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THE REFORMER.

By Rev. Charles M. Sheldon.

Author of "In His Steps," "Robert Hardy's Seven Days," etc.

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

John Gordon, heir to riches, refuses a position in his father's bank and leaves home, father and sister to work for the people of the slums. Scold money getting and a life of frivolity are revolting to him. Gordon's society sweetheart, Luella Marsh, refuses to share his life at Hope House, "an oasis of refuge and strength" among tenements, saloons and vaudeville halls. They part. Gordon goes to Hope House and meets its head, Miss Grace Andrews. He decides to join the slum settlement. His friend, David Barton, a successful "yellow" journalist with a bad cough, asks him to conduct a reform page in the Daily News, edited by one Harris. Gordon considers the offer. The offer tempts Gordon, but he scores "yellow" journalism. Editor Harris overhears the conversation, but gives no sign when he joins Gordon and Barton. Harris offers Gordon \$500 a month to edit a slum reform page. Barton's cough grows worse. Gordon refuses Harris' offer because he thinks Harris wants the page for sensational, not reform, purposes.

CHAPTER III—CONTINUED.

David Barton sat up and exclaimed sharply:

"Do you mean to say that Miss Marsh refuses to live with you in Hope House?"

"She does refuse, but I did not give her time, I am afraid, to give her reasons."

"Time for reasons! How much time does she want?" Barton went on savagely. "Hope House is not good enough for her, eh? She is not willing to go with the man who loves her into such a burden-bearing life! She loves her nice, clean, soft, easy, social position more than she loves the man! No, I tell you," Barton silenced his friend, who made a gesture of dissent. "The girls of this age are not like those of our fathers. They are not willing to begin in a small, economical way and share their husbands' privations. They want big, expensive establishments right off. They have no idea of any sort of life except one of luxury and social success. To my mind, you're well rid of her!"

"No, no, David! Not that! I ought not to have made such a test. You do not know her as I do."

"I don't want to either. Isn't it for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer? If I were the woman you loved, wouldn't I go with you anywhere, John? You know I would, mean, selfish animal that I am. If I were a woman and had the love of John Gordon, I wouldn't even ask him where he was going. I would simply go. That's the reason I say you're well rid of her. She's not worthy of you, John."

"But you have never loved any one, David!" cried John Gordon in great distress, for he was nearer saying a sharp word to his friend than at any time since their friendship began.

"I love you, John, more than this selfish woman ever loved. But I'm afraid that's not saying very much. Wouldn't I die for you?"

"I believe you would, David."

"Well, this woman wouldn't even live for you."

"It's harder to live than to die sometimes," John Gordon answered, with a sigh.

"I tell you she's not worthy of you, John. Mend your broken heart or get another." Barton sang the first line of a popular music hall ballad. "No woman is worthy of a man if she refuses to accept his terms when they are as reasonable and as necessary as yours. But it has hit you hard, hasn't it?"

For answer John Gordon laid his head down on the table. Barton eyed him sympathetically, but offered no word of consolation. After awhile he muttered:

"Confound these women! They make more trouble than all the men put together. The young fellow seems to have sustained a compound fracture. But it'll heal in time. Good thing he's got a steady job. Hope House will give him employment." He lay quiet, and after a little Gordon rose and walked into the other room.

He stayed there until he heard Barton begin to cough again, when he instantly returned to his friend's side to find him sitting up on the couch, his head between his hands.

This time the coughing was of short duration, and Barton exclaimed the instant he was able to speak:

"I can tell time by my cough, it's so regular. I shall miss it when it leaves. The last one tonight. I usually wind it up about half past 10."

"David, have you consulted a doctor?"

"Not today."

"Any time?"

"Certainly."

"What does he say?"

"Just what you and Harris say. Quit work and go to Colorado. I can't. Don't bother about it. I won't go, that's all. I've begun to get attached to the cough, it has shown such an affection for me."

He straightened up and laughed at the look in his friend's face. Gordon was only partly assured.

"It will kill you."

"First time anything ever did."

"You have no right to neglect it."

