dow, "but the way in which your preachers present it makes it nothing but a lifeless letter in their code of ethical laws. They are forever engaged in discussions about justification by faith, the doctrine of the Trinity, the nature of God's attributes and kindred subjects. You know the Homoiousian and Homoousian controversy resulted in a division of the church, which obtains to this day; and so we have two great parties bitterly fighting and denouncing each other on account of the difference between the two little letters 'o' and 'i.' The consequence of all this is the Christian world has no fixed belief. Most Christians I find have no adequate conception of the golden rule, as simple as it is. One of the most consummate caitiffs I ever knew was a Christian."

"Professed Christian," interrupted Pendleton.

"Have it as you will," replied Dow, " but he was a wretched illustration of what he professed. I have heard him relate his religious experience to his brethren, which by its pathetic tone brought tears to their eyes, and then I have seen him the next day engage in the most shamefully dishonest practices. He was so shrewd that his iniquity was suspected by only a few."

"Of course, there are some hypocrites in the church," replied Pendleton, "but that is not the fault of the Christian religion: for it inculcates the very principle which seems to be the only article of your creed."

"Certainly I am not so deficient in reason as to

judge and measure the excellency of any form of religion by the conduct of every one of its adherents; but I am merely detailing facts which tend to prove that Christianity will never effect the moral regeneration of the world. It is too complicated in its dogmas. But you are forcing me into digression. Here is our Academy," continued Dow, pointing to a two-storied structure; "sufficient in size to accommodate several hundred pupils. It is larger than our present necessities require, but it was constructed with reference to the future enlargement of our community. We expect, as the years advance to exhaust its capacities. At this time we have in attendance about one hundred and fifty students."

"What is the extent of your curriculum?" asked Dickinson.

"We expect to make it as comprehensive as that of any respectable college. We are now making very gratifying progress. I expect you, Brother Dickinson, to take the department of Greek, and you, Brother Pendleton, the department of English grammar and rhetoric. That was the contract into which we entered at Memphis. As to religion you are to teach the young people to believe in the existence of one Supreme Being, and to practice the golden rule in all the affairs of life. The most of the students will be missionaries, to travel over the world and make converts to our religion. We expect it to spread from this forest and this institution of learning till it shall cover the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep.

I will never live to see this glorious consummation, and neither will you, but the scheme will progress, working like leaven in generation after generation till mankind are one vast brotherhood governed by the one principle of fraternal love."

"The wildest chimera that ever entered into a human brain," thought Pendleton. "It is the delusion of a diseased mind, which will one day end in heart-breaking disappointment. But I have promised, and I will faithfully redeem my pledge."

"Brother Dow," said Pendleton during the pause in the conversation, "do you limit our religious teaching in the school to the golden rule—just that and nothing more? Would you object to my teaching some other principles of religion in addition to the golden rule?"

"Not at all, brother. I care nothing for the doctrines of Moses and Mahomet and Jesus Christ, provided they are subordinated to the one principle of the golden rule. That is to be the 'alpha' and 'omega' of your instructions. That rule covers the whole ground of man's duty. It matters little what they believe if only it dominates their conduct. That being the governing principle, they cannot run into moral error. But let us move on."

As they proceeded Pendleton and Dickinson observed that the streets were laid off with mathematical precision, and the residences were all well built.

"Where do you get your lumber, Brother Dow?" asked Dickinson.

"We have a fine saw-mill on the river, which supplies

us with all we need. We have a factory, too, that makes nearly all our furniture. In fact, we are manufacturing here almost everything our necessities require. Every vocation that could be useful to a community with no extravagant aspirations is represented in our little town."

"But where do you get your groceries and dry-goods?" asked Dickinson.

"Mostly from ports on the Gulf coast, and frequently from New Orleans. For this purpose we keep constantly running a train of wagons, so that we can procure whatever we desire."

"Are your people contented and happy?"

"There is no reason why they should not be. They have everything in the way of creature-comforts that any reasonable man could demand."

"But how did they all get such a good start in life? Were they all in well-to-do circumstances when they joined your community?"

"Oh! no; some of them emerged from the gloomiest depths of indigence. Of course, we had to furnish them with funds to begin a new career. Whenever now any misfortune befalls a member of the community we all unite and re-establish him. There is no suffering here that can possibly be removed by human efforts. Such an unsightly caricature as poverty in its abject features is unknown among us."

Dickinson smiled.

"There is nothing here to tempt a man to the commission of crime. I am fully persuaded that dis-

honesty in any form would be revolting to every inhabitant of this village. You will find that they all have too much self-respect and too high a regard for the dictates of conscience ever to condescend to chicanery and knavery. In a word, it is here more easy to practice honesty than improbity. No man here would be willing to forfeit the esteem and respect of his neighbors for the sake of the pillage he might secure, even if he were controlled by no high principle of rectitude. But the practice of the golden rule is its own reward in the way of peace to the conscience, which it invariably brings. But I want you to ascend that mound yonder, which was thrown up, it may be, ages ago, for some purpose which is not now apparent."

"I have frequently seen such mounds in some parts of Mississippi," said Dickinson, "and I have been told that they were built by the aborigines, but for what object is left to conjecture. At any rate they are facts."

"We will not rack our brain for the solution of the mystery. If it were solved, it would add nothing very valuable to the stock of our knowledge; it would only gratify curiosity."

They then climbed the mound, which was at least fifty feet in height.

"Now," said Brother Dow, "cast your eyes over the prairie if you want to behold a scene of beauty rich enough to thrill the most apathetic heart with joy and gladness."

It was not an extravagant assertion; for corn fields

were yet green with rustling blades, and cotton fields were beginning to whiten with the fleecy staple under the rays of a Texas sun. Wheat and oats also waved as the gentle breeze, which had travelled all the way from the Gulf of Mexico, swept over the prairie. Herds of cattle were grazing on the luxuriant grass, and men were seen mowing and raking up hay, which was to serve for winter's use, and piling it up in stacks. It was, indeed, a lovely scene, as Brother Dow had said; and he did not exaggerate, was the conclusion of his two companions. Presently he said suddenly:

"I will now leave you here to indulge in contemplation as long as you wish. You can descend whenever you please, and return to the town and your homes."

Accordingly he turned and walked away, leaving the two men to their own reflections. When he was out of ear-shot, Dickinson said, "Brother Pendleton, what do you think of Brother Dow's 'scheme,' as he calls it?"

"If you will promise not to betray me, I think it is a miserable delusion, which you will see explode, if you remain here long enough. The old man is so wrapped up in his theory that he does not see its impracticability."

"But," said Dickinson, with a smile, "it seems to be working all right."

"So it does; but the very same state of affairs could be established anywhere, without the golden rule, by any benevolent man with abundant means."

"Do you think that all the citizens of this place are as honest as Brother Dow thinks they are?"

"Just at present I would not like to venture an opinion upon that point. We must wait and see. Certainly the golden rule is one of the foundation stones of Christianity, and too much prominence cannot be given to it. But it alone, in such severe isolation as Brother Dow places it, can never end in the moral reformation of human society. Confucius insisted upon the observation of the golden rule, but he has never regenerated China."

"Well, changing the subject slightly, what do you think of Sister Peggy?"

Pendleton fixed upon him such a penetrating look that it mantled his face with crimson.

"Excuse me, if you please," solemnly answered Pendleton; "you would pay no regard to anything I might say on that subject."

"Well," replied Dickinson, laughing, "I can almost read your opinion in your face."

"If you can do that, there is no need of my giving utterance to it. Suppose we descend and return to town."

Dickinson, without speaking another word, wended his way with his companion to their room, where he fell into reflections which must be left to the reader's imagination.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE next day Pendleton and Dickinson entered upon their duties as teachers in the school, or as Brother Dow called it, Academy. To their surprise, they found five other teachers in the building, all thoroughly competent and well skilled in the art of pedagogy. Brother Dow was highly educated, and seemed to have correct ideas of pedagogy, both as a science and an art. He would employ no instructor who was limited in his attainments to the mere rudiments of education. He would permit no student to advance a single step till he had thoroughly mastered his lesson. If a student could not keep up with his class, he was put back into what was called the "lagging class," for which a special teacher was provided, who gave individual instruction. Consequently, the school was in a most flourishing condition. It was observed by the two new professors that there were no idlers and no mischief-makers in the rooms, of which there were ten or twelve. All seemed to be honest, and had made, and were still making, commendable progress. All were well-dressed—a fact which aroused Pendleton's wonder. The discipline was mild, but firm, based upon the golden rule. The student could turn to not a single wall of any of the rooms without beholding in large

letters the words, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Each student had to repeat them every morning, as he entered the building, to a teacher who stood at the door for the purpose of hearing this brief lesson in ethics. The same moral process was repeated as they departed in the evening. Taking it all together, Pendleton, at the close of his first day's work, pronounced it an admirable school.

There was one circumstance which especially delighted Dickinson; Sister Peggy was a teacher in the Greek department, and he could see her every day, and sometimes exchange a word with her. But this formal intercourse did not satisfy him, and he determined to call on Peggy the next Saturday evening; her permission was readily granted. He found her, at the time appointed, in the parlor, which was neatly, but not luxuriantly, furnished. There was, however, one exception in the shape of a magnificent piano. Peggy was an unusually accomplished musician. After they had exchanged the customary civilities of polite society, and talked a little upon different subjects, Dickinson said, "This is the first time I have had an opportunity to converse with you since my arrival."

"You have no one to reproach but yourself," answered Sister Peggy. "I gave you *carte blanche,* as you will doubtless recollect, to call whenever it might suit your convenience or pleasure."

"Do you treat all your visitors in this same generous way?"

"I have no visitors."

"Well, you must have a lonely time."

"Have you never read *Zimmerman on Solitude,* brother? You know his motto was 'Never less alone than when alone.'"

"I have seen the book," replied Dickinson, "but I did not fancy it; indeed it so repelled me that I had no desire for further acquaintance with such a gloomy author. If that was his motto it deserved to be written over the door of some old monk's cell. God made man a social, gregarious animal. To cultivate a disposition for a solitude which would exclude intercourse with one's fellows is merely trampling upon the instincts, and the better instincts, too, of human nature."

"You talk like an inexperienced youth, brother."

"A youth!" cried Dickinson with a laugh. "Sister Peggy," he continued playfully, "this is not the first time you have accused me of the 'atrocious crime of being a young man,' as I used to say when declaiming Pitt's speech, with a vim growing out of the conceit that I was the statesman himself. Do you know there is some incongruity in your assumption of the airs of wisdom that is supposed to belong to old age, when you have not grown at least in years out of the follies of girlhood?"

No woman ever grows angry for being likened to a girl in personal appearance, and Sister Peggy took no offence at this last question, but Dickinson observed a slight suggestion of crimson rising to the surface of her face, for which he could not account, as he knew that she cared nothing for flattering compliments.

"Brother," she replied in undisturbed tranquillity, "you are unjustly accusing me of hypocrisy. I assume no airs. I do nothing that is contrary to the promptings of my nature."

"Well," said Dickinson in an apologetic tone, "I did not mean to be offensive. Let us not quarrel about it. Will you favor me with some music? I see you have a splendid piano. How did you find such an elegant instrument in this wilderness?"

"It was found in New Orleans," she said as she took her seat at the key-board, and placed on the rack a sheet of music. Then in the same rich voice, whose first tone had thrilled Dickinson at Memphis, she began to sing. It was the most marvellous performance that he had ever heard in his life. The air was a weird wail that filled his heart with pain and sorrow. Mournful words, articulated with perfect distinctness, fell upon his ears with a force that caused tears to well up unbidden to his eyes. When the song was finished she maintained her position upon the seat with the rigidity of a marble statue. Dickinson rose with his heart pulsating with the deepest emotion. He found himself at her side gazing with strange feeling at her sad face.

"Oh! Sister Peggy," he cried, "you are a living representation of Niobe. You inspire me with a sense of the unutterable woe that blasted her existence."

"Comparisons are odious, brother," she answered coldly, without turning her head. "Suppose I were to call you, or compare you to Narcissus or Antinous."

"I should take it as a compliment, though you can

see by a cursory glance at my features that the comparison would be totally wanting in the element of truth."

"Perhaps so, but it would be as applicable as the one you have just made."

"Sister Peggy, let us drop comparisons; please sing me something lively and cheerful, that will dispel the gloomy atmosphere with which your dirge has filled the room."

"I am incapable of it, brother."

"Why are you?" cried Dickinson; "you look as if you had musical skill enough to charm the very trees like Orpheus of old."

"Another fulsome comparison, brother," answered Sister Peggy, with unruffled composure.

"May be," said Dickinson, trying to assume a playful air, "it would have been less objectionable if I had said Melpomene."

"It would have been exactly the same. But you appear to be well versed in heathen mythology. I will compliment you that much."

"I do not think I have given any astounding evidence of classical learning. But I thank you for anything that you regard as a compliment," answered Dickinson with earnestness.

"But tell me," breaking off abruptly, "why do you shun the social pleasures of life? Why are you so fond of solitude? Why are you such a misanthrope?"

"Your last accusation is unjust. I had flattered myself that I was a philanthropist."

"Yes; but you do not come down to the level of mankind. You treat us common mortals as if you had been sent as a missionary from Jupiter, or some other celestial orb."

"My brother, is this the way you observe the golden rule?"

"How am I violating it?"

She turned her face full upon him. "How are you violating it! Why, you are seeking to penetrate the secrets of a heart that would conceal its history. How would you wish to be so treated?"

"I beg your pardon." Dickinson then changed the subject, remained a short while longer, and took his leave. He thought he had not made the slightest progress with this strange woman, who seemed to have the wisdom of age combined with the appearance of youth. He entered his dwelling, and found Pendleton absorbed in the contents of a book. At that time they roomed together. He could not conceal his dejection, and made no effort to do so. He was a young man who seemed to have no objection that the world should read his heart, except, perhaps, those deeper recesses which no human being wishes to be invaded.

Pendleton laid his book aside, looked at his handsome face now disturbed by an expression of sadness.

"Where have you been, Brother Dickinson? But I need not ask; I can guess."

"Where have I been, then?"

"You have just left Sister Peggy."

"You are right, for once."

"And I guess further," continued Pendleton, "that you have received little encouragement to repeat your visit."

"Right, again."

"I am sorry for you, brother," said Pendleton, with a manner that betokened true sympathy.

"Brother Pendleton," exclaimed Dickinson, "she is an enigma. I can no more understand her than I could the Sibylline oracles."

"Why, Brother Dickinson, she is no such riddle as that. You could read her much more clearly were it not for your blind and amazing infatuation."

"What is so amazing?"

"Why, cannot you see that she and her father both are carrying some great burden of sorrow?"

"I am not surprised at the old man," replied Dickinson. "I think his sober and melancholy air is very becoming to him. It harmonizes with what he calls his mission. But I see no reason why the girl should be so gloomy; it is unnatural, and is not at all *en rapport* with the majesty of her external appearance and her nymph-like locomotion."

"Brother Dickinson," said Pendleton, with a smile, "are you aware that you sometimes fall into a rather stilted style in your conversation?"

"If I do, I have caught it from the old man and his seraphic daughter. When you are in Rome, do as Rome does, you know. But let that pass, Brother Pendleton, and tell me how you read the girl."

"By a kind of intuition, I suppose."

"Oh! I do not mean that. I care nothing for the philosophy of your science. I want you to tell me *what* you read."

"That is a different question. If you want a candid answer, I think she has met with bitter disappointment which has sapped the very sources of her happiness."

"Do you mean disappointment in love?"

"Well, I believe that is generally at the bottom of the heaviest disappointments that mar a woman's life. But without a more intimate acquaintance I am not prepared to say that such is the nature of her trouble."

"I do not think her disappointment is of that character: for that kind of misfortune is not so deep that recovery from it is impossible."

"You judge other people by yourself, do you?" asked Pendleton with a laugh.

"Our individual experience is a most reliable criterion, though I do not wish you to infer that I have had experience along that line. So if that is her only ailment of heart I believe it can be cured."

"Perhaps so; and you flatter yourself that you hold the remedy?"

"I do not say that I have. I only wish that I did; I would use it."

Here they dropped the subject.

