

THE STRUGGLE

It was a hot humid day. The weather had been like this for over a week now, and the New York papers were carrying stories of how eggs had been fried on the sidewalks.

Bill Holland sat at his desk, perspiring freely while trying to wade through a pile of papers. The heat was intolerable. The tedium of the paper work, the noise in the office, the stifling heat, all worked on his nerves. For the tenth time in less than an hour, he went to the water cooler. He filled a paper cup, drank deeply, but experienced no refreshment. Returning to his desk, he tried to become engrossed in his work, but it was impossible. He hated it all. He hated the heat, he hated his job, he hated New York. Bill Holland decided that he hated life. Five o'clock finally came. After punching out, Bill headed for the street. The heat outside was even worse. He decided to head for a bar.

By seven o'clock he was well along, and the effects of his drinking had made him more pessimistic. He felt that he couldn't go on any longer. His wife, he knew, would be in even rarer humor over his late return. The thought of an apartment, hot and dirty, a crying baby, and a nagging wife, all worked on him.

"If I could only get away from this struggle, I would be happy," he thought. "Just making enough to get by on isn't worthy of a man."

Life had seemed so different to him in his younger days. He had been an only child, but even without brothers and sisters he had been fairly happy. He was intelligent, and although his grades had been only fair, he had passed through grammar school and high school with a minimum of effort. Bill had received no major buffets in his youth, and his mother had protected him from most of the minor ones, namely the attempts of his father to make him set some rule over his life. At this point life had been quite simple.

When he graduated from high school, the prospect of obtaining a permanent job had bothered him considerably, but this too was solved for him. A widowed Aunt had got him a job in New York.

Life in New York was not quite the way he had pictured it. First of all he had found it hard to buckle down to office work. During the first few weeks he had drawn several severe reprimands for slackness. The fear of dismissal goaded him to further effort, at least enough to retain his job, but after a few weeks its tediousness began to weigh him down. He longed to return to the protection of his mother.

Bill had also been very lonely. He had only a small circle of friends and he began to tire of the nightly tour of the bars and the occasional ball game.

He remembered how he had met Jane. It had happened through a friend in the office. Her good looks and self-confidence had attracted him at once. With her, he felt that he could accomplish anything. Life would be a breeze with her.

"Yeah, life would be a breeze with her." He ordered another whiskey and a beer. The burning sensation of the whiskey followed by the cool beer helped him a little but he was still feeling bitter.

He remembered how happy they had been during the first few months of their marriage. Both were working, so money was no problem. Then it happened; he was going to be a father. He realized that Jane could work a few months longer but he also realized that his life would be drastically changed.

The first step was a cheaper apartment. It took several weeks but they found one—on the East side. The neighborhood was filled with people in the same state as he. Women screamed at their kids, at their husbands, at the heat,—the heat.

"Another whiskey and beer."

The apartment was a two room affair, with a community bathroom down the hall. The building was dirty and the thin walls added everyone's troubles to your own.

This is what he had to return to. Sleep would provide a few hours of forgetfulness, and then the struggle would be renewed.

The struggle - - -

Bill Holland stood up, paid his bill, and then weaved to the door. The heat hit him like a sledge hammer, his eyes blurred, his senses whirled, and he stumbled. He clutched at a parking meter, missed it, and fell on the busy street. He heard the piercing scream of brakes, and then a dull pain filled his body. He lapsed into the oblivion of unconsciousness.

It seemed to Bill Holland that he had been in the world without a struggle for over a week. New York was gone, his wife and baby were gone. He was even rid of the office and the heat.

How he had reached this world he did not know. His first recollection in this world was of walking down the main street in a small town. Everyone he met greeted him with a friendly smile and called him by his first name. He seemed irresistibly drawn to a large white house that was situated on a side street. He stopped at the front door and then gasped. A name plate on the door had William J. Holland engraved on it. He went in and was greeted by Jane, or so it seemed at first. She had changed. Her manner was exactly like that of his mother. She told him to be sure and wash, and that his supper would be ready at once. He felt a sudden constriction in his heart.

