Jamesy

A Christmas Story by James Whitcomb Riley

Copyright-1914-by Bobbs-Merrill Co.

Installment Two.

"Now, go on with your story," said I. "How about this 'game' you were 'giving' this morning?"

"Well, I'll tell you, cap. Us fellers has got to lay fer ever' nickel, 'cause none of us is bondholders; and they's days and days together when we don't make enough to even starve on. What I mean is, we on'y make enough to pay fer aggrevatin' our appetites with jist about enough chuck to keep us starvin'-hungry. So, you see, when a feller ain't got nothin' else to do, and his appetite won't sleep in the same bunk with him, he's bound to git on to somepin' crooked and git up all sorts o' dodges to git along. Some gives 'em one thing, and some another, but you bet they got to be mighty slick now, 'cause people won't have 'orphans,' and 'fits,' and 'cripples,' and 'drunk fathers,' and 'mothers that eats morphine,' and 'white-swellin',' and 'consumption,' and all that sort o' taffy! Got to git 'er down finer'n that! But I been a-gittin' in my work all the same, don't you fergit! You won't ever blow, now?"

"How could I 'blow,' and what if I did? I don't live here," I replied.

"Well, you better never blow, anyhow; 'cause if ever us duffers would git on to it you'd be a sp'iled oyster!"

"Go on," I said, with an assuring tone.

"The lay I'm on jist now," he continued, dropping his voice and looking cautiously around, "is a-hidin' my box and a-rushin' in, sudden-like, where they's crowd o' nobs a-talkin' politics er somepin', and a-jist startin' in, and 'fore they know what's a-comin' I'm a-flashin' up a nickel er a dime, and a-tellin' 'em if I only had enough more to make 50 cents I could buy a blackin' box, and wouldn't have to ast no boot o' my grandmother! And two minutes chinnin' does it, don't you see, cause they don't know nothin' 'bout blackin' boxes; they're jist as soft as you air. They got an idy, maybe, that blackin' boxes comes all the way from Chiny, with cokeynut whiskers packed 'round 'em; and I make it solid by a-sayin' I'm on'y goin' to git a second-hand box—see? But that ain't the p'int—it's the Mr. Nickel I already got. Oh! it'll paralyze 'em ever' time! Sometimes fellers'll make up 75 cents er a dollar, and tell me to 'git a new box, and go into the business right.' That's a thing that always rattles me. Now, if they'd on'y growl a little and look like they was jist a-puttin' up 'cause the first one did, I can stand it; but when they go to pattin' me on the head, and a-tellin' me 'that's right,' and 'not to be afeared o' work,' and I'll 'come out all right,' and a tellin' me to 'git a good substantial box while I'm a-gittin',' and a-ponyin' up handsome, there's where I weaken—I do, honest!" And never so plainly as at that moment did I see within his face and in his eyes the light of true nobility.

"You see," he went on, in a tone of voice half courage, half apology, "I' got a family on my hands, and I' jist got to git along somehow! I could git along on the square deal as long as mother was alive—'cause she'd work—but ever sence she died—and that was winter 'fore last—I've kind o' had to double on the old thing all sorts o' ways. But Sis don't know it. Sis, she thinks I'm the squarest muldoon in the business," and even side by side with the homely utterance a great sigh faltered from his lips.

"And who is Sis?" I inquired with new interest.

"Sis?" he repeated, knocking my foot from the box, and leaning back, still in the old position, his hat now lying on the ground beside him, and his frowzy hair tossed backward from the full, broad brow—"Who's Sis?" he repeated with an upward smile that almost dazzled me—"W'y, Sis is—is—w'y, Sis is the boss girl—and don't you fergit it!"

No need had he to tell me more than this. I knew who "Sis" was by the light of pride in the uplifted eyes; I knew who "Sis" was by the exultation in the broken voice, and the half-defiant tossing of the frowzy head; I knew who "Sis" was by the little, naked hands thrown upward openly; I knew who "Sis" was by the tear that dared to trickle through the dirt upon her ragged brother's face. And don't you forget it!

O that boy down there upon his knees!—there in the cinders and the dirt—so far, far down beneath us that we trample on his breast and grind our heels into his very heart; O that boy there, with his lifted eyes, and God's own glory shining in his face, has taught me, with an eloquence beyond the trick of mellow-sounding words and metaphor, that love may find a purer home beneath the rags of poverty and vice than in all the great warm heart of Charity.

I hardly knew what impulse prompted me, but as the boy rose to his feet and held his hand out for the compensation for his work, I caught the little dingy palm close, close within my own, and wrung it as I would have wrung the hand of some great conqueror.

The little fellow stared at me in wonderment, and although his lips were silent, I cannot but believe that had they parted with the utterance within his heart my feelings had received no higher recognition than the old contemptuous phrase, "Oh, what you givin' me?"

"And so you've got a family on your hands?" I inquired, recovering an air of simple curiosity, and toying in my pocket with some bits of change. "How much of a family?"

"On'y three of us now."

"Only three of you, eh? Yourself, and Sis, and—and—"

"The old man," said the boy, uneasily; and after a pause, in which he seemed to swallow an utterance more bitter, he added, "And he ain't no good on earth!"