## CHAPTER VII.

DICKINSON resumed his employment the next morning, and the day passed off without incident worthy of record, as did many other days in succession. All the world knows how it goes with a young man who is in that ecstatic and desperate state called love. The alternations of hope and despair, delectation and discomposure need no description, as they are but common facts of human experience. But Dickinson was especially subject to such alternations, as he was a being of strong impulses. Sometimes he determined to abandon his pursuit of a fruitless love, but one glimpse at Sister Peggy scattered all his brave resolutions to the winds and left him still in the thrilling grasp of little Cupid. Complete separation from the object of his burning affections would no doubt have cured him of his malady, but he could not tolerate the thought of placing distance between himself and Sister Peggy Dow. So the wheels of time rolled on as they have been rolling for six thousand years, and will continue to roll till they break against the walls of eternity.

One afternoon he ascended the mound, previously mentioned, in order to watch the sun sink into his ocean bed and to contemplate the scenery that lay

spread out at his feet. He gazed at the little river that wound its way, like a thread of glittering silver, through the prairie, rushing on by its own momentum to its death in the Gulf of Mexico.

"Why cannot human life flow on to its end like that stream?" he questioned with himself. "Instead, it runs over a rough, rocky bed that is ever disturbing its tranquillity, sometimes throwing it into gentle eddies, and again by the interposition of some huge boulder, checking it and turning its current till there is no certainty how or where it will end. What pleasure is there in life anyhow? We laugh a little and cry a little and toil a great deal, and then—a spasm, a little gasp—and we disappear like a pebble in the ocean. We are like actors on the stage, who strut across the boards, one with the air of a king, another with the grace of a queen, and presently the curtain drops, the foot-lights are extinguished, and all is left in silence and darkness. Man would better be as the animals yonder grazing in the prairie. They have no cares as to the present, and no anxieties as to the future, but act every day as if their motto were *carpe diem.* They live in the enjoyment of the passing moment, and then die without regret. Pshaw! human life is not worth the living."

At that moment his reflections were put to flight by a gentle foot-fall in the rear. He turned and found himself *vis-a-vis* with Sister Peggy.

"I am sorry," she said in a tone of indifference, "that I have disturbed your thoughts. I did not see you when I was ascending the mound."

"Am I so small and insignificant that I fail to make an impression upon the retina of your beautiful eye?" asked Dickinson, recalled to his playful humor by her thrilling presence.

"I was not looking for any one, nor expecting any one," she answered with a *nonchalant* air that made the blood slightly recede from his face. "I frequently come here to commune with nature."

"Is communion with nature more pleasant than with human beings?"

"Now, brother, you are trying to make me say something that will discompose your feelings and derange the whole current of your reflections."

"What do you care for my feelings or reflections?" cried Dickinson, in desperation and bitterness of spirit.

"I care much, brother," answered Sister Peggy, quietly. " 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' I would not purposely wound your feelings, and so I avoid giving pain to others."

"A fig for the golden rule!" cried Dickinson, with ill-suppressed vexation, "if its function is merely to crush the noblest and holiest aspirations of the human heart."

"I do not understand you, brother," answered Sister Peggy, with calmness, looking him in the face with her glorious eyes, but with an expression so cold that it killed the blushes with which his vehemence had suffused his cheek.

"No; I plainly perceive you do not, and I fear you will never make the slightest effort to understand me."

"I will, brother, if the effort is required by the golden rule."

"Oh! the golden rule again!" exclaimed Dickinson, breaking into a laugh so hearty that it seemed to startle Sister Peggy. "Why, sister, do you never laugh?"

"Never, unless there is something to laugh at," she replied without the least perturbation.

"I wish from my heart," said Dickinson playfully, "that I could see you smile just once. Come, practice the golden rule and smile at me or the clouds. Be like a joyous child for one moment, and laugh at my foolishness."

"I cannot by a mere volition metamorphose myself into such a being as a child," she answered with some severity of manner, but without the least change in her tone.

"If I were old Ovid," said Dickinson, persevering in his attempt to induce her to playfulness, "I would transform you into ——" Dickinson suddenly checked himself.

"Into a what?" asked Sister Peggy. (She has a little curiosity, after all, thought Dickinson.)

"Into a being who could laugh," he said, rapidly changing the character of the metamorphosis in his fancy.

"I am already that without any transformation," she replied.

"Why do you not laugh, then?" he cried.

"For the reason that I see and hear nothing calculated to excite laughter. But cease, brother; you are

descending to silliness; it is unworthy of your manhood."

"I will not longer intrude upon you," said Dickinson, changing to sobriety. *"Au revoir."* He bounded down the mound. At a short distance from its foot he glanced back, and saw her in a poise that might have suited an ancient goddess. So he thought.

## CHAPTER VIII.

HAVING now familiarized the reader with the characters of our *dramatis personae,* and the government of Golden Rule, based upon one single principle of morality, we must now introduce another individual, who will, perhaps, somewhat relieve, for the time being, the somberness of the present story.

Since the advent of Pendleton and Dickinson weeks had glided by till the time could be counted by months. In fact, another year was now advancing into the season of spring. It is not necessary, and would not be interesting, to relate what occurred, during all these months, in the community. The hours moved on with seeming smoothness and monotony till an event occurred which led to results that called forth Pendleton's powers of critical observation, and made him determine to investigate more closely the practical workings of the municipal government.

One Saturday he and Dickinson were returning from hunting, on the chief highway that led to the town. They were close to the outskirts when they suddenly came upon a human form on the roadside. It required no inspection to discover that it was a ragged negro, who seemed to be completely exhausted.

"What are you doing here?" inquired Pendleton in a kindly voice.

The negro, raising himself with an effort to a sitting posture, answered:

"Marster," he spoke in trembling tones, "I'se a dyin' an' I mout 's well tell de truff. I'se a run-away nigger, an' I'se had nothin' to eat fur four days. I'se almos' dead; I'se starved."

"Brother Dickinson," said Pendleton, "remain here with him till I find some refreshment for him; he must be relieved at once."

So saying, he rapidly walked to a house which was not far off, and returned with some bread, meat and milk. The man eagerly devoured the food as fast as Pendleton would allow him. In half an hour the black man was so far restored that he was able to walk, and he rose to his feet.

"Whut is you gwine to do wid me, marster?"

"Nothing," replied Pendleton, "but conduct you to the governor; he will settle your case. Besides, you must be taken to a place where you can have proper attention."

"I needs no 'tention ceptin' somepun to eat."

"Follow us, then, and you will get it."

"Is you gwine to take me to jail, marster? I'se used to dat. But I tells you now, it won't do iny good dis time. I'se made up my mind to die afore I goes back to my ole marster iny more."

"You have nothing to fear, uncle," answered Pendleton kindly. "There is no jail in this town. I merely want you to see the governor. He will advise with you what to do."

A walk of a few moments brought the trio to Brother Dow's residence. That gentleman soon made his appearance, and with his keen eye hastily inspected the negro from head to foot.

"Why have you brought him here, Brother Pendleton?" asked Dow.

"We did not know what else to do with him. Talk to him, if you please."

"Who are you?" asked Brother Dow, bestowing his whole attention upon the negro.

"My name 's Sambo. I'se jes' told dese two gen'-mens dat I'se a run-away nigger."

"What is the name of your owner."

"I'se not gwine to tell dat," said Sambo, with an air of stubborn firmness. "I'se neber gwine back to him no more, 'ceptin' I'se hauled back dead. You may put me in jail an' leave me dar till I dies; you may beat me till all de bref is out o' dis body, an' I'se not gwine to be traitor to myself." And Sambo drew himself up and tightened his large lips to give emphasis to what he had said.

"Why did you run away?" asked Dow.

"Becaze old marster nearly beat de life out 'o me, when he had no cause to do it. I'se run away from him, I reckin a dozen times, an' I'se bin put in jail til old marster camed arter me, an' den he tuck me back to de plantation, an' he whip me till I wuz almos' dead. I'se neber gwine to be tuck back no more; I'll die fust."

"I will never return you to such atrocious bondage,"

said brother Dow solemnly. "You may rely on that, brother. You are a free man in this community."

"Do I understand," spoke up Pendleton, "that you give this man his freedom?"

"I do, so far as I am concerned."

"Do you intend to let him become a citizen of this town?"

"Certainly, if he desires to remain with us, and will subscribe to the golden rule."

"Brother Dow, I would like to know how you can do that without violating your own rule."

"I am carrying out the rule to the very letter."

"And yet you have, by your own authority, set this man free, without the consent of his owner and without compensation. Are you treating the owner as you would have him treat you if you were to exchange places?"

"The Declaration of Independence, which you Americans regard as a sacred oracle, and which you read publicly, with a great flourish of trumpets, on the celebration of the Fourth of July, places this first among self-evident truths, that 'all men are created equal.' If that is so, what right has any man to hold another man in slavery?"

"Without discussing that point I would like to suggest that Sambo is property; his owner has paid for him; this negro represents money. Now, how can you without utterly disregarding the golden rule, deprive the master of his services?"

"If you were in Sambo's place and he in yours would

you wish him to return you to bondage? That is the question, Brother Pendleton."

"Of course, I would not. But the subject now before us is, how will you settle the question of right between yourself and the negro's master? Will you break the golden rule in one instance that you may observe it in another? Will you do evil that good may come?"

"Slavery," said Dow with some animation, as well as indignation, is a flagrant, atrocious, cursed outrage upon humanity. You misapply the golden rule, Brother Pendleton, when you use it as an argument to justify a man in his iniquity. But leaving abstract and general questions of ethics, we have here a concrete case that must be settled. The golden rule requires individual application in our daily intercourse with our fellow-men. Now, how shall we deal with Brother Sambo? Shall we treat him as we would wish him to treat us if our circumstances were reversed? Let me be brought face to face with the man who claims him as property, and I will settle the matter with him. At present we are concerned only with this fugitive from oppression and foul injustice. Brother Sambo," he continued, turning to the negro, who was listening intently at the discussion, and trying to comprehend it, "do you wish to become a member of this community?"

"I dunno what else I ken do, marster," replied Sambo in some perplexity. "One thing is sartin, I'se not a gwine back to my ole marster; dat is sartin and shore."

"That is for you to determine. But here I want you to understand that you are a perfectly free man. If you want to reside among us, you shall be treated with justice and kindness. You shall have every opportunity you can wish to develop your moral and intellectual capacities."

"Marster, dat is shore a good offer, and I 'cepts it, if it's lef to me."

"There is one thing you must promise."

"What is dat? I'se ready to promise every an' iny thing in reason."

"Then you must promise to obey the golden rule in all your conduct, and all your transactions with your fellow-men."

"What is de gold' rule, marster?"

"I forget that you are not an educated man," said Brother Dow pityingly. "The golden rule is 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' "

"Dat is, you wants me to do to t'other folks as I'd want 'em to do to me."

"That is it exactly," said Dow, "spoken in your own uncouth language."

"I'se allers done dat, marster; I'se tried to be honest, an' I iz honest. I'se neber stole inything, an' I'se neber tole iny lie, neder."

"I trust you fully," said Dow. "You are my brother, and I shall ever treat you as such. The first thing to be done is to denude you of your tattered attire, and clothe you in decent apparel, that you may have self-respect."

"I hez self-'spect, marster, but I'se neber had a dog's chance to show it."

"You shall have that chance. Follow me."

Brother Dow conducted Sambo to the nearest store. When they had disappeared Dickinson burst into a laugh which caused a smile to steal over the face of Pendleton.

"Brother Pendleton," said Dickinson, when his laughter had subsided, "whom do you suppose Brother Dow reminds me of?"

"I do not know. Whom?"

"Well, he is the materialization of Don Quixote."

"You have hit it exactly in my opinion. I believe he is insane on the golden rule. The poor man does not see that he is carrying it out on a false foundation."

"How is that?"

"Why, he assumes that the rule by its own inherent excellence will commend itself to the moral sense of every man; in that he is mistaken, as he will find out to his sorrow."

"Anyhow," said Dickinson, "the rule seems to be working well in this community."

"Certainly; men will generally do right when it is to their interest. But let us wait for further developments."

At this point, Dow returned with Sambo dressed in a neat and substantial clothing. The negro seemed elevated several degrees in self-esteem.

"I'se sartinly much 'bleged to you gen'mens, but 'speshly to Marster Dow, as I hearne you call 'im."

"Call no man master," said Dow sternly. "You are free; you are my brother, and you will hereafter call me Brother Dow, and you will so address every man in the community. Come to my office, and I will place upon you a badge like this, which will entitle you to all the privileges that any of us enjoy. You will have free access to the stores and you can take whatever you want by paying the price, or if you have not the money you can charge it to yourself; then you are to pay for it as soon as you can. You will fully trust your brothers, and they will trust you. In a word, do unto them as you would have them do unto you. What more can I do for you?"

"All I ax is some way to make a honest livin'; fur dat is doin' as I'd wish to be done by."

"You are right, Brother Sambo. You shall have remunerative employment. I will hire you myself till you can work up to a more desirable condition. I will pay you just such wages as I would wish you to pay me, if our positions were reversed."

"Dat is shorely far, marster—no—Brudder Dow."

"Yes, Brother Dow—not master."

"'Twill take me some time to git usen to dat," replied Sambo with a broad grin. "I wuz not brung up dat way."

"Now, Brother Sambo, I will show you your residence for the present. You are to rest and refresh yourself till Monday morning, by which time you will have recovered from the fatigue of your journey."

Brother Dow then conducted Sambo to a dwelling

occupied by a family of negroes. He had bought several families, for reasons which the limits of the present story will not allow to be stated, and had settled them in the town. He assigned Sambo to a room which was already partially furnished; for Brother Dow tried to be prepared for any emergency.

"Marster—no—Brudder Dow, if you'll lone me a few cookin' 'tensils, I'll be all right. I'se usen to doin' my own cookin', an' I 'fers it. Dat is doin' as I want to be done by."

"Have your own way, Brother Sambo. You can do as you please, provided only you regulate your conduct by the golden rule. I am glad to see that you are already applying it to the affairs of practical life."

"I'se usened to dat rule," quoth Sambo, "and I'se allers lived by it. I'se honest."

"Follow me," said Brother Dow, admiring Sambo's bold claims to the highest type of integrity. "I will accompany you to one of our stores, as you are not fully acquainted with our customs, and you shall select what you think necessary to your comfort."

Accordingly, Sambo made his selections, and was installed in his new quarters, being supplied with everything that a negro, brought up as he had been, could require. Brother Dow then left him to his own enjoyment.

A great many negroes of the South are in the habit of talking aloud to themselves. They are, or seem to be, so unconscious of soliloquizing that often they keep on if they meet a person. Sambo was addicted to this

practice. Left alone, he sat scratching his head, and thinking for a while, he said aloud to himself:

"I'se sartinly run on to a good thing. I'se shorely glad I hez found dis place. Brudder Dow is shorely one good man. Ef I onderstan's dis matter about de gold' rule, I is only to do to t'other folks as I'd wish dem to do to me. Dat is a good 'ligion, an' ain't hard to lib up to. I'se allers done dat inyhow. I'se gwine to be as honest as iny ov 'em; I shore is. Och! dis is a good place."

Sambo spent Sunday roaming through the village, and taking observations. Monday morning he was hired by Brother Dow to chop wood in the forest. The negro went to his work in good temper with all the world and himself. After chopping for a few hours he suddenly halted.

"Lemme see," he said aloud, "how dis gold' rule works. S'pose Brudder Dow wuz in my place, an' I wuz in his'n, an' he'd git tired as I now is, what 'ud he want me to do? He shorely 'ud not want me to say, 'Work on dar; I don't care how tired you is.' No, sar, he 'ud want me to say, 'Ef you is tired, Brudder Dow, lie down an' res'.' Dat is jes' zackly what he 'ud want me to say; dat's whut de gold' rule means. So I'se a gwine to res' a little bit."

And Sambo threw down his axe, stretched himself comfortably on the ground, and was soon held fast in the embrace of Morpheus. He awoke in about two hours, rubbed his eyes and looked around in every direction.

"Whar is I? Oh! I 'members; I'se in Gold' Rule. I'se done tuck a nap. Now ef I wuz in Brudder Dow's place, an' he wuz in mine, I'd say, 'Brudder Dow, ef you is done res' enough, an' you feels like it, you can git to yo' work.' Dis gold' rule shorely works well; it don't allow ov a man's workin' his self to death. It gins 'im a chance to enjoy some o' de pledgers ov dis worl'. I'se shorely glad I'se struck upon dis bressed place."