At supper he carried on with his usual banter and Jane laughed uproariously at every funny remark he made. At first he enjoyed this, then it irritated him. It took no effort to make her laugh. It all looked so phony. This continued for several meals, and since he no longer enjoyed her company he began eating out.

His first night in this strange place passed quickly. The next day he checked his position thoroughly. He found stationary with Holland Wholesale Company, William J. Holland, President, printed on it. He also checked his financial standings, fifteen thousand dollars in a current account, and thirty five thousand in stocks and bonds.

The next day William J. Holland went to work at the Holland Wholesale Company. He located the office that had president written on the door, and sat down at the desk. On it was a familiar stack of papers. He thought this would occupy most of his day. Five minutes later his work was done for he had only to glance at a thing and he would be through with it. He had to get out of there.

He noticed as he passed through the main office that his employees looked at him as though he were a God. Then the monstrosity of his position hit him, and he sought a secluded spot. Thoughts of his wife and baby hit him, but he quickly suppressed them. "I'm not through yet," he muttered.

The next few days passed in much the same manner, though each one got progressively worse. Thoughts of his wife and baby returned to him again and again. He checked them.

Today a thought suddenly occurred to him, "The rifle and fishing equipment in his room." He raced up to his room, got the gear, hurried down again and put them in the back seat of his car. He noticed on his rifle a hunting license which said, "no restrictions on game." He headed out of town to a heavily wooded section, stopped the car, got his rifle out of the back seat, and after filling the clip with cartridges slipped the safety off. He had only taken a few steps when he spotted a large deer. Quickly he brought the rifle to his shoulder and fired. The deer fell, and a feeling of satisfaction surged through his body. Suddenly he spotted another deer and fired. This deer also fell as did another. He hurled his rifle away in disgust. He ran to his car, grabbed his fishing rod and headed for a small lake. He carefully attached a small fly and then cast into the water. A large fish took the fly and headed for deep water. He broke the rod in two.

Bill Holland sat down under a tree and began to weep uncontrollably. Thoughts of his wife and baby welled up in him unchecked. Only now did he realize how much he loved them.

The struggle - - -, only by accepting it and overcoming it was man worthy to be called man. He had had to experience this fact to realize it. His whole life flashed before him. He saw how immature he had been; how he had failed to master himself and the things around him. Sobs wracked his body.

Gradually he regained control over himself and began to ponder his position. He had been in the world without struggle for over a week now. New York was gone, his wife and baby were gone. He was even rid of the office and the heat. Waves of sorrow again welled up in him. He

felt that there was no way out of his position.

A strange feeling enveloped his body, he felt weak, his senses began to swim. He thought he was dying but after a time his senses cleared. He was surrounded by four bare, white walls. He heard a voice, "Doctor, he's regained consciousness." He had been unconscious for an hour he learned.

A few minutes later his wife entered the room. She kissed him. "How is the baby?" he asked.

He thanked God for another chance. He knew he would make the most of it.

JACK REARDON '55.

THE FULFILLMENT OF A DREAM A COLLEGE MAGAZINE

"In vain you will build churches, give missions, found schools—all your works all your efforts will be destroyed—if you are notable to wield the defensive and offensive weapon of a loyal and sincere Catholic Press." Pope Pius X.

Although we see the impossibility of a small college such as St. Dunstan's setting up a press on the campus, it is quite possible that the former faculty and students realized the importance of the Holy Father's words, when they began putting out a monthly magazine called **The Collegium** in 1886. This magazine contained discussions of current topics of that time and was generally well thought of by the public. We have not too many facts concerning this original magazine, but we do know that it was abandoned a few years later, possibly around 1888. Why it was dropped we do not know, but it is quite possible that the underlying factor was the small number of students available for contributions at the time.

For the next four years there was no magazine on the campus, but in September, 1892 **The Collegium** reappeared. It was felt by the students of that time that it was their duty to revive a journal which in its past career had shed some lustre on its founders, and had been well received by the public. The Editor of **The Collegium** in 1892 has ex-