

## The City That Has No Heart.

**N**O use in discussing the matter further," said Tom, "I have made up my mind and I mean to stick by my decision. The old farm is all very well for you and mother and the girls, Dad, but a young fellow like me is only wasting his time here. Why Bill Richards is earning a salary of twelve hundred dollars a year. Just think of that! He's working in Small's Real Estate Office, in Westport and has promised to get me a position there too. And although I'm sorry to leave you, Dad, I think I would be doing wrong, were I to remain at home."

Thus spoke young Tom Jameson, to his father, as they walked slowly towards the old farm-house where he had spent so many happy, care-free days. Thus speaks many another young man who sees the world through the mist of his own foolish dreams.

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"Hello, Tom! Glad you've come,—have the position all ready for you, old boy. You can begin work tomorrow."

The speaker was none other than Bill Richards, Tom's friend and schoolmate.

"Very kind of you, Bill, and when I make good, I'll not forget my best friend."

"Oh! That's nothing, old man, and of course, as you're a stranger here, I'll take you around and introduce you to my other friends."

Richards was as good as his word. He procured a boarding house for Tom and invited him to his own splendidly furnished rooms on X—Avenue. There our young friend met with some of Westport's sportiest youths. Dressed in the latest fashion, their eyes sunken and faces sallow, these young men gave Tom the welcome usually granted to an "unsophisticated rube." Strange to say the effect of this treatment excited the country lad's envy rather than his disgust. "Why," thought he, "cannot I drink cock-tails and play poker just as well as they. It's all in getting used to it and

I can plainly see, that unless I'm able to play my part, I shall not be very popular with Bill and his friends."

Poor boy! He thought he owed it to Bill, who had secured him a good position, to leave the "old-fashioned ways," in which his dear old mother strove so hard to teach him to walk. His Rosary was soon replaced by cards and dice. His monthly Communion was soon forgotten and, like Bill, he now scarcely ever went to Mass.

A year passed over, and to the outside world, it might appear that Tom Jameson had prospered. His letters home, although not so frequent as at first, were filled with glowing reports of his success. He had risen in the esteem of his employer. Now his salary was even more than that of his friend, Bill Richards. Surely they must realize how wise had been his decision in leaving the humdrum life of the farm. Here he had all that a smart young man could desire, wealth, friends, amusements. But he never mentioned the undertow of his existence, which was fast enveloping him, nor did he once dream that soon he was to fall from the giddy height, whither his false friends had led him.

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"Westport News!" shouted a small boy. "All about the big money grab and the 'tempted murder!'" These were the unpleasant words which greeted Tom Jameson as he awoke one morning with aching head and parched throat. For several months, he and his boon companions had exceeded their usual pace. Drink and cards had well-nigh depleted his funds and last night, he went to the rendezvous determined to stake his last dollar in order to retrieve his losses. Now as he gradually came to his senses, he remembered how he had "edged with his last chip" and—lost! He recalled the quarrel and his blood ran cold, as the words of the newsboy reached his ears again, "Westport News!—'tempted murder!'" The whole scene came vividly before him. There was Jim Fletcher stretched across the table, the poker chips covered with blood and then,—  
"Westport News! All about the big money grab!"—

Slowly, he raised himself on his elbow and looked about him. Where was he? This was not his own well furnished room. His speculations were interrupted by the entrance of a uniformed officer, bearing a tray on which was a scanty meal—Tom's breakfast. Now he realized all. He was in jail!

Poor Tom with heavy heart and trembling hands, read the account of the previous night's brawl. What mattered it then that he was innocent of all the charges laid against him. Fletcher was lying in the hospital in an unconscious condition and Bill Richards walked about with an air of disinterestedness. A large sum of money had been found in Tom's pocket and blood on his clothes pointed him out as the culprit.

In a few days the trial was held and the evidence was so strong against him—even his former friend, Bill Richards, testifying as to his guilt—that Tom was sentenced to ten years imprisonment in Westport Penitentiary. Then the busy life of the "heartless" city moved on as before and the memory of Tom Jameson was soon almost forgotten.

But if the incidents just related caused very little concern to the people of Westport, they were felt severely enough in the rural district of Snowdon. There an aged father and mother suffered in silence, as only parents do suffer, whose son has brought disgrace on their grey hairs. Their only consolation lay in the earnest assertion of his innocence, maintained by Tom in his letter of explanation after the trial. Proud of their son, the sudden intelligence of his downfall, fell like a blight upon their lives and they prayed to the God of Justice to deliver him back to them or, in His Mercy to take them away from the pitying gaze of their neighbors.