To do Sambo justice, he was loyal to his construction of the golden rule in every instance. He soon mastered it, according to his way of solving ethical problems, and he could give it ready application to any transaction in which he was concerned. It will be proper here to give another instance of his experimentation with Brother Dow's principle of government. One night, as he was about to retire to his bed he said aloud to himself:

"I thinks I'd like to hab a chicken fur my brekus, an' I knows whar I ken git one, without disturbin' de folks; I 'ud not want to be 'sturbed ef I wuz asleep. I'se had no use fur money 'cordin' to de way dese people does biz'ness. Brudder Dow show'd me how to do in de stores an' I'se a good many things charged, an' its mighty convenient to have dem kines ov accounts. Dese good folks gibs you no trouble about 'em. I'se gwine to pay dem accounts when I gits de money. But whut about dat chicken?" He thought a while, scratching his head, and then said, "Now I'se got it."

Then he stretched himself on his bed and snored

soundly till midnight. Rising and dressing himself, he went down one of the streets till he reached the house where Pendleton and Dickinson were boarding. Dickinson, for some reason, had not retired, and was sitting in the room in darkness busied with his own reflections. Presently his ear detected a disturbance in the chicken house, and stepping as noiselessly as possible to the door, looked out. This is what he saw: Sambo coming out with a chicken in his hand. The moon was shining, and he had a clear view. Instantly, with his suspicion aroused, he sprang out, and stood in front of the astonished negro.

"Ah! Sambo, it is you is it? I have caught you. Is this the way you observe the golden rule?"

"I is a observin' ov it; but you is de person dat is gwine back on it."

"How do you make that out, Brother Sambo?"

"W'y, you is a wa'chin' o' me. Would you want me to watch you ef I wuz in yo place an' you wuz in mine? Whut does de gold' rule say about dat?"

Dickinson laughed and said, "Brother Sambo, you are stealing."

"No, sar," exclaimed Sambo with emphasis, "I is not stealin'. I'se honest."

"What are you doing, then, if this is not stealing?"

"Wal," answered Sambo deliberately, "de case stan's dis way: s'pose I had a house full ov chickens like dis house is, an' a poor, hungry fellow wuz to come along widout iny money. Do you s'pose I'd 'ject to his propriatin' one ov dem chickens to his own use. No, sar,

I'd say, Go on, brudder widout sturbin' iny ov de folks, an' hep yo'self. No, sar, ef I wuz to koch 'im in de very ak ov propriatin', an' he wuz to say to me, 'Brudder Sambo, do as you 'd be done by,' I'd say, 'Go long, brudder, wid de fowl, an' may de Lawd bless you.' "

Dickinson again laughed. "That is what you would have me say to you, is it, Brother Sambo?"

"I leabs dat to you, wid de gold' rule afore yo' eyes. Jes' put yo'self in my place an' me in yourn an' termine whut you'd do. I'se willin' to bide by de consequences ob yo' conclusions. Ef under dese sarcumstances you thinks you ought to 'port on me, you'll hab it to do; but you'll be shorely a breakin' ov de gold' rule, cordin' to my obstruction ov it."

Dickinson stood, laughing for a moment.

"Brother Sambo, I was thinking, if you had lived in ancient times, you would have been a very sincere and a constant worshipper of Mercury, and I doubt not you would have paid your devotions exclusively to him. You could have held your hand with him in a game of sophistry."

"Whut kine o' game is dat?"

"The game you are playing now."

" 'Propriatin' a chicken off de roos'?"

"No; but trying to deceive yourself with false reasoning. Your application of the golden rule is an outrage upon common sense."

"I is shorely 'zerbin' dat rule," replied Sambo, with persistence, "an' I'se done zackly whut I'd 'spect t'other folks to do to me. I'se sartin I'd not grudge iny hungry pusson one little chicken."

"Well, Brother Sambo, if I were in your place, and you in mine, I would do as you say. So go with your chicken."

"Thank you, brudder," said Sambo, as he marched away with the fowl in his hand.

Dickinson re-entered his room, fell asleep, and it is reasonable to suppose dreamed about Sister Peggy. For the present we leave Sambo to grapple with the golden rule in his own way.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE days went gliding by, but there was no diminution of Dickinson's infatuation in his love affair. If there was any change, it had increased. Suspense at last became so intolerable that he determined to bring matters to a conclusion. Sister Peggy had never given him any encouragement to hope, but he thought that if he should plainly reveal the state of his affections, he could at least ascertain if there were any grounds whatever for the exercise of perseverance. Whatever might be the result, his gnawing suspense would be ended. But he thought that etiquette demanded that he should acquaint Brother Dow with his purpose and gain his consent to pay his addresses to Sister Peggy. Accordingly, one Saturday he called at the office, where he found Brother Dow alone.

"Be seated, Brother Dickinson," he said with his usual courtliness of manner.

"Brother Dow," he said, suppressing his embarrassment as well as he could, "I have come to talk with you on a very delicate subject;" and he paused.

"Well, proceed, brother," said Dow, encouragingly. "The best way is to broach it at once, without preamble or prelude."

"Well, then, I love your daughter, and I have come to ask your permission to pay my addresses to her."

Brother Dow manifested not the least surprise, or pleasure or displeasure.

"Have you ever spoken to her on the subject?"

"Never."

"Has her conduct ever been such as to encourage you to do so?"

"Néver."

"Very well; you may as well nip the matter in its incipiency; you will by so doing save yourself some mortification."

"Why? How?"

"Have you never thought of the disparity between your ages?"

"I thought we were about the same age."

"What number of years has passed over your head, brother?"

"Twenty-five."

"Ah! Peggy is old enough to be your maternal parent," answered Brother Dow.

"Impossible!" cried Dickinson, raising his hands.

"Nevertheless," replied Dow, "it is a fact."

"If that is true," said Dickinson after a momentary pause, "she is the most remarkable example of the preservation of youth that I ever saw in my life."

"That may be, brother, but I trust the information I have given you will forever banish all thought of persistence in your purpose."

"Brother Dow, what you tell me is astounding, and is a severe test of human credulity, but I would love your daughter if she were as old as Methuselah," cried

Dickinson with vehemence. "What do I care for age as long as it is belied by her personal appearance; you cannot calculate age by the mere flight of years. So all I ask is your permission to win her if I can."

"Granted, brother. I have given you warning, and if you are disposed to walk over the precipice, I disclaim all responsibility for the result."

"If I can win her affections, you will offer no objections to our union?"

"No," answered Dow without hesitation.

"Thank you, Brother Dow." And he left.

That very evening he called on Sister Peggy, who never refused to see him. They talked for a while on different subjects; but Dickinson displayed so much nervousness that it at last attracted Sister Peggy's attention, and, looking him full in the face, she asked, "What troubles you this evening, brother? You are not like yourself."

"Sister Peggy," exclaimed Dickinson, with his frame in a tremble, "have you never suspected that I love you?"

"Why, I hope so, brother. We ought all to love one another."

"You are evading," cried he. "You know I do not mean that cold sort of love. I love you with all my heart and soul. I loved you the first time I ever saw you in the grove at Memphis. From that day to this your image, burning into my heart, has filled my very soul and mingled with all my thoughts. I think of you all the day, and dream of you by night. I cannot

reveal the depth of my feelings. I want you to be my wife. Will you? Take time to consider if you will, but do not send me away without hope."

She did not blush; she did not smile; she was not in the least agitated. The only change that he could detect was the deepening of the habitual sadness of her face; even in that he might have been mistaken. But she hung her head, which was the only change in her attitude. He took this as a favorable omen, suddenly sprang up, seized her hand, and carried it to his lips. She hastily snatched it away, but without any manifestation of anger, or even as if she had taken offense.

"Brother, be seated; calm yourself; I want to reason with you. In the affairs of life we should not give way to impulse."

"Do you call my deep love an impulse? I gave up all my prospects in the States and followed you to Texas, and have waited long and patiently for this opportunity of declaring my passion. My affection for you is not the blind impulse of a school-boy. Tell me, candidly, if you never suspected that I loved you."

"It would be false to say that I have not perceived your infatuation."

"If you knew it would end in disappointment, why did you not warn me?"

"That would have been indelicate, brother. I had no opportunity to warn you till you declared yourself. But, brother," continued Peggy in a somewhat softened tone, "you cannot accuse me of having encouraged you by word or look. I am sure I have never given you

reason to infer that your feeling was reciprocated in the remotest degree."

"But you might have repelled my advances by refusing to see me when I called. You encouraged me by receiving my visits."

"I am sorry, brother, that you have so misinterpreted my conduct. I am sure I have given you no encouragement to persist in your advances. Cannot two beings of opposite sexes associate together, even in the intimacies of warm friendship, without wishing to enter into the marriage relation?"

"I suppose it would be possible to all beings who are destitute of human affections. But, under ordinary circumstances, when there is any congeniality, such association generally ends in their mutual falling in love with each other. You are not such a Diana in your nature—at least, you do not have that appearance—that you are utterly free from all the amiable infirmities of humanity. Tell me, have you never loved in your life?"

"I have loved, brother," answered Sister Peggy, with a paleness suddenly spreading over her face. "Yes, I have loved."

"Tell me about it," cried Dickinson, with hope somewhat reviving, for he thought that if she had ever loved, she could love again.

"You have broached a painful subject," replied Peggy, slowly. "But I think the practice of the golden rule requires that I should reveal a little of my past history, that you may the more easily dismiss your

folly. Yes, I have loved," and she spoke with more energy than Dickinson had ever seen her display. "Years ago I loved a man who completely fulfilled my highest ideal of manhood. In person and mind he was everything that any woman could desire. I worshipped him. He colored, yea, shaped my whole existence. In his absence darkness gathered around me; in his presence I was in heaven. Oh! how I adored him," suddenly Peggy exclaimed, wringing her hands in agony, to Dickinson's utter amazement. Ah, he thought, she was not dead to all feeling; she was still a human being. "O brother! you are opening my wound afresh, and you are making me forget myself. I am living over again the first few days succeeding an event that has darkened my whole life, and at times tempted me to the commission of suicide. Nothing but the fear of God has kept me from it, and sometimes I have been so enraged that I have felt like rushing into his presence and accusing him of cruelty. I do not know how I have managed to endure the trial. Count M——; there, I have called his name for the first time since the dreadful event occurred."

"What occurred?" asked Dickinson, seeing that she was painfully confused.

"I have betrayed myself; I did not intend to pronounce his name. One week before we were to be united he sickened and died, and I died too. All my affections were buried in his tomb, and they have never returned, and never will."

Dickinson saw the tears streaming down her cheek, and the sight inflamed him.

"O Sister Peggy!" he cried, again rising to his feet, "let me win you back to life and love. Let me dry your tears by taking you to my heart that pulsates with pain as well as love for you. Why should you drag out a miserable existence, which, if you would love me even a little, I would make as bright and beautiful as the colors of the rainbow? Bury the dead past and look forward to the future, whose years can be redeemed from sorrow. Just try to love me, and I will be your slave. Every moment of my life shall be devoted to your happiness. Be mine, and we will travel hand in hand through this Texas wilderness, snatching from the passing hours such happiness as is possible to human beings. Let me kiss away your tears."

"Do not approach a step nearer," answered Sister Peggy with coldness. "I yielded to a momentary weakness, but now it is gone."

And she again became as a statue of ice.

"Even if I could love you," she continued, "a great social chasm comes between us which forever forbids any closer relations."

"A social chasm," cried Dickinson. "What can that be?"

"I spoke before I thought," quickly answered Peggy. "But I have revealed enough of my history to show you the folly of ever hoping to make any change in our relations. There is too great a disparity between our ages, even if there were no other obstacle. Do you know that I am at least fifteen or twenty years older than you are?"

"Your father told me that; but such love as mine staggers not at years. You do not appear old to me. Besides, if you have preserved the rosy freshness of youth through all these years amid such trials as have fallen to your lot, it will no doubt outlast mine. Who knows," he continued, playfully, "but you may be endowed with the immortal beauty of an ancient goddess?"

"Put an end to such silly compliments, brother. I do not enjoy them."

"I am only speaking truth as it appears to me," said Dickinson, apologetically. "But I cannot help loving you, though you were as old as one of the antediluvian patriarchs."

"I have told you it is all in vain. There are obstacles in the way that are insurmountable."

"You spoke of a social chasm, in a tone, too, which would lead one to believe it was as wide and impassable as the gulf that separated Dives from Lazarus."

"And it is just that way; it cannot be spanned."

"In the name of the golden rule," cried Dickinson, "what is it? Do unto me as you would have me do unto you, and gratify my aroused curiosity."

"If you appeal to me in that way, I must comply with your request. But you must promise me that you will never divulge the secret which I am about to entrust to your keeping. Will you promise?"

"I promise in the name of the golden rule."

"Well, then," said Peggy, drawing herself up with ill-concealed pride, "my father is Lord L——, and I am the Countess of H——."

This was spoken as if she expected that Dickinson would be utterly overwhelmed by the revelation. The arrow missed the target. He looked at her as though her secret were but the commonest information in the world.

"What possible difference can that make?" he asked with an air which indicated that he thought she was making a mountain out of a mole-hill.

"What difference does it make!" she cried in surprise. "Do you not see that an abyss deep and dark yawns between us?"

"No; I do not see it," answered Dickinson, with rising anger. "Do you suppose I care for the absurd conventionalities of aristocratic society? Why am not I as good as any count that ever paraded his imaginary accomplishments before the gaudy court of a king? What is there in nature to make him my superior? Perhaps he can show a genealogy that embraces a long list of ancestors, and perhaps he may possess more wealth than I do; but these are adventitious circumstances which affect not in the least degree the native nobility of man. A king, when it comes to natural endowments, is not one whit my superior. Indeed, I have a supreme contempt for some of earth's dignitaries whose histories I have read. Though they were elevated by the accident of birth a little above the common level of humanity, yet they had not a single quality of mind or heart that would command the admiration of the self-respecting portion of mankind. And must I be told that I must humble myself in the dust

before people who have nothing to recommend them but the artificial distinctions which foolish society has erected as a barrier between man and man? No, no, Sister Peggy, the chasm which you have mentioned as such a stupendous obstacle in the way of my aspirations has no existence except in your imagination. I have often heard your father say that all men are born equal."

"And so they are," quickly replied Peggy, "in some respects. They have an inalienable right to liberty; but blood makes a difference which no sort of conventionality can ever remove."

"Blood," answered Dickinson, with a slight curl of his lip, "is merely the crimson fluid which circulates in the veins and arteries of all animals. The microscope has never detected the slightest difference between the corpuscles that flow in the veins of a king and those of the meanest peasant. Your notion is based upon nothing but a pure conventionality growing out of a false conception of the inborn dignity of man. The assumptions of aristocracy are a foolish attempt to draw distinctions between ranks that have not the slightest foundation in nature. The only aristocracy I recognize is that of brain, which God himself has established, and which men cannot destroy, if they would."

"You think your marriage with a princess would be no violation of propriety?"

"Not in the remotest degree. To tell you the truth, there are some princesses with whom I would not

condescend to enter the marriage relation. They are so far inferior to me in all the elements of intellectuality that there could be little congeniality between us in conjugal life. That sort of obstruction, indeed, makes a social chasm which not even a miracle could bridge."

"My brother," said Sister Peggy, coldly, "I did not suspect that you were so inflated with arrogance."

Dickinson felt his indignation rising and his love cooling.

"Sister Peggy," replied Dickinson in a tone indicative of a slight degree of mockery, "I can easily retort the charge. I never till this hour suspected that you entertained such inconsistent notions of human society. If this is the creed of your father, this scheme of practicing the golden rule as the only true principle of government is a miserable farce. You and your parent are every day looking down with contempt upon the people you have governed here with apparently benevolent intentions. You are not doing unto them as you would have them do unto you; for you want them to regard you as a superior being separated from them by a great social chasm."

"Your accusation is unjust, brother. For in my conduct I am sure that I have never given any one reason to think that I entertain the sentiments you have imputed to me."

"But," answered Dickinson, quickly, "you cannot deny that they exist in your heart."

"I deny nothing. I let my life speak for itself."

"Your life," cried Dickinson in the heat of indignation, "is closely related to a falsehood. Forgive me," he exclaimed, earnestly; "I did not mean to say that; it was but the utterance of impulse. Will you pardon me?"

"Certainly," answered Sister Peggy without the slightest show of agitation. "I make charitable allowance for your perturbation of mind as I would wish you to do were our places reversed. But, brother, it is useless to prolong this interview; it is becoming unpleasant to us both. Let us terminate it, and I beg you never allude to this subject again."