"Neglect it? Don't I nurse it day and night? No cough ever had better care than mine. I give it the best the patent medicine show affords."

"It will be the death of you."

"All right," Barton said cheerfully. "Rather die from my cough than from a stupid, thoughtless trolley car. By the way, John, did you ever think of

the difference between being run over by a horse and wagon and an automobile?"

"I never gave it much thought." "More people get run over by automobiles than by horses, so the facts show. You see a man can dodge a horse because he—the horse—is alive. But an automobile—Let's change the subject. Give me your programme."

"My programme?" "Your programme as a reformer. What are you going to do? What lies in your mind?" John—David Barton swiftly changed from the careless, flippancy manner he had assumed over his physical condition, and John Gordon instantly knew the friend who loved him was talking now out of his great serious heart. "John, if you are really going to try to make the old world better you've held out your arm to a wrestler who will give you the struggle of your life. I want to help. I don't believe it will amount to anything—the struggle, I mean. And maybe not the help either. But tell me your heart's desire."

"Well, then," John Gordon answered, while his whole expression glowed with his real deep religious enthusiasm and a pride that swept his thought even of Luella Marsh out of existence, "I have a programme. First, I plan to live at Hope House as long as I can be of use there or as long as I can from that place in the city learn the city. It may be five years, it may be ten. If it is ten, I shall be only forty. A man cannot do much public work worthy of the name until he is forty."

"History and biography say otherwise, but never mind," muttered Barton. "Go on."

"My plans of course do not cover possibilities that may come into my experience at the end of my residence in Hope House. But I have dreamed of many things. I don't mean book knowledge, but live, personal knowledge of people. Not the kind that makes a man a professor of sociology in the university, but the kind that makes a man want to change bad laws or make good ones; the kind of knowledge of people that Prof. Hubdell when he said, 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel,' the kind of knowledge of people that compels a man to see in every other man a universe of eternal value and eternal happiness."

"There are mighty few people in this city that think of run-down-at-the-head humanity after that fashion," muttered Barton again. Then after a silence he asked:

"Who's against you in all this?" "Selfish greed, ecclesiastical pride in the churches, political rotteness in the city management, cynical indifference on the part of cultured men and women, whisky, yellow press, business interests wherever they touch financial loss, if reform calls for sacrifice; foreign born and foreign shaped classes, but most of all the opposition of high bred snooty which grows out of the soil of irreligion."

"And who is on your side?" Barton asked almost mechanically, in a low tone.

"God, all good men and women in the churches, and there are many a rising sentiment among young men against municipal partisanship, a gradually rising journalism which in time will demand the extinction of yellow journalism, which is an excrescence that carries in large measure its own destruction, and a rising tide of popular passion against the saloon as an institution and for more equal opportunities in the field of struggle for human happiness."

"You left out the largest item in the list of forces against reform."

"What's that?"

"The people themselves."

"Of course I realize that," John Gordon replied slowly. "But it was not the people that crucified Jesus. It was the scribes and Pharisees."

"The people yelled, 'Crucify him!'"

"The rabble, you mean."

"What's the difference?"

"I don't know exactly, but the rabble is not the people."

"Mighty fine distinction," Barton muttered again. "Of course you can't

deny that the common people are an ungrateful lot. You heal ten lepers, and only one out of the ten will ever thank you for it."

"What difference does that make to me if they're healed?"

"Heap of difference to them, though. I suppose you know that even the politicians don't get in Miss Andrews' way so much as the people themselves. They don't know enough to make the general good of greater concern than their particular good. They're an ungrateful lot, the people are."

"Not all of them. But even if they were, I don't know as that is any reason for letting them alone. Jesus probably knew that only one of the ten lepers would return to give thanks, yet he healed them all."

"They must be mighty ashamed of themselves by this time," said Barton wearily. Gordon instantly noted it.

"You're tired out. Not another word tonight. Can't I do anything for you? No? You will call me if you need me?"

"Yes, of course. You know where your old room is. Just make yourself at home. I gave orders to William when your things came to get your room ready. Sound sleep to you."