Young Jameson's health, already undermined by his recent life of debauchery, now gave way under the shock produced by the sentence which was passed upon him. He fell into a fever and for several weeks lay in the infirmary of the penitentiary, at the very point of death. His former friends deserted him. Even Fletcher, who had now recovered from the effects of the blow and knew that Tom was innocent, made no effort in his behalf. There was only one who seemed to know or



care whether he lived or died. This was Helen Burt, Small's stenographer, and the daughter of the penitentiary warden. Tenderly she watched over him through the long, weary nights, ministering to his many wants. When Tom on Richards' recommendation, first entered the Real Estate office, she took pity on the strange country lad, and it was due chiefly to her disinterested assistance, that he had advanced so rapidly. Then as now she proved a true friend. And as he sometimes walked home with her from the office, when the day's work was over, she warned him against the dangerous companions with whom he was associating. Her interest in Tom, unselfish, though it was, had not been unnoticed by Fletcher and when he recovered from the effects of the brawl, and saw Jameson, whom he considered his rival, out of the way, he determined to leave him to his fate.

During his convalescence Tom had time to consider the seriousness of his situation. Here he was doomed to spend ten weary years in prison. "What a fool I have been," thought he, "to lead such a life! How happy were those good old days on the farm. Oh! if I could only go back now and blot out the memory of the past few years." And then he thought of the dear ones at home whose hearts he had well nigh broken. The poor boy groaned aloud with sorrow and remorse. "There is nothing to be gained by grieving Tom" said his comfortress, "cheer up and pray that your innocence may yet be established." Although the young man had little hope of such a happy outcome, his faith consoled him, and he looked forward eagerly each day to her coming.

As Fletcher went about his duties in the office one day he suddenly remarked to Miss Burt that she looked pale and care worn, and invited her to accompany him to the theatre that night. Her refusal angered him and he strongly voiced his sentiments to Richards in the outer office.

"Good enough for you," said Bill "you're always sticking around where you're not wanted."

This retort provoked a storm of abuse from Jim and as the two had not been on the best of terms for

some weeks past a real row ensued. "Suit you better to be paying me some of the money I loaned you than planning theatre parties with the stenographer," went on Richards. This was too much for Fletcher, and although shaking with rage, he restrained himself sufficiently to reply :

"Yes ! mighty easy for you to lend the money you cheated Jameson and me out of—very generous of you to help a fellow with his own money after breaking in his head—yes, Bill Richards, I was'nt so drunk that I did not know it was you and not Jameson who hit me with that cursed bottle."

The quarrel was carried on at first in a low tone, but as their wrath mounted higher the two men became oblivious to their surroundings and finally their voices could be heard distinctly for some distance. The door leading from the outer office was ajar and the stenographer could not help hearing all that passed. She was amazed to hear Bill Richards charged with the crime for which her friend Jameson was serving a sentence in the penitentiary. As soon as she realized the gravity of the situation—for Fletcher and Richards were about to come to blows—she telephoned for the police and as Richards was closing on his opponent a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder, a pair of handcuffs were clasped on his wrists and he was led away. An investigation followed which proved his guilt and seeing further concealment useless he confessed all. He had cheated the other boys, and when accused by Fletcher struck him with an empty bottle on the head. Fearing the consequences he determined to put the blame on Tom who was now badly intoxicated.

Tom Jameson was soon informed of the unexpected change in the course of events. The faithful little stenographer, who had already shown him so much kindness, who sympathized with him in his trouble and who believed all the time in his innocence now rejoiced with him in the hour of his vindication.

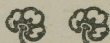
A few days after his release, he received a note from Mr. Small offering him his old position again. This he readily accepted and it was not long until he had regained his former good standing. No more did

he associate with the "good sports"—he had had enough of them, But profiting by his past mistakes he now bent all his energies towards one point. He would save up some money and go back to the old farm in Snowdon, where his parents and sisters lovingly awaited his return.

Another year passed by and one evening in June a tall well-dressed man, accompanied by a young lady, walked up the pathway towards the Jameson farmhouse. There was great rejoicing in the old farmhouse that evening. "I have found that it is not all sunshine in the great city," said Tom—for such it was—and but for one good friend I, instead of Bill Richards, might now be occupying a prison cell. Let me introduce to you that good friend Mrs. Thomas Jameson."

And now in the Westport News, Small and Company are advertising for a new stenographer.

J. A. F. '18.



It is of the utmost importance that a nation should have a correct standard by which to weigh the character of its rulers.—Lord John Russell.

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Only a sweet and virtuous soul,  
Like seasoned timber, never gives.

—Herbert.

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Errors, like straws, on the surface flow ;  
He who would search for pearls must dive below.

—Dryden.

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As conscience is the best inward evidence of God, so human actions are the best outward evidences of Him.—Faber.