"I promise you in the name of the golden rule that I never will. My foolish dream is over. What you have said widens the chasm which you say yawns between us. You request that the subject be dropped forever. Be it so. I can banish it from my heart if not from my memory. I shall always hereafter look back upon this interview as one of those sad episodes that so frequently break the monotony of human life."

"Let us not part in anger, brother," said Sister Peggy, mildly. "I assure you that I have not the slightest feeling of acrimony toward you. You have spoken hastily and harshly and done me injustice; but I can overlook it and treat you as I have always done."

"But I cannot treat you in the same way," replied Dickinson with some bitterness. "For I now see that my visits have been intrusions which you politely endured in accordance with the demands of the golden rule. They will never be repeated."

"I beseech you do not say that. You are mistaken. I have enjoyed our interviews. Your conversation has helped me to beguile many an hour by calling me from the dreary past to the realities of the present. I hope you will not terminate our social intercourse."

So saying, she extended her hand with her usual air of maternal dignity. Dickinson barely touched it. He turned and walked away with every particle of affection for Sister Peggy eradicated from his heart. There is nothing surprising in the fact; for, as human experience demonstrates, a very little thing sometimes produces a complete revulsion of feeling. There is not a hair's breadth between mirth and mourning—a smile and a tear. There is no impassable gulf between love and hate.

. . . . . .

Dickinson went his way, and being a susceptible and impulsive man, not many weeks elapsed before he transferred his affections to another object, wondering how he could ever have allowed Sister Peggy to occupy even the darkest nook in his heart.

There was a young lady teacher in the school, who was known as "Sister Susan," attractive in person and mind. She would long ago have made a deep impression upon Dickinson had not the image of Sister Peggy filled his heart. But that having been eradicated, Cupid found the house empty and he quietly entered and turned the whole stream of affection toward Sister Susan. It must not be supposed that the "blind god" had any difficult task to perform. Sister

Susan was as different from Sister Peggy as day from night. In a word, the two were antipodal so far as social proclivities were concerned. Susan was bright, witty and cheerful, as well as intellectual. After a few visits Dickinson found himself more enamored and infatuated with her than he had ever been with Peggy—and he pronounced himself a logger-head for ever having been captivated by a statue of snow.

One evening he declared his love with his usual impetuosity. Sister Susan's color was changed to crimson on hearing his burning words; but, feeling a little mischievous, she turned her glowing face toward him and archly asked, "What has become of Sister Peggy?"

"She is at home, I guess," answered Dickinson, drily.

"Do you suppose I was blind to your infatuation?" continued Susan.

"Sister Susan," said Dickinson with energy, "every man is guilty of folly in his first *affaire d' amour.* I beg you never allude to that foolish experience; it was all a flash; there was nothing in it but an idle fancy."

"Perhaps your present experience is another specimen of idle fancy."

Their whole interview need not be recorded. Dickinson urged his suit with so much vehemence and ardor that Susan was convinced of his sincerity, and at last gave him to understand that his affection was reciprocated.

What was there to prevent immediate marriage? Nothing; and soon the monotony of Golden Rule was

pleasantly broken by the celebration of nuptial rites. Brother Dow and Sister Peggy both attended, and gave the couple useful presents. It was the first marriage Golden Rule had ever witnessed.

Our limits will not allow us to enter into particulars.

## CHAPTER X.

AFTER the marriage of Dickinson more than a year had passed away, and during all this time the affairs of Golden Rule flowed on seemingly in the same smooth channel. Brother Dow and Sister Peggy seemed to be satisfied with the progress made in the execution of their scheme. The school had improved since the advent of Pendleton and Dickinson, who were accomplished scholars and excellent teachers. Peace and prosperity seemed to be in the ascendant throughout the whole region of Golden Rule, and every inhabitant appeared to be contented and happy. Sambo, especially, enjoyed all the delights of his new-found freedom. Often he would pause in his work, which he never suffered to grow wearisome, and indulge in audible soliloquy.

"Dis gold' rule is shorely a mighty good instertution. I'se powerful glad I found my way to dis place. Here I works when I feels like, an' res' when I feels like it, an' dar is no oberseer to keep a watchin' o' me an' keep me lammin' away till I'se almos' dead. Brudder Dow is shorely a good man wid his gold' rule. Dat is de only oberseer an' de only whip he has. I is a practicin' de gold' rule all de time, too, an' I is hones' about it. I goes to dese people's chicken house when I is hungry fur fowl meat, an' I'd sartinly grudge no

man a chicken ef he was hungry an' I had a full roos'. I does zackly as I'd be done by. Den I pays a good price fur all de goods I gits out o' de stores; an' when I ain't got no money I takes dem on a credic wid de honest 'tention ob paying fur 'em as soon as I is able. An' dat is whut Brudder Dow telled me to do, an' it's right, too, 'cordin' to de rule."

And thus reasoned Brother Sambo, and went on his way rejoicing. Who could blame him?

One day an insignificant event, at least in appearance, occurred, which, however, was so far-reaching in its effect that it changed the path of destiny for every inhabitant of Golden Rule. The lives of us all hinge upon very little things. One word has often shaped the destiny of a human being and led to success or ruin. The religion of Mahomet owes its preservation to a spider's web. A shower of rain settled the fate of Waterloo, and changed the face of Europe; and thus trivial incidents turn the history of individuals and nations into new directions. One day a stranger in the garb of a hunter, as the sun was sinking towards the western horizon, rode a mustang pony into the town of Golden Rule. He carried a long rifle in front of him behind the horn of his saddle. The first man he saw was Dickinson.

"Why, hello, Dickinson!" he exclaimed familiarly, "how are you? What are you doing here?"

"Why, Col. Crockett!" exclaimed Dickinson, in surprise, "how are you? I may ask you the same question you propounded to me, 'What are you doing here?' "

He was addressing the famous David Crockett, with whom the reader of Texas history is acquainted. He was once a member of Congress from the State of Tennessee, and aspired to represent his district another term, but was defeated. He then made his way to Texas with the intention of carving out a new pathway for himself.

"I hardly know, myself," replied Crockett to Dickinson's last question. "I am just riding about over Texas, seeking what I may devour, as the preachers say, and I accidentally stumbled into this town. I didn't know there was such a place in Texas. What is the name of it?"

"Golden Rule."

"A good name," replied Crockett, "if you only live up to it. But I guess the name has no connection with the character of the citizens."

"For once you will miss it in your guess. But come, you must go home with me, and we will have a talk about old times."

"Are you keeping house here? Are you a citizen of the place? and are you a married man?"

"I can answer all your questions with the one word, Yes," replied Dickinson.

"Then, I accept your invitation."

Accordingly, the two men, talking as only old friends can, made their way to Dickinson's house, which was a neat and comfortable structure, situated in a desirable portion of the town. After supper Crockett lighted his pipe and took a seat on the gallery in company with Dickinson. They were facing the river.

"You have a splendid view here," said Crockett after he had sent a few puffs of smoke into the air; "it's charming."

"Yes, it is romantic and picturesque. Wife and I sit here every evening, when the weather is fine, enjoying the scenery; it is grand."

"You are right," said Crockett, with his eyes fixed on the river, as it glided and rippled along under the silvery moonbeams.

"How are you making a living here?" abruptly inquired Crockett. "Are you practicing law?"

"No, no," replied Dickinson with a laugh. "There are no lawyers here, and no courts. Such a thing as a law suit is unknown among us. There is not a criminal in town."

"How do you manage?" asked Crockett in surprise. "I've been to Congress, but I've never heard of a place without laws and courts."

"Oh! we have only one law, and it keeps us all out of mischief."

"What law is that?"

"The golden rule. You know, if every one obeys it there can be no necessity for any other law."

"You astonish me," exclaimed Crockett. "Do you mean to tell me that every man in the town is perfectly honest?"

"To-morrow I will show you through the place, and you may judge for yourself. I have dwelt here several years, and I have never seen a man arrested for any misdemeanor. In fact, there are no officers to arrest one."

"What!" cried Crockett, "no constables and no squires?"

"Not one. Of course, we have no jail."

"Well, that heads me!" cried Crockett. "I can't believe you, Dickinson. You are just trying to play off a joke on me."

"I have told you the truth, Colonel."

After a few moments' reflection Crockett asked, "Dickinson, what is there to keep people from stealing and robbing?"

"Nothing, Colonel, but their own sense of honor and right. If a man has everything he wants, what temptation is there to steal?"

"Why, it's born in some people, and it's natural to them to steal. They don't know how to be honest. You needn't tell me that every man in this town is honest. I saw some niggers passing before supper; are they citizens or slaves?"

"There are no slaves in the community, Colonel. All are free."

"Well, you can't make me believe that a nigger will not steal, if he has the chance."

"Why should the negro steal?" asked Dickinson, thinking of Sambo. "Why should he, if he suffers for nothing?"

"I don't know why he should, unless it's his nature, just like lions growl and fight. But tell me, who started this project? What ever put it into his head?"

"A man by the name of Lorenzo Dow originated it."

"What! that old preacher that I have met in Ten-

nessee, who discovered a rogue by putting a rooster under a wash-kettle? It was funny; but I was there that night and saw him do it."

"No, it is not that Dow, nor even a relative. You shall see him in the morning."

After a long conversation on other subjects they retired to rest. Crockett was up early the next morning, walking over the town, and taking observations.

After breakfast Dickinson with Crockett called at the office of Brother Dow, where an introduction took place.

"So you're not the preacher Dow that I have often heard in Tennessee?" said Crockett.

"No, but I am acquainted with him."

"Are you related to him?"

"Not at all, brother; but I have assumed his name."

"Why don't you use your own name?"

"Because it does not suit my purpose."

"Dickinson, my friend here, has been telling me some wonderful things about your town."

"I hope he has impressed you with the excellency of our form of government, both in its civil and ecclesiastical aspects."

"Indeed, it is excellent if what he tells me is really true."

"He could not tell you a falsehood," bowing to Dickinson; "at least without violating the one principle that underlies our government."

"Will you please explain to me how you manage your government with that one principle? I have been a member of Congress, and I learned there that there

are more principles than one that enter into the government of the United States."

"I will explain with pleasure, brother."

We will not tax the reader's patience with the long speech into which Brother Dow entered with his usual enthusiasm. He merely dwelt upon the excellency of the golden rule, and showed that it was exemplified fully and gloriously in this assemblage of brothers dwelling together in peace and fraternal love. After the speech had wound to a close Crockett was conducted through the town, and shown the practical workings of the golden rule. He looked on and listened in silence. He then returned with Dickinson, with his head bent in thought.

"What do you think of it all?" presently inquired Dickinson. "What do you think of Brother Dow?"

"Dickinson," said Crockett slowly speaking, "has it never occurred to you that the old man is considerably deranged in the upper story?"

Dickinson laughed.

"How much money has he?" asked Crockett.

"I do not know; but he never seems to be handicapped for the lack of funds."

"Well," answered Crockett, "I believe he is crazy, and is wasting a fortune on a wild goose chase. He is a poor judge of human nature if he thinks that men can be persuaded to practice the golden rule without being made over. Of course, they may do it to a certain extent, and as long as it does not interfere with their selfishness. But I'll warrant that your good citizens are not honest in everything. The old man is a down-

right simpleton for trusting niggers. He is honest himself and assumes that everybody else is. He is making a mistake which he will find out when it is too late to rectify it. Are they all Christian people here?"

"Oh! no; Brother Dow does not believe in Christianity. He thinks the observance of the golden rule is religion enough."

"He is not an atheist, is he?"

"No; he says he believes in God, but he rejects the Bible as a divine revelation."

"Then his scheme will be a miserable failure. But, Dickinson, changing the subject," said Crockett, breaking off abruptly, "we are going to have trouble in Texas, and that very soon, too. I would advise you to fortify your town or leave it. You may depend upon it that we have got to fight Santa Anna or give up this beautiful country of Texas."

"I have not heard of any trouble brewing, Colonel."

"Whether you have heard of it or not, take my word for it that the storm is coming, and that before very long. Your Golden Rule will be wiped out of existence. Santa Anna will pay no attention to that rule. It is no principle of his government. Get out of his way, or be prepared to whip him."

"I hope you may be a false prophet, Colonel."

"I wish I were, in this case; but we'll see."

Crockett then went to the stable, saddled his pony, filled his saddle-bags with bread, and rode away. Dickinson gazed after him thoughtfully till he disappeared in the haze of the prairie. When would they meet again?

## CHAPTER XI.

WE must now return to Sambo, who, since his residence at Golden Rule, had been practicing the one principle of Brother Dow's government according to his own notions of propriety and rectitude. It was never his intention to trample it under foot, and he was trying to comply with its demands in his own way. He would have denied in all sincerity that he had ever antagonized its requirements. Pendleton, heretofore described as a keen, critical observer, had his suspicions aroused as to the immaculate integrity of the villagers, and he had for some time been quietly taking observations. He had his eye on Sambo especially. One day, not long after the visit of Col. Crockett, he was in one of the stores when Brother Sambo entered. Here was a good opportunity, and Pendleton promptly made use of it by stepping behind two large boxes, one on the other, which afforded him a place of concealment. The negro entered, and as he had never found any one watching him, boldly commenced his commercial operations. In accordance with his habit of loud soliloquizing, he said, "Well, I needs some suger, and here is a bar'l ob it ob a very good quality, too. I wants about ten poun's, an' I will wrap up dat much in dis paper."

This was accordingly done.

"Dis sugar is worf two cents a poun—at leas' I'd ax no mo' dan dat fur it ef it blonged to me So I'll do as I'd be done by. Here I leabs two dimes to pay fur it on dis shelf made fur de purpose, an' de sto-keeper can find it. De nex thing I wants is a par o' briches, an' here is a pile ob dem." Sambo tried on several pairs till he found one that suited his taste. "Dey fits me zackly. Now whut is dey worf? Here is some kine o' mark on dis paper-tag, but I can't read yit, do brudder is a learnin' me how. So I'll hab to gess at de price, an' I'll make a hones' gess, 'cordin' to de gold rule. Dey is worf a dollar, an' dat is a good price. Ef dey blong'd to me dat is all I'd ax fur em—jes' dat an' no mo'. Here is a ves' to go wid de briches, an' it's not worf a cent mo'n two bits. Here is a coat, too, to finish out de suit, an' as I'se done spend all my money, I'll have to take it on a credic. Dat's whut de gold rule say, so Brudder Dow telled me when I fust come to dis bressed town. I'se shorely struck a mighty good instertution. Why can't de peoples ac' 'cordin' to dis rule ebery whars? Ef dey would, dis mis'bl worl 'ud be worf livin' in. I hopes Brudder Dow 'll persuade dem to do it; an' he will do it, too, fur he is shorely one good man, dat does to eberybody as he'd be done by. He sez he's a gwine to make de gold rule de 'ligion ov de whole yearth, an' I b'lieve he will. I hears dem school-boys a-preachin' about it, an' I onderstans dey is to go out an' preach dis gospil to ebery man. An' when dey all gits to preachin', dey'll shorely hab a good

time. But I'se done finished my business, an' it's time I wuz a gwine."

Sambo had not taken a step before Pendleton emerged from his place of concealment.

"Ah! Brother Sambo, I have caught you this time in the very act of theft."

"An' I'se kotched you too, Brudder Pendleton, in de bery ac' ov breakin' de gold rule, fur you's bin a wuchin' o' me. Is dat de way you 'zerves dat rule. Ef I wuz in yo' place an' you was in mine, would you want me to wuch you, as do I had no trus' in you?"

"I could not be in your place, Brother Sambo. I am no thief."

"I ain't a-sayin' you is; neider is I. But de way Brudder Dow sez to 'ply de gold rule is to put yo'self in tother feller's place, an' den do to him as you'd want to be done by. You isn't to mejer dis rule by stan'in' in yo' own place, but in de oder man's place," said Sambo with the triumphant air of one who had utterly defeated his opponent in argument. "Now," he continued, "here you's bin a watchin' o' me, an' ef dat aint a breakin' ob de gold rule I dunno whut is. Brudder Dow sez we mus' truss one noder an' treat one anoder as brudders; an' I ax you ef you is done dat. I wouldn't a watched you; but here you's bin a watchin' me as do you didn't have no conf'dence in me."