In the morning the friends breakfasted at a clubroom near by, where Barton had bachelor quarters at table, and John Gordon noted with concern the face of Barton, which showed marks of wakefulness.

"I coughed once or twice just to keep in practice. And at 6 o'clock I went off again just as a reminder of getting up tonight. But don't you worry. I'll be all right when I get used to it."

He laughed lightly and accompanied Gordon part way down into the city, leaving him at the point where the Hope House district began, after exacting a promise from him that he would take dinner with him at 7 that evening.

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John Gordon went at once to Hope House and had a conference with Miss Andrews.

"There is no reason why I should not begin my work at once," Gordon said.

"The trouble is—Miss Andrews spoke with a slight smile—"you are not like the average resident. More than half of my people during the last ten years have left me to enter their life work. Now I understand—"

"This is my life work," said Gordon gravely.

"It is a matter of both life and death, Mr. Gordon. But let us arrange a definite programme," she added hastily, as if disturbed by some idea foreign to this conference. "How would you like a tenement house tour to begin with?"

"I will do whatever you suggest. I am sure that whatever it is, it will be just the right thing to do."

"Here is obedience for you! Will you always be as tractable?"

"I hope so."

"Very well." She hesitated a moment. "Suppose you go out with Ford. He is making a report of the block west of Bowen street. You can help him."

For a week John Gordon and Ford, the university student, made a special study of a block of tenements in the Hope House district. Ford took kodak pictures of alleys and back yards and stairways and groups of tenement children and inanimate groups of garbage and stifling narrow courts and displays of soiled and tattered wash and everything else except the smells, as Gordon said, and he and Ford took them without the aid of a camera. Gordon tabulated statistics, birth and death rate, density, nationality, disease, occupation, religion and absence of it, number of people in single rooms, quality of food used, drink and drunkenness, saloons in block and their revenue, together with all other items that bore on the life of the lives in that ulcer of the city.

At the end of the week Gordon had reached some conclusions.

"What can be done about bettering conditions? The people in the tenements are victims to a large degree of conditions that they are unable to better. The owners of the property! There's the vital point. How to reach them?"

For answer Miss Andrews took down from the house library a volume containing a list of property owners in Hope House neighborhood. Before giving it to Gordon she said sadly: "You must not let this list disturb your general purpose. Of course it will not do that. But I am sure you want all the facts."

"That is just what I want," said Gordon, wondering a little at Miss Andrews' gravity, although she was always calmly serious.

She quietly, but with the same manner of doubtful hesitation, put the book in his hands and went into the hall to answer a summons.

John Gordon opened the volume and began to run down the names in the list. He was alone at the time, and in thinking back over the experience he was able to recall the strange sensation he had of isolation from every friend, even Barton, whom he had not seen for several days. This feeling of isolation was so unusually strong that he had to fight against the falsehood that there was no tie of friendship in his work, that he stood alone in the struggle for humanity.

Name after name of agents or firms or companies having control of the property around Hope House had been read by him, and he had not reached the block he had been studying, for his interest deepened every moment as he recognized familiar names, familiar in the commercial and social world.

He turned over a page and came to the section marked "Waterside," and the second name he read was "Rufus Gordon," with numbers indicating ownership of several of the worst houses in the block. He read the name with heightening color and went on, and near the top of the opposite page he saw the name of Philo H. Marsh all numbers crediting him with ownership of half a dozen tenements. Glancing at the bottom of the page, Gordon noted the same name again as the owner of property which, by reference to the appendix, he identified, by comparison with his own draft of the block, as saloon and vaudeville property.

"Luella's father!" The idea that for years the woman to whom he had given his affections had lived in the luxury of her home, kept in the possession of the soft, easy things of social luxury by means of money that had the taint of human misery and shame and sin on it, caused him to revolt against the whole cruel social indifference of that part of the social world represented by the facts in the book before him.

"Luella's father and mine also!" he added. He leaned his head on his hand, and his face grew stern. Miss Andrews, coming back to the library, paused in the doorway and stood there a moment looking intently at him.

"But it is my business! It is the business of every man. Father, do you know the horrible condition of that property and the awful condition of the people living there?"