"I have not one iota in you, Brother Sambo. You are a rogue."

"Now," said Sambo, meekly, "you jes' keeps on a-breakin' de gold rule, fur you is a callin' o' me bad

names. Put yo'self in my place, an' how 'ud you like me to call you sich names as you is a callin' o' me?"

"I could not object to it, if you were to detect me in the very act of robbing my brother."

"Dat isn't de pint afore us at dis present. I is not dealin' wid you. I hesn't kotched you at inything, fur I neber watches my brudder man; fur, Brudder Dow, he sez dat 'ud be wrong. But de whole pint at dis present is, how you gwine to look at de pint ef you wuz in my place an' I wuz in yourn."

"I never saw such a gross perversion of a moral principle," said Pendleton, half talking to himself.

"I'se shore I is not a invertin' on de gold rule," said Sambo.

"That is exactly what you have done, Brother Sambo. You have turned it upside down and inside out. You have utterly distorted it to suit your own selfish ends. Have you been acting in this way ever since you came here?"

"Actin' in whut way, brudder?"

"Why, taking goods at your own price, and some of them on a credit when you never expect to pay for them?"

"Dar, brudder, how you knows I neber expects to pay fur dem? You neber hearn me say dat. Who tole you I'se not a gwine to pay fur dem?"

"Have you ever paid for anything you have bought on a credit?"

"Not yit I hain't, becaze I'se not had de money. But I'se gwine to pay fur ebery one ov em. In all dis I'se done zackly as I'd be done by."

"Come on, Brother Sambo. I want you to go with me to Brother Dow. Let us see how he will answer your sophistical arguments."

"Sartinly I'll go wid you. I'se willin' to meet Brudder Dow or inybody else in argifyin' de gold rule."

"No; do not leave your sugar," said Pendleton as Sambo was about to deposit the package on the counter. "Face him with all the goods you have taken. Leave your cast-off clothing here in the house till you return. You are not afraid to trust the owner of this store, are you?"

"No, sir, fo' de Lawd I is not. But ef he hez iny use fur em he's welcome to em."

"I guess so," said Pendleton. "He would certainly be entitled to the old suit in the place of the new which you have on."

"I perposed no sich trade as dat. I wuz not a gwine to swop my ole suit fur a new one."

Pendleton, in a thoughtful frame of mind, went to Brother Dow's office, followed by Sambo, who was confident that his construction of the golden rule was in accordance with the most rigid principles of rectitude, and he would have been willing to discuss the ethics of his conduct with the most acute logician. They entered the room, and were kindly and politely received by Brother Dow.

"Be seated, brothers. To what fortunate circumstance am I indebted for the honor of this visit?"

"Brother Dow," began Pendleton, speaking very deliberately, "I have caught Brother Sambo in an act of

such doubtful propriety that I have brought him to you."

"You are using strange language, brother—language which is unknown in this community, when applied to human beings. You may catch a horse and other quadrupeds, but I am at a loss to conceive how you catch men. You are not a police officer, such as they have in all dishonest cities and towns."

Pendleton was dumfounded.

"He's bin a watchin' o' me, Brudder Dow," spoke up Sambo quickly, "jes' as do I wuz a tief, an' he's bin a interferin' wid my hones' trades, an' he's made me come wid 'im to see you about it, jes' as do I couldn't make a hones' trade. Dat's what he's done."

"Explain yourself, Brother Pendleton," said Brother Dow without one particle of emotion.

"Why, look at him!" exclaimed Pendleton. "He took that sugar which he holds in his hands at two cents a pound; you know it is worth eight. He took that vest and pants at one dollar and a quarter, and they are marked six, as you can see for yourself. He took that coat on a credit, without intending ever to pay for it."

"Brudder Pendleton," interrupted Sambo, "is a doin' me a injestice. I'se neber said I'se not a gwine to pay fur dis coat. I'se a gwine to pay fur it soon as I gits de money. De oder tings I'se done honesly paid fur."

Brother Dow examined the tag on the articles and found that Pendleton was correct in his statement.

"Brother Sambo," said Dow, looking the negro full in the face and speaking gently, "I have confidence in you, and I trust you; but, for Brother Pendleton's satisfaction, explain how you made the trade."

"Wal," said Sambo, brightening up at the compliment he had heard from the lips of Brother Dow, "you see as how I couldn't read, I had to guess at de price of de goods. I wuz a thinkin' ov de gold rule all de time, an' wuz a tryin' to do zackly as I'd be done by. I made a hones' guess, an' in my hones' opinion dey wuz worf zackly whut I paid fur 'em. I tuck dis coat on a credic, an' I'se a gwine to pay fur it jes' as soon as I'se able. Now dat is de whole bizness. An' Brudder Pendleton, he wuz a hidin' ov his sef an' a-watchin' o' me, when onder de same sarcumstances I wouldn't a watched him."

"Brother Pendleton," said Dow, without any change of manner or tone, "you should not impugn the motives of any member of this community. Brother Sambo wears the badge of brotherhood, and is entitled to implicit confidence and trust. If we treat each other with no more consideration than men of the outside world manifest for one another, we will never succeed in persuading mankind to adopt our glorious religion. I want to demonstrate by practical experiment the perfect feasibility of the golden rule as the guiding principle in all the affairs of life. To do that our own conduct must be a living illustration of the principle. If we allow suspicion to effect a lodgment and find an abiding place in our minds, it will impede

the progress of our scheme. Watching the brothers is certainly an evidence of suspicion."

"I do not deny it," replied Pendleton, calmly. "I have suspected Brother Sambo of moral crookedness for some time. His own conduct was surely enough to arouse suspicion."

"Of what offense has he been guilty, brother?"

"I have just shown you. He stands before you convicted of a grave crime."

"I find something a little reprehensible in your conduct, Brother Pendleton, but I am willing to overlook it. You may be satisfied in your own mind that Brother Sambo has violated the golden rule; but I do not see that he has, according to his construction of it."

"No, certainly, if you give him all the latitude he wants in construction. But you can see that he has construed it to suit his own interest. In my opinion he has most grossly perverted the rule, and to punish him he ought to be expelled from the community."

"Brudder Dow," quickly answered Sambo, who was frightened at the hint of expulsion from this accommodating and charitable town, "Brudder Pendleton is gwine back on de gold rule agin. He's done dat more'n a dozen times wid me. I'se axed him to put his sef in my place and 'side whut he'd do, but he allers looks at de subjec from his pint ov view. Now, Brudder Dow, jes' ax 'im yo'sef if he wuz in my place, would he want to be spelled from de community. Dat's de way to settle de pint."

"What say you, Brother Pendleton?"

"What criminal wants the law executed? Of course, if it were possible for me to take the place of a rogue, certainly I would want to escape punishment for all my crimes. Candidly, I answer that I would not want to be expelled from a town that allows me to go the whole length of licentiousness and to depredate upon my neighbors with perfect impunity. If that is putting myself in Brother Sambo's place, I should wish to remain a member of the community all my life."

"Dar now," quickly exclaimed Sambo, "he's done answered my question, an' he's hit de gold rule 'bout right. He's doin' as he'd be done by."

"Brother Dow," said Pendleton, paying no attention to Sambo's conclusion and his air of consciousness that he had prostrated his opponent in argument, "is it possible that you can tolerate such an atrocious perversion of the governing principle of this town? Will you just exonerate Brother Sambo from all guilt?"

"Brother Pendleton," answered Dow, with a compassionate air, "you must make some allowance for the infirmities of ignorance. Brother Sambo has just emerged from the horrors of a state of inhuman bondage, in which condition he was deprived of every opportunity of cultivating his intellectual and moral faculties. His attention was never directed to the beauty and utility of the golden rule. His whole education was based on a false principle—that is, do unto men as they do unto you. In his state of slavery, if he did wrong, he was forced to it by the stern necessities of his awful condition. Who could be expected

to rise to unimpeachable rectitude under the hideous lash of oppression? I think Brother Sambo deserves credit for not taking refuge in suicide, and thus putting an end to his intolerable troubles."

"I'se bin tempted," said Sambo, wiping the tears from his eyes, "to susancide more dan once, but I wuz afeerd of de law ov God, which say, 'dou shall not kill,' an' dat means a pusson's own sef as well as inybody else."

"Brother Sambo," said Dow, pityingly, "has come among us in order to free himself from the shackles of slavery, and he is a free man entitled to all the rights of a human being. He asks only the opportunity to demonstrate his capacity to obey the golden rule. Of course, we could not expect him to perceive its beauty and appreciate its excellence till he sees its practical operations. Brother Sambo is beginning to understand the sacred relations which exist between man and man. I doubt not he will rise to our high standard."

"I is allers done to oder folks as I wanted dem to do me, an' ef I'se eber done wrong, it comed from de head, an' not from de heart."

"I have no doubt of that, Brother Sambo," answered Dow, gently and compassionately. "You must continue to study the golden rule and execute it in every particular, and as your moral education advances you will rise to a still higher plane of action, and your whole moral being shall reach the highest state of development of which it is capable. You can go, Brother Sambo, to the duties of your vocation."

"And so," exclaimed Pendleton in amazement, "you are going to turn him loose to prey upon the community!"

"What would you have me do, brother?" asked Dow, quietly. "The golden rule does not tolerate corporal punishment, even if I were disposed to inflict it. I hope, brother, you will rid yourself of the habit of using such hard-featured words as 'prey' and 'depredate' when you speak in the presence of any member of this community. We aim to train them up to such a high standard that all such monstrous terms will have no significance in their vocabulary."

"I have no more to say," quoth Brother Pendleton as he rose to go. He made his way to Dickinson's residence, and found that gentleman in his study.

"Brother Dickinson," he said as he seated himself, "has it never occurred to you that Brother Dow has a rather broad streak of insanity in his composition."

"Why do you ask?" inquired Dickinson, laughing.

"There is nothing to laugh at," replied Pendleton, severely. "It is a serious business. I want you to answer my question."

"Well, I had never given much thought to it till it was suggested by Col. Crockett when he visited us a short time since. The truth is, I have associated with him very little. But Col. Crockett decided that he was crazy."

"But what is your opinion?"

"Well, I would hesitate to call him insane. He is morally eccentric."

"He is a moral Don Quixote, and is fighting windmills, which will at some time break his head."

"What has driven you to that conclusion?"

Pendleton briefly described the scene at Brother Dow's office. "And now do you not think that he has given the unscrupulous negro liberty to steal or appropriate whatever he wants at the dictates of his own sweet will? There is now not a thing to restrain Sambo's sinful propensities."

"Why did you not reason with Brother Dow?"

"I tried to do so, but he would not listen to me. His mulish obstinacy and his moral obtuseness are perfectly amazing."

"Well, I shall not trouble myself about it."

"I shall seek another interview with him."

And Pendleton rose and left.

## CHAPTER XII.

A WEEK'S residence at Golden Rule had aroused Pendleton's suspicions as to the practical workings of Dow's benevolent scheme. He did not believe that the affairs of the village were converging to the result to which Brother Dow was looking forward with fond anticipation. In fact, from the first he had no confidence in any project based upon the hypothesis that human nature is innately pure. The conduct of Sambo determined him to enter into a more thorough investigation of the commercial affairs of the community. This he did, and when he had secured sufficient facts in the case, he one Saturday morning called on Brother Dow.

"Are you at leisure this morning?" inquired Pendleton, after they had exchanged the customary civilities.

"I can attend to your wants, brother, if I have to postpone other matters for that purpose."

"Thank you; and now I wish you would listen to me calmly and patiently, bearing it in mind that I am trying to carry out the golden rule in what I have to say to you. I have always found you a reasonable man, therefore I hope you will hear me quietly."

"Proceed, brother."

"I must preface what I have to say by informing you

that I was once a preacher of the gospel. I abandoned my vocation for reasons which it is not necessary to mention. While seeking other employment in the village of Memphis you appeared upon the scene; and you remember I entered into a contract to teach in your school. Perfectly willing myself to obey the golden rule, I confess I had some curiosity to see how the rule would work in the scheme which you proposed to carry out on a large scale; and this is the chief reason why I became a member of your community."

"I trust you are satisfied with the success of the scheme, Brother Pendleton."

"Well, Brother Dow, I doubted its practicability from the first, from the fact that you based your principle upon a foundation which has no existence except in your imagination," said Pendleton, feeling his way with caution.

"What foundation is that, brother?"

"Why you assume that human nature is originally without moral blemish."

"So it is, brother."

"I beg to differ from you. If there is any principle of Christian theology which is demonstrated by human experience, it is that man is born a depraved being, with every inclination opposed to the practice of the rule which constitutes the basis of your government, which your generosity has established in this town. All history is but a record of scenes that have had their origin in human depravity."

"Those scenes," interrupted Brother Dow, "may be

traced to the neglect of the practice of the golden rule."

"That is true as to fact, but the question is why has the golden rule been so neglected?"

"Because men have not perceived its intrinsic beauty, and have never seen it exemplified except in a very narrow sphere. Your own Christ insists upon its observance, and he was a good man as well as a wise one."

"I am glad that you have introduced the name of Christ, though I must assert that he was far more than man, he was God-man. True enough he used in substance the words, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,' but he always and everywhere proclaimed the solemn truth, 'Ye must be born again.' He knew the natural sinfulness of the heart, and he insisted that it must be radically changed before there could be reconciliation with God. Now, without that change, I tell you, Brother Dow, the practice of the golden rule is an utter impossibility. Please hear me, Brother Dow," he continued, as he saw the old man preparing to speak. "I tell you there is not a single principle of the Christian religion that can be truly carried into practice without a radical change in the dispositions of the natural heart. Certainly men can see by the exercise of their natural judgment that these principles are sufficient for the moral regeneration of the human family, but how to put them in practice is the question. Holiness is revolting to the unregenerate heart. The natural man shrinks from it as he

would the leprosy of the ancient Jews. Thoughtful men have always admitted that there is something fearfully wrong with human society in its moral aspects. They have proposed remedy after remedy. They have substituted pompous rites and ceremonies for the religion of Christ, and have thus tried to evade the wicket gate of true repentance. Even in the church some are so fascinated with self-righteousness that they offer to God the fragrant flowers and fruits of Cain instead of the bloody sacrifice of Abel."

"Your church is full of hypocrites," interrupted Brother Dow with blunt abruptness.

"Certainly there are some of that character in the church, but you dare not attribute their hypocrisy to any defect in the Christian religion; it springs from the want of spiritual regeneration; that is the whole difficulty. People without having been born again enter the church, and they are not prepared for the enjoyment of its privileges. Their faith is a cold, hard, dead thing, that is incapable of directing the current of their life. Christ to them is but a dim phantom, and no living person in the heart. They are making the vain attempt to serve God and mammon—living for the sinful world and snatching at shadows in religion. The root of the matter is not in them. They have no relish for true holiness. They have never really renounced the world, the flesh and the devil. They have never yielded to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and are not guided by it in their daily conduct. They make some show of piety and devotion

on the Lord's day, and forget all about it during the remainder of the week."

"If that is the condition of the church," said Brother Dow, "it is certainly a corrupt institution."

"You make an egregious mistake if you think that all members of the church are spiritual Laodiceans. In fact, the majority I believe are honest people who are trusting to Christ alone for salvation. He is a living entity in their hearts."

"Brother Pendleton," interrupted Dow, "you are talking in riddles which remind me of the ridiculous mysteries in which some of the ancient sects endeavored to apparel their pious ceremonies. My observation convinces me that there is no such religion in the heart as you are so enthusiastically describing. It is all a hallucination."

"Brother Dow, what would you think of a blind man who should be convinced that there is no such thing as light? He would reach that conclusion from his own observation. Thousands upon thousands of people have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and they have lived up to the golden rule, and enjoyed a peace which is utterly unknown in this wicked world. Will you pronounce their experience a hallucination simply because you are a stranger to it? According to your own confession it has never entered into your life. How, then, can you be a competent or impartial judge? You are simply biased by your own preconceived notions."

"You have admitted that the Christian religion

sways only a small portion of mankind, and yet civilization has advanced."

"Brother Dow," said Pendleton with warmth, "eliminate Christian influences out of civilization, and it would relapse into the barbarism of ancient times. That is clearly proved by a comparison between heathen and Christian nations. Certainly, all who live in Christian countries are not true followers of Christ, but nearly all admit the utility of Christian ethics, and they submit in theory, if not in practice. All are controlled more or less by Christian influences. That fact accounts for the progress of modern civilization."

"But you cannot say that you Christians practice the golden rule."

"Brother Dow," answered Pendleton, with deep solemnity, "our Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed a high standard for the guidance of human beings. It requires perfect holiness, which no man can ever reach. To live up to that standard is an impossibility. Hence, the necessity for what we call the vicarious atonement. In that lies man's only hope of deliverance from sin. Jesus knew that man could never reach sinless perfection in this world. The law of God demands absolute, perfect obedience, and man can never render such obedience. The Son of God took pity upon fallen man, and fulfilled the law in his stead. He shed his blood upon the cross, and thus rendered salvation possible. Trust in Christ is our only hope. If we have no faith in him, any sort of religion we may profess is a

wretched delusion. True, Christians may fall far short in the discharge of their duties, and may fail to live up, at least rigidly, to the requirements of the golden rule—a source of regret to them—but they are encouraged to perseverance in their efforts by the assurance that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. We are all born in sin, and it clings to us all through life. We cannot shake it off entirely, try as hard as we may. Christ knows all this, and he has given us the assurance that if we will confess our sins and truly repent of them, he will forgive us. If our salvation depended upon our obedience to God's high and holy law, eternal perdition would be our inevitable doom. Outside of the atonement of Christ and apart from my faith in his promises and in his power to save, I have no hope of ever reaching heaven; and now permit me to say in regard to the golden rule that the ultimate obligation to obedience lies in Christ and not in considerations of worldly policy. We must obey it because it is right and not because we think it is best for human society. Your scheme, however benevolent and charitable, has no connection with Christ. Any scheme of moral reformation that does not have him for its very centre will never be crowned with success. Men have tried such schemes, at least in their individual experience, for ages past. They have substituted morality for the religion of the heart. They think if they pay their debts, and, in a word, render an outward obedience to the moral law, they will escape the righteous condemnation of God. But in

heaven there will be no debts to pay, no poor to relieve, no sick to visit; and so the man who expects to gain heaven by his morality would, if admitted, find himself deprived of all employment and stripped of every attribute that can render heaven a source of happiness, and that is love to Christ. That is the very foundation of true religion, and that being lacking, all else is in vain."

"All that sounds to me like the wild vagaries of a dream," said Brother Dow.

"If you will pardon me for saying it, yours is the dream, Brother Dow. You seem to me to have only a vague conception of God, for you have rejected Christ, who is the express image of the Father, and through whom God has revealed himself to the world. But you have taken one of the principles of Christ's religion, founded it upon nothing but human reason, and made it cover the whole duty of man."

"And so it does," interrupted Brother Dow. "Does this religion of Christ reject it as a rule of practice between man and man?"

"Surely not; but I contend that men cannot practice it unless it is based upon faith in Christ."

"But in spite of all you have said, you can see with your own visual organs that it is working successfully in this community. I originated this scheme with only a small band. It has gradually increased till we have developed into a respectable town. All our people, though some at first did not seem to perceive the beauty of the principle that underlies our government,

have been educated up to a high standard of moral excellence. There is not such another community anywhere in the world. What objection can you possibly have to it? We are all living and working in harmony. We are disturbed by no quarrels, and especially no disputes about the tenets of religion, which you have to confess divide the Christian world, and which in times past have ended in the most shocking persecutions. The very bloodiest pages in the annals of time are those which relate the crimes of Christians against each other. If they had practiced the golden rule such terrible wars as they have waged would never have marred the history of humanity."

"But you forget, Brother Dow, that these persecutions and wars are due to the lack of religion, and not to anything in its nature that leads to such violations of the golden rule. Men have failed even among Christian nations, to obey that rule because they had not enough of the love of God in their hearts to restrain their wicked passions."

"What is the use," cried Dow, "in antagonizing facts which come under your own observation? You persist in the assertion that men cannot obey the golden rule without the form of religion you advocate when you see them living up to it every day. Where have you seen a community in a more prosperous condition? You cannot ignore the state of affairs here that confronts you wherever you turn. How can you controvert the evidence of your own senses?"

"Brother Dow, I admit that there is a kind of

material prosperity here; but is it possible that you have never inquired into its cause?"

"There is no necessity for investigation. I leave that to Adam Smith and your writers on political economy. If they had all laid down the practice of the golden rule as the basis of national prosperity, the problem that has proved so perplexing to statesmen and philanthropists would have been solved long ago. But they have dealt only with questions of commerce, and left all moral considerations out of the case. It is no wonder that their books are nothing but idle speculations of the brain."

"Brother Dow," answered Pendleton pityingly, "have you never suspected that the cause of this community's material prosperity is yourself? Your merchants, who seem to be in a flourishing condition, would have gone into bankruptcy long since if you had not supplied them with means to prevent it."

"I have only lent them money now and then. All merchants contract loans when the necessities of their business require it."

"That may be true; but you have instilled into the minds of your people that when a debt cannot be paid it ought to be forgiven by the creditor."

"So it ought, if the golden rule is to be observed."

"Consequently," replied Pendleton, "your merchants have no scruples in borrowing money from you which they can never repay. They believe that you will forgive them, and they do not give themselves any trouble about it. You are placing the very temptation

in the way of your people which you claimed that you were removing. You make your merchants throw open their doors to every inhabitant of the village, and they cannot resist the temptation to appropriate to their own use whatever they please, paying for it or not just as they choose. You yourself heard Sambo's interpretation of the golden rule. Many in the community resort to the same perversion, persuading themselves all the time that they are honest. The truth is, they are dishonest at heart without being fully aware of it. You may call them prosperous, but nearly all their prosperity grows out of your sustaining hand. This glorious edifice will crumble to dust with the consumption of your means; or if from any cause your power is withdrawn, your scheme will end in ruin, and your people will drop back into their old habits and be like the rest of mankind. One thing that has misled you is the fact that there is a number of true Christians in the community who are really honest, and who exercise a salutary and restraining influence over their associates, and have thus managed to maintain your edifice upon its tottering foundation. Your death would end the whole scheme."

"You are mistaken," answered Dow, somewhat aroused by the information he had received. "My daughter will carry it on till our religion becomes a fixed principle in the minds of men. She is the sole inheritor, at my death, of a fortune so immense that it would exceed the limits of your credulity, were I to mention its extent."

"So," said Pendleton, with pity for the deluded man, "the whole scheme depends upon your money. Well, if you want to support a band of idlers in ease and luxury, it is your privilege. I believe you will never be convinced of the fallacy of the principle upon which you are acting till disaster in some form overtakes you."

"Brother," interrupted Dow, "I have listened patiently to your ravings, and you have made no change in my views. If you have no more to say, let us end this useless interview."

Pendleton bowed, left the office and made his way to the residence of Dickinson, who was his only congenial companion in the village.

"Brother Dickinson," he said, "I have just come from an interview with Brother Dow."

"Well, what was the result?"

"The result, so far as I am concerned, was the confirmation of my opinion that the old man is daft in one particular. Nothing but ruin will ever convince him of the folly of believing that the human race can be regenerated by the golden rule. He is perfectly incorrigible. He cannot or will not see that his scheme has attached to him a set of sharpers who cling like barnacles to the bottom of a ship; and he seems to think that they are the very embodiment of integrity and honesty."

"Are we all sharpers, including yourself?" inquired Dickinson with a laugh.

"Present company is excepted, of course," replied

Pendleton. "Besides, there are some honest Christians in the community. But I am thinking of leaving the town. To tell the truth, I am disgusted with the whole business."

"I hope you will not leave us, Brother Pendleton. That would be a calamity."

"I do not say that I will leave. One thing that inclines me to stay is the consideration that I may make Christians out of some of the students. Brother Dow gave me permission to instruct them in the principles of the Christian religion."

"Well," said Dickinson, "I shall remain here to see the end of the farce; and that is what it is. I am obeying the golden rule, as far as I can; and that is all Brother Dow requires. I could not better my condition by leaving. Besides, I like this country, and Sister Susan also likes it."

"Well, you are useful to Brother Dow in the school, and if I were in your place I believe I would remain."

After talking a while on other subjects, in which the reader would feel little interest, Brother Pendleton retired to his own room.

## CHAPTER XIII.

A FEW days after the foregoing interview between Pendleton and Dow an event occurred which changed the whole history of Golden Rule. It came like a clap of thunder from a cloudless sky. One day just before noon Col. Crockett entered the town again, and, riding up to Dickinson's residence, cried out, "Hello! Dickinson!"

Dickinson responded by coming to the door.

"I've come to see you much sooner than you expected," said Crockett. "Come out."

Dickinson went out.

"Why, Colonel, I am glad to see you. Dismount and enter my humble domicile. You shall have the best the house affords. You seem to be fatigued."

"Well may you say that. I've had a hard ride, and I've come in a hurry."

"Why are you in such haste? Have the Indians been giving you a chase?"

"No; I wish it were no worse than that. But let me have some water and a bite to eat, and I will tell you."

Accordingly, after leading the pony to the stable and feeding him, they entered the house, and in a short time sat down to dinner. Crockett ate voraciously. The meal being finished, they seated them-

selves on the gallery, and the Colonel lighted the irrepressible pipe. He had talked very little during dinner; but Dickinson could see that there was something of a grave character weighing on his mind.

"Colonel, tell me the object of this hurried visit. Judging from what you have intimated, you have come on no pleasure trip."

"Have you heard no news?" asked Crockett.

"We do not trouble ourselves about news away out in this wilderness. We attend to our own affairs, and let the outside world alone."

"Well, don't you remember when I was here not long ago I told you we would have trouble? The storm has burst. All Mexico is stirred up, and Santa Anna is now on his way to invade Texas with an army. We've got to fight or leave the country—that is the long and short of it. We have one hundred and fifty men in San Antonio, but they are not enough to meet Santa Anna's army. Not to keep you in suspense, I have come here for recruits. How many men have you in this town?"

"I think about two hundred, but whether they will volunteer to fight I do not know."

"They will have to fight," cried Crockett, "or be murdered, or run like dogs! What has become of the old man? Is he here yet, and is he as crazy as ever?"

"If crazy at all, he is *in statu quo*. I see no change, either for better or worse."

"I must see him at once and arrange for a meeting of his people. There's no time for dilly-dallying.

Come, let us go to his office," said Crockett, knocking the ashes out of his pipe and putting it in his pocket.

In a few moments they were in the presence of Brother Dow.

"I am glad to see you in our town again," said Dow, with his usual courtliness of manner. "I hope you are in the enjoyment of health."

"Oh! I'm well enough; but you must excuse me for coming abruptly to business; my mission is very urgent."

"I am at your service," said Dow, with a bow.

"Well, I suppose you are not ignorant of the state of affairs that now exists in Texas."

"I have heard nothing of an alarming character," quietly answered Dow.

"Don't you know that Santa Anna is now marching an army into this country? He is going to drive us out unless we can drive him back."

"Santa Anna," replied Brother Dow, with tranquillity and deliberation, "will not disturb this community. I secured my grant of land from him, and paid him for it. He is too honest a man to annul a trade to which he gave a hearty consent. He is a man of honor and integrity."

"Honest man!" exclaimed Crockett. "You don't know him if that is your opinion of him. He is a bundle of treachery. Your town lies right in his way, and in a few days, or maybe in twenty-four hours, he will be here, and butcher you all like cattle, unless you can defend yourselves and turn the tables on him. If

you depend upon his honor, you are trusting to a broken stick; he has no honor. Now you have, I am informed, about two hundred men in this village, and if we could add them to our little army at San Antonio, I believe we could defeat him and gain the independence of Texas. I would like to have them meet somewhere in town, and call for volunteers. If they refuse to respond, I will mount my pony and leave you to your terrible fate. I see you have no way of keeping an enemy out of your town. You have no fortifications, and possibly few guns."

"Yes; we have shot-guns and rifles, but it was never expected they would be used for the sanguinary purposes of war. We are a peaceable people and are devoting our energies to the peaceful pursuits of life."

"I tell you," exclaimed Crockett, in surprise at his indifference, "you will have to use them or abandon your possessions or be murdered at your own doors. But will you allow me to call your people together and make them a talk?"

"They are not my people," answered Brother Dow. "They are all free. I shall not try to prevent their assembling. We resort to no kind of coercion here except the golden rule."

Crockett looked hard at him, and said, "Well, I must act at once. This is the dinner hour, and I suppose the people are all at their homes. How can I give them notice?"

"I suggest," spoke up Dickinson, "that we ring an alarm with the school bell, which can be heard all over

town. They will come out in haste to see what is the matter."

"Let us go at once," said Crockett.

He and Dickinson were soon at the school building, and commenced to rattle the bell in a way to which it was a stranger. Nothing like it had ever been heard in the village. According to Dickinson's prophecy, the people came running out of their houses and rushed to the Academy. In a very short time several hundred men, women and children had gathered in the yard in a state of wonder and excitement. Crockett stood upon the steps, waved his hat till he had drawn attention to himself, and spoke:

"Fellow-citizens, you all want to know why this alarm has been rung. I'll tell you in a few words. You are all in danger. Santa Anna is on his way to Texas, and he will be here with an army in a short time. We do not know exactly where he is, and he may not at this moment be far from this place. He will pass through your town, and there are not enough of you to keep him back. He will murder every one of you, and butcher your wives and children before your eyes. Now, I ask you will you remain here to be shot down like curs, or will you go back to the States and give up your homes, or will you volunteer to join our little army at San Antonio, where we are prepared to meet him? We have possession of the walled Alamo, which we can easily hold if we can get men enough to defend it. Four or five hundred men within the walls of the Alamo can whip Santa Anna and his whole

army. Now, under these circumstances, how many of you are willing to return with me to San Antonio? After we have whipped Santa Anna you can return here to your homes and live in peace under the government of the Republic of Texas; for I tell you we are going to gain our independence or we will die in the attempt. I have talked long enough; you understand the situation. Now, then, all of you who will agree to follow me hold up your hands."

Not a hand was held up. Crockett looked over the pale-faced crowd with an expression of scorn.

"Are you all cowards?" he cried, "or didn't you understand me?"

"We want to hear what Brother Dow has to say," exclaimed a man in the audience.

Brother Dow had been a quiet spectator of the scene, and did not appear to be the least disturbed. Crockett turned to him and said, "Speak out, Brother Dow, and give these people your opinion and your advice. If they reject my proposition, I intend to leave here at once."

Brother Dow mounted the steps and said, "Brothers, you are all free men, and I want you to act on your own judgment. I have every reason to believe that Santa Anna is my friend. He is a man who I believe will practice the golden rule, and I am not afraid to trust to his mercy and sense of justice."

"You might as well rely upon the mercy of a hungry hyena," interrupted Crockett. "He cares no more for the golden rule than a hog does."

"I have a better opinion of his character and his heart than that," calmly replied Brother Dow. "But, brothers, I do not wish to bias your decision. You can settle the question for yourselves."

"But what will you do, Brother Dow?" asked another man in the crowd.

"I shall be governed by your determination of the matter. If you think it best to join Col. Crockett's army, I shall throw no obstacle in your way."

"Then," cried Crockett, "all who are willing to join me will please come up and give me your names. Don't be cowards, but brave men, and help to win the independence of Texas."

Dickinson and Pendleton gave their names, and were followed by thirty others. Then the volunteering came to an abrupt end.

"Well," said Crockett, whose anger had been somewhat appeased by his partial success, "I will remain in town till to-morrow. Perhaps by that time more of you may decide to join us after you have thought over the matter and talked about it among yourselves. But I tell you time presses, and we must leave in twenty-four hours. We don't know when the Mexicans will be upon us."

He returned with Dickinson in order to spend the night. Crockett slept till he was awakened to supper. After supper they both seated themselves on the gallery, the weather being pleasant, though the month of February was claiming its right to materialize in the calendar. The southern portion of Texas has a de-

lightful climate while in the north the rigors of winter are hardening every moist thing into ice. Crockett was a man who liked to breathe the air out of doors. So he sat smoking his pipe. For some time neither spoke, both seeming to be absorbed in reflection. At last Crockett revealed the character of his thoughts.

"Dickinson," he said, "what do you think those men will do?"

"Which men, Colonel? If you mean those who have volunteered, they will stand by you. They are all Christians."

"Are they married?"

"No; they are all single. Most of them are young men, as you doubtless noticed."

"It is a good thing for us that they have no families. But tell me how you can have Christians in this place where there are no churches nor preachers, and no religion but the golden rule?"