Rufus Gordon made no answer, but the anger was evidently deepening in him. John Gordon waited a moment. All his accumulated passion growing out of what he had seen and heard during that one short week in Hope House was in danger of rising like a torrent against his own father. But when he spoke it was with an earnestness that revealed his attempt at self mastery.

"Nos. 17 and 18, owned by you, father, contain seventeen families. They are, as I suppose you know, front and rear tenements. They are both horribly out of repair and absolutely unfit for human habitation. Take the case of the plumbing. There are no vents to any of the pipes, and only one waste pipe has a trap. That is of no value because of the condition of the catch basins, which are below ground and have simply become so clogged with grease that they are cesspools that overflow the court and even run over into the basement, where two families are living. Back of No. 19 on the alley is a stable in which a vegetable dealer keeps two horses and a cow. These are directly under a room which has been added to the old brick bakery, that is in a terrible state of decay and threatens to fall down. If it does, as it is liable to do at any time, it will certainly result in the death or injury of the tenants. All the plumbing is in direct violation of a distinct city ordinance which makes it an offense to put in piping without traps, vents and catch basins to accumulate material that clogs the sewer connections. The overcrowding is simply indescribable."

"In both these tenements that you own and control there is less than 200 square feet of floor area for families of from five to seven, living in three and two rooms. There are six bedrooms in No. 17 that are absolutely dark and that in spite of the ordinance which provides that every room of a tenement or lodging house must have window space equal to at least one-tenth of its floor area. These rooms not only do not have one-tenth window space, but they do not have any at all. They are simply dark rooms, the only light and air that ever enter them being what can get in through the door, which in many cases opens on a middle room, which in turn has no light or air except what can enter through a shaft between the front and rear tenements only six feet wide and into which the tenants throw their garbage because the boxes in front are broken and overflowing. Father, these human beings are rotting in these inhuman surroundings, and no language can convey the awful horror of child life, the cruel torture of mother life compelled to give birth to children, to nurse sick babies, to prepare meals, to endeavor to obtain sleep or rest, in the heart of overpowering odors, all in less space and with less light and air than a human being would grant to a suffering dumb animal. Father, the property owners of tenement buildings in this city are paying less attention to immortal creatures made in God's image than they pay to sick cats or imported toy dogs or blooded race horses. And, oh, father, for the sake of all this tortured life, of these children born without playgrounds, of these mothers who struggle to keep decent and these girls who go down to ruin under the stress of the inhuman crowding, will you not do something? You can do it. The old buildings can be destroyed. They never can be repaired. They are simply alive with vermin and disease. But new buildings, covering the legal space on the lot, could be put up and be made to pay better than the old ones. You could save the lives of children for the future. You could—"

"Are you lecturing at me?" Rufus Gordon suddenly interrupted, his fat flabby face white with passion. "I know my own business, and I will attend to it!"

John Gordon took a step nearer and gazed with painful intentness into his father's face.

"Then do you mean to say, father, that you will not raise a finger to right these great wrongs? Will you not—"

TO BE CONTINUED.

Pointed Paragraphs.

Dealers who sell Bibles say there are great prophets in them.

It's a wise clerk who laughs at the proprietor's fool jokes.

The head of the weather bureau is sometimes a weather-beaten man.

A bad temper is an awkward thing to have and a dangerous thing to lose. Though a man's will may be strong in law, a woman's won't be law unto itself.

There is almost as much realism in fiction as there is imagination in history.

It is much easier to see the way we should go than it is to go the way we see.

If a baby could say what it thinks when people kiss it one kiss would be sufficient.

Buzz saws are usually temperate, but occasionally they take two or three fingers.

Many a man who objects to carrying a bundle home from a dry goods store goes home from his club loaded.

Probably the worst feature about the wisdom that age brings us is the short time we have left to use it.

After eating onions a girl should sit down and read a ghost story that is calculated to take her breath away.

The endurance of the amateur cornet artist would bring him fame and fortune if directed in some other channel.

If you are anxious to have a lot of people mourn your death all you have to do is to join an assessment insurance association.—Chicago News.