"Well, there is nothing in the golden rule to make men dishonest. But we do have one preacher in the community, who has organized those thirty men into a Bible class. Some of them I suppose were good men when they came here. At any rate, Pendleton has made them Christians."

"I was really asking about the others, who would not join us," said Crockett. "Do you think they will stay here and take their chances?"

"I do not know, Colonel," replied Dickinson, thoughtfully. "I have been trying to conjecture, but I have reached no conclusion."

"I don't believe we can do a thing with old Granddaddy Dow," said Crockett. "He is so crazy that I can't even guess what he will do. He could influence those men to join us if he only would."

"Do you think he is totally demented?"

"No, no; he is a—what do you call 'em?"

"Monomaniac," suggested Dickinson.

"Yes, that's the word—monomaniac. He is crazy, terribly crazy, on one subject. His golden rule, as he construes it, warps his judgment. The way he trusts men is really laughable. He believes what any rogue tells him if he thinks his golden rule requires it. The golden rule is a good thing, but my experience is, you cannot get men to practice it."

"Not without true religion, as Pendleton says and as I believe myself."

"I don't know about that. But I do know, the world taken altogether is one vast scoundrel. I have no confidence in the generality of men; they will lie whenever they think it is to their interest. I have not forgotten how they made up lies out of whole cloth and told them on me when I was a candidate for Congress. Golden rule! Bosh! They had no more regard for it than a mule would."

"But no true Christian would do that, Colonel."

"Some of them claimed to be Christians; they were members of the church."

"Merely pretenders, Colonel."

"Maybe so. But they slandered me and beat me out of my election."

They talked on till late in the night. Crockett was too restless and uneasy to sleep. Suddenly he straightened himself and listened intently.

"Dickinson," he said in a low tone, "do you hear that noise?"

"Yes, I hear it!"

"What does it mean?"

"I do not know, Colonel."

"It may be the Mexicans. I do not know precisely where they are; and they may come on us at any time."

They both listened a moment without speaking.

"Dickinson, let us go and see what that means. Let us not be caught napping."

Accordingly they silently and cautiously advanced along the business street of the town. They had not gone far before they perceived wagons in front of a store. Figures moved like ghosts, and were seen sneakingly entering and returning with bundles and boxes, which were as noiselessly as possible deposited in the vehicles. The two men cautiously crept on, and found wagons at every store and grocery. At length Dickinson approached one of the figures and asked, "Who are you?"

"I am Jack Dodds."

"You, Jack? And what are you all doing?"

"Why," answered Jack, sheepishly, "I'm going to leave here, and so are the rest."

"And that you may not go empty-handed, you are robbing the stores, are you?"

"It's not robbing."

"What do you call it then—slipping under cover of darkness and taking goods without paying for them —what is it but theft?"

"I'm jest carryin' out the principle that Brother Dow taught us. I'm doin' exactly as I'd be done by. That man told us to-day that the Mexicans ar' comin', and I don't think it's right to let all these goods fall into their hands."

Crockett broke into a laugh.

"And that's the way it works, is it? You cover up your stealing with the golden rule."

"I deny that it's stealin'," answered Jack, doggedly. "I'm doin' what I'd have other people do under the same circumstances."

"You are?" answered Crockett. "Well, put yourself in the place of the Mexicans, who, I have no doubt, will soon be in this town, and don't you think you would wish these goods should be left for you?"

"Mexicans are not citizens of this place, and they have no rights here."

"Then you narrow the rule down to your friends, do you?"

"We have to do that till the whole world is converted to it, so says Brother Dow."

"I have been in some tight places myself," said Crockett to Dickinson, "while discussing politics on the stump, and I have been put to it for arguments to meet my opponents, but this fellow has taught me a lesson. He twists the golden rule to suit his purpose. Dickinson, this thing ought to be stopped. Let us

inform the old man. If I were in his place I'd want somebody to tell me. Let us practice his rule."

They soon reached Dow's residence, and found him up. He was reading; and so great was his mental abstraction that the noise from without had made no impression upon the tympanum of his ear. Sister Peggy had heard the rumbling and rattling of the wagons, but she had paid no attention to it.

"Excuse us for calling at this late hour, Brother Dow," said Crockett, "but we have come to tell you that your golden rulers are robbing your town, and they will all be gone before morning, and I thought you ought to know it."

Brother Dow laid his book on the table and thought for a moment.

"We ought not to jump to conclusions," he said, speaking with deliberation. "We must leave it to the light of the sun to demonstrate the truth of what you have asserted."

"Then it will be too late," cried Crockett. "Stop the pillage now, if you want it done at all."

"The people in this community have been practicing the golden rule for years, and I have never known them to be guilty of any violation of integrity and rectitude. The word pillage which you have used has no meaning among us."

"Bosh!" cried Crockett in vexation. "Come out and see for yourself."

"I shall not watch the citizens of Golden Rule. That would be violating it myself; it would be an outrage upon our religion."

"Come, Dickinson," exclaimed Crockett in disgust, "let us go; we must take steps for our own preservation. The rogues will leave us nothing by morning."

In the street they met the thirty men who had volunteered. Dickinson asked, "Who are you? and what are you doing?"

"We have come to tell Brother Dow what is going on in town. Some of the people are robbing the stores, and we'll help put a stop to it if we are needed," answered one.

"I told you, Colonel, that these men are Christians, and they will stand by you to the last. They are practicing the golden rule."

"Yes, they are; but it's no use at present. Gentlemen, I thank you; but your kind offer will not be accepted by Brother Dow. We've just seen him, and he does not want the people disturbed in their thievish work. Let them have their way. Nothing short of ruin will convince the old man of his folly. We are going to leave here as soon as day dawns. I advise you to save wagons enough to carry us to San Antonio and corn enough to feed the mules on the way, and food enough for yourselves."

"Your orders shall be obeyed, Colonel."

"Then go at once and act promptly, or you will be left here to starve."

Dickinson, in company with Crockett, returned home, and entered his wife's room.

"Sue," he said in some agitation, "you know the situation. We are going to leave here at sunrise, or as

soon as we can arrange for the march. Brother Dow's 'golden rulers', as Colonel Crockett calls them, are robbing the town, and they will all, except our thirty volunteers, desert us. We are to set out for San Antonio, where Col. Crockett thinks we will have hard fighting. Now, I do not want to carry you into danger. How would you like to go with the people to a place of safety, which they will never stop till they find, you may depend upon that?"

"I shall not do it," exclaimed the woman, with flashing eyes. "I will follow you to the end of the world."

"You brave darling, be it so then," he said, fondly kissing her. "Let us prepare for the journey at once. But do not neglect our babe," he continued, going to the cradle and gazing with paternal affection upon a beautiful little girl slumbering in blissful ignorance of the scenes that were transpiring on the outside.

"No, no," replied Susan as she stooped to kiss the sleeping child, and then set about making preparations for the journey, whose end could not be foreseen.

The next morning the sun rose upon a gloomy scene —a village looted and almost deserted. The business houses had all been stripped. Far out in the prairie a train of wagons could be seen headed for Eastern Texas, and then the purpose of the robbers was clearly developed. Sambo, in the night, filled a sack with such articles as he thought were necessary, mounted a good mule, which he had appropriated, turned his face toward the western sun, and was never heard of again.

Pendleton and Crockett perceived Brother Dow and

Sister Peggy on the main street at an early hour, gazing about them at the wreck. Both appeared unusually sad and dejected. Pendleton and Crockett approached, and were moved with pity.

"Brother Dow," said Pendleton, "this disaster ought to convince you that no one, without a change of heart, can obey the golden rule."

"Do you claim that Christians obey it?"

"I do not say that they do to its utmost limit. But a Christian will come nearer to fulfilling it than a man who has none of the religion which comes from the Holy Spirit. That cannot be disputed."

"Brother Dow," interrupted Crockett, kindly, "I am sorry for you. I am sorry that this misfortune has put an end to your experiment, which is a credit to your heart."

"My glorious dream is ended," said Brother Dow, manifesting such emotion as might be expected in a man of his character. "I have not lost confidence in the power of the golden rule to regenerate the human race, but I am too far advanced in years to continue my scheme, and it will have to be abandoned."

"But what are you going to do?" asked Crockett. "Thirty-two of your people—all that are now in the village—will join our army at San Antonio, and if you stay here, you will be left alone. I think you'd better go with us."

"Do you wish me to violate my rule by engaging in bloodshed?"

"Oh! no," answered Crockett; "you can do as you

please about that. I was only thinking of your safety and this lady's."

Brother Dow thought for a moment, and said, "Thirty-two of our people, including Brothers Pendleton and Dickinson, have volunteered to go with you. They have not deserted me as the others have done, and I ought not to desert them. I was once a general in the English army, but I can be of no service now; the practice of the golden rule forbids me to shed the blood of my fellow-man."

"I don't think," replied Crockett, "that the golden rule, according to my understanding of it, requires you to stand still and be cut to pieces by your fellow-man. If I get a good aim at Santa Anna, the golden rule will not keep me from pulling the trigger of my rifle."

"Olivia," said Brother Dow, turning to his daughter, "what's your advice?"

"I have no advice to give, father. I have nothing to live for. Our holy scheme has terminated in disaster, and that destroys the only interest I had in life. I will go with you, father, wherever you may wish." She closed her lips, and fell back into her previous abstraction. From that moment she seemed to be only a machine endued with the power of motion. Of all the sad sights this world affords there is perhaps none more pathetic than a human being standing in utter loneliness, with every dream of temporal happiness dissipated, every worshipped idol shattered into dust, every hope blighted, and nothing in the future to anticipate

as a relief except the chilling hand of death! Ah! the soul without Christ is but a purposeless wanderer on the shores of time, with nothing to comfort in the past, nothing in the present to cast one ray of light into the thick and gloomy darkness of Eternity!

About nine o'clock, the third of February, a train of wagons, in charge of the volunteers, left the deserted village, and was slowly moving in the direction of San Antonio. Brother Dow carried a magnificent saber presented by the government of England for distinguished military service.

One week after the departure Santa Anna entered the town in all the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war." He had expected rich pillage for his bloodthirsty horde of cruel butchers.

"Fellow soldiers," he cried in rage, "the cowardly rebels have retreated. You see how they fear you under the leadership of the Napoleon of the West. If they had remained and fought us, we would have left their bones to bleach in their own town. Soldiers, apply the torch to their deserted houses."

Three years after the battle of San Jacinto a traveller passing by saw nothing of Golden Rule but banks of ashes and the charred remains of the heavier timbers that had defied the fury of the fire.

Santa Anna moved on in the direction of San Antonio.

## CHAPTER XIV.

WE have now reached a scene which abounds in the elements of tragedy. The reader of nervous temperament or excitable sensibilities may, if he wish, omit the present chapter, lay the volume aside and consider the story ended. The sanguinary scenes of the fall of the Alamo need no aid from the romancer's fancy to increase their horrors. The naked facts in their hideousness simply surpass all conceptions of art designed to harrow the soul with a sense of the terrible. Were it not that several of the characters of this tale were prominent actors in these dismal scenes, we would bring this story to a close more pleasant and more in accord with the better feelings and wishes of human nature. But, after all, why shrink from the narration of facts? All Americans have reason to feel proud of the defence of the Alamo. We read with a thrill of the heroic defence of the Pass of Thermopylæ by Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans. But here, recently, at our very doors, occurred a battle, which, considering the smallness of the forces engaged, the fierce obstinacy displayed and the bloody results which ended it, stands without a parallel in modern times.

Our party from Golden Rule reached San Antonio

a few days in advance of Santa Anna. Dickinson, who had been elected captain of the volunteers from Golden Rule, secured a cottage for his wife about half a mile from the fort. Brother Dow, or rather Lord L——, and Sister Peggy, Countess of H——, had scarcely spoken a word since the collapse of their brilliant dream of regenerating the human race by means of the golden rule. The two entered their quarters, in which, however, they remained only a few hours, and there the following brief colloquy occurred:

"Olivia," said Brother Dow, "I am unable to foresee the result of the present movement, in which we are indirectly concerned. If the place should be surrendered to Santa Anna, I believe he will restore us to freedom, or even if he is forced to capture it, I think he will not harm us. This Col. Crockett seems to have no confidence in his integrity and honor, but I have not lost faith in the native honesty of mankind. I yet believe the golden rule is a factor sufficient in itself to reform the world."

"It did not reform our little village," answered Sister Peggy quietly.

"The scheme was working well," replied Brother Dow, "and we had the nucleus of a moral reformation, which, in the course of time, would have swept throughout the bounds of the earth, if it had not been so inopportunely interrupted by the present disturbance. But it is useless to talk about it now; all is over for the present. If we should emerge from the present trouble I am too old to renew the scheme, and I doubt whether

you alone could successfully execute it, even if you were so inclined."

"No, father," answered Sister Peggy quietly, "I have neither the ability nor the inclination. I have lost all energy, and I can never more take the slightest interest in anything. My only hope now is that my career is near its end. I would welcome death."

"Olivia," replied Brother Dow, with no visible emotion, "you are the last of our race. If it should be the destiny of us both to die here, our immense fortune will escheat to the crown."

"I do not care, father, what becomes of the fortune. I am heart-sick and tired of the world. Nothing would afford me more pleasure than to leave it."

Brother Dow made no reply, and Sister Peggy relapsed into her habitual silence. It was their last interview.

On the 23d of February, Santa Anna entered San Antonio with his jubilant troops, determined to drive every American from the soil of Texas.

It was at this time that Col. Travis performed that solemn act of the bloody drama which appeals so pathetically to every patriotic heart. He drew up his little army in the church, and candidly revealed to them the precariousness of their situation. Some historians, giving loose reins to their fancy, have attributed to him a long speech on that occasion, and have put in his mouth some very beautiful and eloquent sentences worthy of the studied efforts of Demosthenes or Cicero. But the stern truth is, there was no time for

making an oratorical address. Travis had appealed to the country for reinforcements, but there was no response, and he was left with his one hundred and eighty-two men to defend themselves as best they could. The enemy being now in sight, he said to his soldiers as they stood drawn up in line before him:

"Fellow-soldiers: You can all take in the situation as well as I can. The enemy is upon us. Only three courses of action are open to us. First, we can surrender; in that case we will all be butchered as soon as we are disarmed; we can put no faith whatever in the assurances and promises of the Mexicans. Secondly, we can try to cut our way through the Mexican army; in that case, we will all be slaughtered in ten minutes; they outnumber us ten to one, so not one of us would ever make his escape. Thirdly, we can remain in the fort, and defend it to the last. The probability is we will all be killed; but we can slay so many of the Mexicans that there will be fewer of them to fight our friends. Now, which course will you choose? You can do just as you please. There is no time to talk more."

Col. Travis took his sword from the scabbard, drew a line with the point and said, "All of you that are willing to remain in the fort and die with me, step over the line."

Instantly every soldier crossed the line. Col. Bowie was lying on his cot in the grasp of fever, but he said, "Boys, I am unable to rise, but I wish some of you would remove my bed over the line; I cannot fight, but I can die with you."

Four men took up the cot and carried it across the line.

There was one man, however, who did not volunteer to immolate himself on the altar of patriotism; his name was Rose. Crockett looked at him and said, "You'd better stay and die with us, old man. You cannot escape."

"I'm not prepared to die," replied Rose. So, hastily tying up his apparel in a bundle, he climbed to the top of the wall, glanced back at his late companions, and leaped to the ground. After much suffering, according to his own version of the affair, he made his way to a place of safety. As he was leaving the fort he met a man galloping with a child before him and a woman behind him. It was Capt. Dickinson. He had dashed up to the cottage and cried out, "Come quick, Sue! the Mexicans are upon us; give me the babe, and do you jump up behind me. Quick! there's not a moment to lose."

Mrs. Dickinson handed him the child, sprang behind him, and they went flying for life. The Mexicans were already in Commerce street, but Dickinson crossed the river at a ford lower down and entered the Alamo in safety.

The Alamo church stands alone now; but at that time there was a wall around it, with the exception of the front, eight or ten feet in height and about three feet in thickness. In the fort, as already stated, there were one hundred and eighty-two men; and this was the army destined to cope with a force estimated variously from five to ten thousand.

Dickinson had scarcely entered when the Mexicans opened fire with musket and cannon, but no damage was done, if we except the wounding of one horse. The Texans, if we can accept the statement of some historians, had eighteen pieces of artillery on the fortifications. With these, in combination with their rifles, they did fearful execution. The Mexicans kept on advancing, but they were mowed down by scores. Presently they broke and fled in a panic.

Col. Crockett waved the peculiar cap he wore, and cried out to Dickinson, "Dickinson, I'm for following the rascals; I don't want to be hemmed up here; I want to die out in the open air, if die I must. Let us follow them."

"Not yet, Colonel; there are too many of them. You may depend upon it, they will return."

"Perhaps so; I'd like to bring down a few more of them; I brought down every man at whom I pointed my rifle. I took deliberate aim, and I never miss."

He affectionately patted his long rifle on the stock, and said, "You're a true girl, old Betsy."

So the first attack was easily repulsed, and many a Mexican lay stretched in front of the church as the result. The spirits of the besieged were considerably raised by this first success. In half an hour after the enemy had disappeared, a solitary Mexican approached the wall, bearing a white flag.

"What will you have?" cried Col. Travis.

"I bear a communication from Gen. Santa Anna," replied the man in good English.

A ladder was let down on the outside, a Texan descended, brought up the letter and handed it to Travis, who opened it, read it and exclaimed in a loud voice, "Boys, it is a summons to surrender."

"What sort of surrender?" asked Col. Crockett.

"Unconditional. What do you all say?"

"If we refuse, what is his next proposition?" asked Capt. Dickinson.

"If we refuse," answered Travis, "he promises emphatically to storm the fort and put every one of us to death without mercy."

"Go back," cried Crockett to the Mexican standing at the foot of the ladder, "and tell the old rascal that when he enters this fort it will be to the tune of 'Yankee Doodle,' played on my old fiddle."

This raised a laugh.

Col. Travis dropped his head in thought for a moment. Capt. Dickinson spoke up, "His proposition is not worth considering."

"Surely not," answered Crockett.

Col. Travis looked down at the Mexican.

"Please inform Gen. Santa Anna," he said, "that we are much obliged to him for his magnanimous offer. I will be as generous as he is. Please say to him that if he will surrender to us we will allow him to retire with all the customary honors of war. We have no desire to do him harm. But if His Excellency condescends to storm us, we promise him decent burial out there in the prairie."

At this the Mexican laughed.

"Never mind, old fellow," cried Crockett, "the next time I see you, I'll make you laugh on the other side of your mouth."

"Oh! Col. Crockett," said Travis, with a smile, "you should be polite to the messenger."

"I didn't mean to be rude," replied Crockett, "but I thought it right to give him fair warning. I don't think it was polite in him to laugh in our faces as he did."

"Nothing more?" asked the Mexican.

"Nothing more at present, thank you," answered Col. Travis. "Good day to you."

The man bowed and retired.

"Boys," said Travis, "I guess they will attack us as soon as that messenger returns. Stand to your posts. Don't fire a gun till they are within fifty yards of us. Then each one of you pick his man and let him have it. Let us give them such a dose of lead that they will have the desire to keep at a safe distance. Don't fire the cannon till they begin to retreat. As soon as they turn their backs, pour it into them."

The whole army waited patiently an hour, but Santa Anna seemed to be in no haste to renew the attack.

"Col. Crockett," said Travis, "while we are waiting, get your fiddle, and give us a tune or two."

Crockett cheerfully obeyed this order, for he was proud of his musical accomplishments.

"Certainly, Colonel," he answered with a bow. "There is nothing like music to raise one's spirits. I'll play a tune which will put the boys in good humor and steady their nerves."

Accordingly, Crockett went into the church, and soon returned with his fiddle, which he had fondly named "Old Sally." He stood upon the wall and rapidly drew the bow across the strings, which promptly responded in what he called a "reel." It was heard all over the fort. The men all along the lines were keeping time by the clapping of hands and patting of feet. All seemed to forget the peril which confronted them in the glee inspired by the strains of "Old Sally." Presently Crockett paused, and his eye was caught by something in the tower of the old cathedral, which faces the Alamo at the distance of about a quarter of a mile.

"Look, Colonel Travis," he cried, pointing with his fiddle-bow, "they are taking observations."

Travis looked, and then turning to a cannoneer, said, "Aim your piece carefully, and put a ball in that tower. They are not Americans up there."

The man deliberately aimed his piece, stepped back and applied the torch. There was a puff of smoke, and those who were looking saw the dust fly from one corner of the tower, and they perceived through the tower window several figures in the act of hastily descending. It was afterwards ascertained that the party was composed of Santa Anna and a portion of his staff. After that shot the tower was occupied no more.

"Play on, Col. Crockett," said Travis.

"Boys," said Crockett, "I want to tune Old Sally for that grinning Mexican; I expect to play his funeral march."

"You ought to have played the Rogue's March for him when he turned to leave us," quoth Dickinson.

"I was too mad," replied Crockett. "I felt more like breaking Old Sally over his head."

"Yonder they come!" cried Travis. "Every man to his post! Remember the orders."

Deep silence reigned in the Alamo. Every man had his rifle to his shoulder. The Mexican army slowly advanced in good order.

"Keep cool, boys," spoke up Travis. "We will break their ranks in a few moments."

"Boys," cried Crockett, "if any of you see that grinning Mexican, leave him to me and Old Betsy; he's my meat."

The Mexicans still came on in silence. They approached to within a hundred yards of the wall. Not a gun was fired by the besieged. The enemy suddenly halted; then they raised their guns.

"Crouch down, boys," cried Travis. "They are going to fire; don't return it; wait till they are closer."

Scarcely had he uttered these words when there was a tremendous volley, and the balls rattled against the wall. There was no response from the Alamo. It might have seemed that the fort had been suddenly deserted. The Mexicans loaded their muskets and fired again with the very same result. The silence in the fort remained unbroken. The Mexicans reloaded and boldly approached to within fifty yards with a self-confident air and with firm step; and now every Texan was taking deliberate aim.

"Fire!" thundered Travis in a tone that could be heard away beyond the enemy. There was a sheet of flame from the top of the wall—a keen report of rifles —a cloud of smoke. The aim of the Texans had been true and fatal. The Mexicans fell by scores all along the line. The survivors at once turned and took to flight. The cannon on the walls were hastily pointed and fired. A few more Mexicans fell, and the rest disappeared from the scene like phantoms.

"I do not think they will repeat that experiment," said Col. Travis.

"No; they will try something else," answered Col. Crockett, "but I don't know what it will be."

Col. Travis was correct, and the enemy made no more assaults of that kind. They kept at a safe distance, and threw two hundred or more shells into the fort, which, however, did little or no damage. This kind of warfare they waged day and night, till the 5th of March, with the hope, it seems, of wearing out the garrison. Before day dawn of the 6th of March, the Mexicans under cover of darkness had crept up to the walls with scaling ladders. It was too dark for the garrison to see them, though their tramp could be heard. Consequently, as soon as the light began to dispel the morning darkness, the Mexicans were fully prepared for their horrid work. The ladders were planted against the wall, and the Mexicans were climbing over in spite of the deadly fire of the defenders. They fell from the ladders, but others were pushed up by those below. But many of the Texans were killed

on the walls, which made the ascent the more easy for the enemy. They kept climbing over and leaping down, notwithstanding that they were stricken down as fast as they reached the ground. The enemy fired upon the Texans from the top of the walls, and many fell dead and dying. The Mexicans poured over in such overwhelming numbers that they could no longer be resisted. Col. Travis had fallen early in the action, and his body lay on the top of the church, to which he had stepped from the wall. All were dead or dying except sixty-nine, who rapidly retreated into the church by the eastern door in the side, which they firmly closed. There is only one other entrance, and that is by the front door, which the enemy had not yet attempted to open. Few of them, in fact, remained in front of the building. They had climbed over the walls, and the front door could not be reached by them except through the church. About half way of the building stood the sixty-nine Texans, who were the last actors in the bloodiest and most terrible scene of the whole battle. The door was blown down, and now the supreme moment had come.

It was at this moment that Capt. Dickinson rushed into the room occupied by his wife and Sister Peggy; it is the first on the right as you enter the front door.

"Oh! Sue," he cried in agony, "they are in the church! All is lost! If they spare you save our baby. God bless you, darling."

He stooped down and imprinted a frantic kiss upon her lips; it was their last kiss. He drew his sword

and hastened back to the closing scene of the final struggle.

Sister Peggy was seated in the room near to Mrs. Dickinson. Through the whole eleven days of the siege she had shown no emotion, but had held herself aloof from all intercourse, wrapped up in her own gloomy abstraction. She now quickly rose and followed Dickinson.

"Where are you going?" cried Mrs. Dickinson in terror.

"To die," replied the Countess, moving rapidly away, followed by her father, who had taken no part in the battle. The soldiers were astounded at her appearance. Instead of the deathly pallor, which would have been natural to a woman under such appalling circumstances, a brilliant radiance lighted up her features. Her beautiful face fairly glowed with rapture. Dickinson looked at her in amazement.

"Ah! Sister Peggy," he said, "we could not be united in life, but we will be in death."

She advanced in front of the Texans. The smoke had cleared away from the door, and there stood the Mexicans with guns ready for action. Brother Dow was standing immediately behind his daughter. The Mexicans raised their guns and fired. The Countess of H——, pierced by a dozen balls, fell dead without a groan. One ball struck Brother Dow in the face, making a bloody, but not dangerous wound. His daughter's blood spurted upon his long whiskers, as she fell.

And now there was an astounding transformation, which arrested the attention of friends and foes. Brother Dow was suddenly changed into another being. He threw off his hat, and his long hair fell from behind his ears. His whiskers were dripping with his own and his daughter's blood. Whether he had become a raving maniac in a single moment or was moved with the intensity of rage, no one could tell. At any rate, he was the very picture of what we would call a demon. Then he hastily drew the long, splendid saber, previously noticed, which he had never laid aside, unbuckled the belt, which he cast down with the scabbard. All this was done in a few seconds. Friends and foes were startled by a yell so unearthly, so loud, so terrific, that it caused all parties to pause and listen. The bright saber flashed like lightning, and Brother Dow bounded at the Mexicans. They had not reloaded their guns, and were pushed in by those in the rear. They shrank back at this horrible apparition, and looked at him in terror. With a rapidity of motion that can scarcely be conceived the saber descended, and a Mexican fell with cloven skull. Some threw up their guns for protection; it was in vain. The long, sharp weapon was thrust through them, as it was wielded by a long, stout arm. At least a dozen Mexicans lay weltering in their own blood in an incredibly short space of time. In his mania, if such it was, he had become a bloody Samson in strength. Mexicans sank down before him as though they were only helpless pigmies. Not one was left standing at the door on the inside. Mrs. Dick-

inson heard Crockett cry out, "Three cheers for Golden Rule!"

The men, of course, with the exception of Dickinson, did not understand it, but the cheers were given with enthusiasm. The lull was of short duration. The Mexicans pushed up to the door and fired into the little band, and a number fell to rise no more. They seemed to have overlooked Brother Dow. A few more ventured in, but they were instantly cut down by the long saber. If they had kept up this kind of warfare for any great length of time it is possible that the fate of the Alamo might have been different. But suddenly such numbers made a passage through the door that Brother Dow was forced back by simple pressure. But the saber, reeking with blood, flashed and descended, and a Mexican dropped at every stroke. The Texans were now without ammunition, and they fell till nearly all were dead. The survivors were forced back toward the front of the building. Brother Dow seemed to be invulnerable. As he was forced backward, the bloody saber was seen, gleaming in spots, flying upward and downward, and whenever it descended a Mexican was sure to drop to the earth. All were now dead except Crockett and six others, including Brother Dow. All histories of Texas state that after the fight, Col. Crockett was found surrounded by piles of Mexicans whom he had slain. Brother Dow, brought to bay by the impossibility of further retreat, halted in front of Crockett, where he wielded his saber with seemingly inexhaustible strength. The parties had no time to

load their pieces, and they were fighting with clubbed guns. This gave Brother Dow a decided advantage.

And he fought on.

He had not spoken a word. The longer he fought the more he fulfilled the human conception of a demon incarnate. The blood was trickling down his face and coagulating in his long whiskers, which became separated into gory strands. His hair, also crimson, almost covered his face; and the once mild and gentle man, whose heart had throbbed with rapture at the thought of making the golden rule the universal religion of the whole earth—fought on. His glorious dream was all gone now. Till the fall of his daughter he would not have harmed a creeping worm. But that bloody catastrophe seemed to wipe out the last vestige of benevolence from his nature, and bring to the surface all the evil passions that had been so long slumbering in the darkest recesses of his heart.

And he fought on.

The Mexicans drew back in terror whenever they caught sight of him, but that momentary shrinking cost many a one his life. Crockett and his companions were panting and trembling from pure exhaustion, and they could scarcely raise their guns to strike. But Brother Dow fought on with the same freshness with which he had so suddenly plunged into the combat. That swiftly-rising and falling arm seemed to be an iron machine operated by steam.

And Brother Dow fought on.

The Mexicans were pressing forward. They rushed

to Col. Bowie's room, the first on the left as you enter the Alamo. He was lying on a cot, prostrated with high fever, and sick almost to death. But the hero had two pistols on his couch, and with his trembling, dying hand he made a last effort, and fired both before his assailants could reach him: two Mexicans fell dead. In the next moment he was in eternity.

All the soldiers of the Alamo were now dead or dying, except Crockett, his six companions and Brother Dow. The Texans were about to sink down from simple exhaustion.

Brother Dow fought on.

He was the only active combatant left. He had kept an open space in front of him by a furious application of the long saber, which was dripping with Mexican blood. The Mexicans were trying to reach Crockett. Dow turned to one side, and the saber flashed. A half dozen of the enemy fell in rapid succession at Crockett's feet. He and his companions were incapable of further resistance, and stood panting for breath, waiting to be cut down. The spectacle was sublime—the whole resistance of the besieged being now concentrated in one right arm. The whole squad around Crockett would have fallen some moments before, had it not been for the superhuman efforts of the towering giant, who was covered with blood from head to foot.

And Brother Dow fought on.

We are at liberty to suppose that his horrible feats were but the result of despair or insanity. At any rate there was no sign of weariness or relaxation. The

Texans stood looking at him in utter amazement. Crockett was near Mrs. Dickinson's door, and she heard him say in almost a whisper:

"It is Old Nick."

But this terrible scene was about to close. The Mexicans were pushing forward. The report of a musket was heard in the rear, and Brother Dow reeled and fell; the ball had penetrated his brain. Crockett and his friends were now without any protection. One historian says that he offered to surrender. The statement is slanderous to the memory of a man who had no fear of death. Crockett, who had no confidence in the generosity and magnanimity of the Mexicans and in their admiration for noble daring to such an extent that they would show mercy to a vanquished foe, knew very well that he would be butchered the moment he was disarmed. It is incredible that he made any proposition to surrender. Mexicans had rushed up with loaded guns, and he and his brave companions were shot down near the front door.

The battle was ended. The Alamo contained nothing of the Texan army but dead heroes. When the last soldier had fallen, a Mexican officer, Gen. Almonté, a noble and chivalrous gentleman, stepped into Mrs. Dickinson's room, and in perfect English said, "Are you Mrs. Dickinson?"

"Yes," she replied

"Follow me, then," he said, "if you wish to be saved."

With her babe in her arms she arose and followed him. She was fired at and slightly wounded.

"Cease firing!" thundered Almonté. Then they passed through the crowd of Mexicans without further molestation. The last shot fired in the Alamo was at a woman.

A negro boy belonging to Col. Travis and Madam Candelaria, a Mexican woman, who had nursed Col. Bowie in his sickness, were also spared. These four were the survivors of the Alamo on the Texan side. Madam Candelaria lived to the age of one hundred and fifteen years. Mrs. Dickinson's daughter, well called the "Child of the Alamo," grew to womanhood, and married a gentleman by the name of Hannig in San Antonio. All now sleep in the grave; and so the curtain drops and the foot-lights are extinguished!

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*P. S.*—Sometimes the reader wishes to know the origin of the story which affords him amusement or instruction, as the case may be, for a few hours. We will gratify this laudable curiosity. Some years ago the author of these pages was stopping in Memphis, Tennessee. It was announced that a remarkable man would preach in Court Square. At the appointed hour, eight o'clock in the evening, a wild-looking man made his appearance who announced that he was Lorenzo Dow II. He answered in dress and person to the description of the Dow who has been a conspicuous actor in these pages. To that strange figure the present story owes its origin.