A gentleman of leisure excels in doing nothing gracefully.

CHAPTER IV.

MISS ANDREWS had come into the room and up to the table before John Gordon raised his head.

"These names?"

"You found them. Of course I intended you should. I am sorry for you," Miss Andrews spoke sadly.

"Sorry for me? Sorry for them, Miss Andrews! I am not altogether surprised to find my father's name here, but Mr. Marsh—"

He was silent a moment.

"Mr. Marsh?" Miss Andrews asked, and John Gordon, who had been wondering if he could tell Miss Andrews anything about Luella, realized that she was in total ignorance of Luella and her father.

"Mr. Marsh is senior member of the firm of Marsh, Lyon & Humber, electricians. He is an old friend of my father. I have known him since I was a boy and always respected him. It was a great surprise to me to find his name here."

"Why should it be?" Miss Andrews questioned calmly. "Business in many of its regular methods is not noted for a refined and loving expression of the Golden Rule. Most of the names in that list are names of men who fare sumptuously every day and are counted among the best citizens."

"I've made up my mind what to do," John Gordon said irreverently. "I am going to see my father, and—"

"And what?"

"I won't promise until I have seen him. But you know better than I do that the city ordinances are violated a dozen times in the Waterside district. The overcrowding, the plumbing, the absence of lighting, are all in direct violation of every ordinance on the subject. Scores of the tenants complained that their landlords refused to do anything."

Miss Andrews said nothing, but she eyed John Gordon with her customary calmness. It was the calmness of one who has been through the entire hell of political apathy and municipal incompetence and criminal neglect and still preserves its equanimity.

"Let me know the result of your interview, please," she finally said as John Gordon lapsed into a silent brooding.

He went into the business city next day and entered the bank of which Rufus Gordon was president with a feeling that he strove to subdue and the prayer that he might not be provoked into saying some things that burned in his heart. At the same time when he was once in his father's presence he began to doubt his ability to discuss the facts calmly.

Mr. Rufus Gordon showed no surprise at the sight of his son, although the two had not met since that eventful day when John Gordon had taken somewhat formal leave of his home.

"Will you take a seat?" Rufus Gordon spoke with the cold politeness he might have shown any man who had in all probability come to negotiate for a loan.

John Gordon remained standing and came at once to the point of his errand.

"Father, we have decided each to go his own way, but that does not mean that we are never to have anything more to do with each other, does it?"

"When you are tired of your present foolishness, you can come back." There was the faintest suggestion in Rufus Gordon's manner of relenting in his tone and attitude. The lips trembled slightly, and the eyes rested for just an instant on the son's face before coming back to the apparently indifferent gaze that had been directed at the table.

"I have not come to talk of that, father. It is impossible for me to change my purpose. What I have come to see you about is this: You control some tenement property in Waterside district, Bowen street, two blocks south of Hope House. Do you know from personal knowledge the condition of that property?"

Instantly over Rufus Gordon's face swept an angry wave of color.

"It is none of your business! This is part of your contemptible meddling as a reformer in other people's affairs!"

Miscellaneous Reading.

THE CASE OF VENEZUELA.

Developments That Led to the Present Embarrassing Situation.

The immediate cause of Venezuela's dilemma has its origin in concessions and guarantees made by previous administrations, and in the cases of both Germany and England, the controversies arise from railroad grants and guarantees in that country. The railway which is the cause of Germany's demands is known as the Grand Ferrocarril de Venezuela, running from Caracas to Valencia, a distance of 110 miles. The concession was obtained in 1887 by Herr Krupp, of Essen, Germany, and the road was built under a guarantee from Venezuela that the bonds would realize 7 per cent. The company formed became known as the Grosse Venezuela Eisenbahn Gesellschaft, and the road was completed February, 1894, some time before the term fixed by the government for completion.

In many respects it is one of the most remarkable railroads on the continent. In the short journey it makes through mountains, it was necessary to construct 212 viaducts and bridges and eighty-six tunnels. Its declivities radius of curves and general superior construction has justly excited the admiration of the engineering profession. The road is supplied with eighteen locomotives, thirty-five passenger coaches, eight baggage cars and 155 freight and cattle cars. The equipment is practically perfect.

The road traverses a most romantic section, making a tortuous journey through interminable mountain ranges, over deep gorges and perilous ravines. At certain places the line approaches near yawning abysses upon one side, while on the other great jutting bowlders swing out menacingly above. On both sides of the road for fifty miles after leaving Caracas is an interminuous garden of coffee estates, shielded by large shade trees. Now and then this view is varied by vast fields of waving cane.

On the line of this road is the historic city of San Mateo, celebrated in the annals of the country for heroic deeds of early pioneers who sacrificed life to ignite a powder magazine to prevent it falling into the hands of the Spaniards. The city is also noted for a miracle-working image of the Virgin, which is said to perform many marvelous things. San Mateo was also the home of the great liberator, Simon Bolivar, and here occurred the death of his young wife.

The Lakes of Valencia, around which the road curves for many miles, is like the Caspian sea, having no visible outlet. The shore line near the railroad is bleak and desert-like, having once been part of the basin. The city of Valencia, originally built on the lake shore, is now five miles distant at low water.

On this line is also located Antimino, an interesting resort valley of the Guare, where wealthy families of Caracas have built many large and elegant homes, and where they spend the hottest months of the summer. Surrounding the place and extending down the valley are 117 coffee estates and eight large sugar plantations.

The contention of England is not so clear; but concerns the railroad, the little narrow gauge line, running from Port La Guayra to Caracas, a distance of twenty-one miles. The two places are only seven miles apart in a straight line. This road is also an interesting piece of engineering, crawling among the clouds above La Guayra, 4,000 feet in the first ten miles of its course toward Caracas. It was on account of this road that the famous president, Guzman Blanco, caused dirt roads and bridges over the mountain to be destroyed that traffic might be deflected to the railway. It would seem, however, that his successor, Castro, is not so deeply concerned over the earnings of English bondholders.

In 1897, Bruzual-Serra, minister of state, effected a compromise with German creditors, refunded the debt and created a sinking fund for semi-annual payments. This was repudiated or disregarded by succeeding administrations, and during revolutions the treasury has been looted and public claims utterly forgotten.

POLICE DOGS OF GHENT.

How They Are Trained to the Duties of Town Constables.

Most people know how prominent a part is played by the dog in Belgium, where he acts as the poor man's horse. But the Belgian dog has not stopped here. He is an ambitious creature. He is not content to do naught but slave. He has, in fact, aspired to the law with such good effect that he has become one of its limbs, and now plays the part of policeman, and with such good results, too, that crime in that particular district patrolled by him is said to have diminished by two-thirds since his entry into the force. It is at Ghent that the dog has become a recognized member of the regular town constabulary. The dogs are taught by means of dummy figures made up as much as possible to represent thieves and dangerous characters they may be likely to meet. How much patience is needed by him who undertakes this particular form of education only those who have tried to train animals will properly appreciate. The dog must be taught to seek, to attack, to seize, and to hold, but without hurting seriously! The first step is to place the dummy in such a position that it shall represent a man endeavoring to conceal himself. The dog soon understands that it is an enemy whom he must hunt, and enters into this part of his lesson "con amore," but it is not so easy to teach him not to injure it.

The teacher lowers the figure to the ground and the dog learns that, though he may not worry his prey, he must not allow his fallen foe to stir so much as a finger until the order is given. After the dummy a living model is used, and as this process is obviously not entirely without danger, the person chosen for this purpose is usually he who ministers to the pupil's creature comforts, and for whom the canine detective is sure to entertain a grateful affection. Nevertheless, he is prevented at first by means of a muzzle from an exhibition of too much zeal. Afterward the experiment is tried on other members of the force, and in four months the dog's education as a policeman is considered complete, and he takes his place with the rest. The animals are also taught to swim, and to seize their prey in the water; to save life from drowning; to scale walls, and to overcome all obstacles; so that any enterprising burglar who goes "a-burgling" in Ghent has a lively time of it if he meets with one of these four-footed "bobbies."