"Can't work?" I queried.

"Won't work," said the boy, bitterly. "He won't work—he won't do nothin'—on'y budge! And I haf to steer him in ever' night, 'cause the cops won't pull him any more—they won't let him in the station house more'n they'd let him in a parler, 'cause he's a plum' goner now, and liable to croak any minute."

"Liable to what?" said I.

"Liable to jist keel over—wink out, you know—'cause he has fits—kind o' jimjams, I guess. Had a fearful old matinee with him last night! You see he comes all sorts o' games on me, and I haf to put up fer him—'cause he's got to have whisky, and if we can on'y keep him about so full he's a regular lamb; but he don't stand no monkeyin' when he wants whisky, now you bet! Sis can handle him better'n me, but she's been a-losin' her grip on him lately—you see Sis ain't stout any more, and been kind o' sick-like so long she humors him, you know, more'n she'd ort. And he couldn't git on his pins at all yisterday morning, and Sis

sert fer me, and I took him down a pint, and that set him a-runnin' so that when I left he made Sis give up a quarter he saw me slip her; and it jist happened I run into him that evening and got him in, or he'd a froze to death. I guess he must 'a' kind o' had 'em last night, 'cause he was the wildest man you ever see—saw grasshoppers with paper collars on, and old sows with feather-duster tails—the durndest program you ever heard of! And he got so bad onc't he was a-goin' to belt Sis, and did try it; and—and I had to chug him ore or he'd 'a' done it. And then he cried, and Sis cried, and I'cri—, I— Dern him! you can bet yer life I didn't cry!" And as the boy spoke, the lips quivered into stern compression, the little hands gripped closer at his side, but for all that the flashing eyes grew blurred and the lids dropped downward.

"That's a boss shine on them shoes."

I was mechanically telling over in my hand the three small coins I had drawn from my pocket.

"That is a nice job!" said I gazing with an unusual show of admiration at the work; "and I thought," continued I, with real regret, "that I had two dimes and a nickel there, and was thinking that, as these were Christmas times, I'd just give you a quarter for your work."

"Honest, Cap?"

"Honest!" I repeated, "but the fact is the two dimes, as I thought they were, are only two three-cent pieces, so I have only eleven cents in change, after all."

"Spect they'd change a bill fer you 'crost there at the lunch counter," he suggested, with charming artlessness.

"Won't have time—there's my train just coupling. But take this—I'll see you again some time, perhaps."

"How big a bill is it you want changed?" asked the little fellow, with a most acquisitive expression, and a swift glance at our then lonely surroundings.

"I only have one bill with me," said I, nervously, "and that's a five."

"Well, here, then," said the boy, hurriedly, with another and more scrutinizing glance about him—"guess I can 'commodate you." And as I turned in wonder, he drew from some mysterious recess in the lining of his coat a roll of bills, from which he hastily detached four in number, then returned the roll; and before I had recovered from my surprise, he had whisked the note from my fingers and left in my hand instead the proper change.

"This is on the dead, now, Cap. Don't you ever cheep about me havin' wealth, you know; 'cause it ain't mine—that is, it is mine, but I'm a—There goes yer train. Ta-ta!"

"The day before Christmas," said I, snatching his hand, and speaking hurriedly—"the day before Christmas, I'm coming back, and if you'll be here when the five-thirty train rolls in you'll find a man that wants his boots blacked—maybe to get married in, or something—anyway he'll want a shine like this, and he'll come prepared to pay the highest market price—do you understand?"

"You jist tell that feller fer me," said the boy, eclipsing the twinkle of one eye, and dropping his voice to an inflection of strictest confidence—"you jist tell that feller fer me that I'm his oyster!"

"And you'll meet him, sure?" said I.

"I will," said the boy. And he kept his word.

* * * * * * *

My ride home was an incoherent fluttering of the wings of time, in which travail one fretful hour was born, to gasp its first few minutes helplessly; then moan, roll over and kick out its legs and sprawl about; then crawl a little—stagger to its feet and totter on; then tumble down a time or two and knock its empty head against the floor and howl; then loom up awkwardly on gangling legs, too much in their own way to comprehend that they were in the way of everybody else; then limp a little as it worried on—drop down exhausted—moan again—toss up its hands—shriek out, and die in violent convulsions.

We have all had that experience of the car-wheels—had them enter into conversation with us as we gaily embarked upon some pleasant trip, perhaps; had them rattle off in scraps of song, or lightly twit us with some dear one's name, or even go so far as to laugh at us and mock us for some real or fancied dereliction of car etiquette. I shall ever have good reason to remember how once upon a time a boy of fourteen, though greatly under-sized, told the conductor he was only ten, and, although the unsuspecting official accepted the statement as a truth, with the proper reduction in the fare, the car-wheels called that boy a "liar" for 20 miles—and 20 miles as long and tedious as he has ever compassed in his journey through this vale of tears.

The car-wheels on this bitter winter evening were not at all communicative. They were sullen and morose. They didn't feel like singing, and they wouldn't laugh. They had no jokes, and if there was one peculiar quality of tone they possessed in any marked degree it was that of sneering. They had a harsh, discordant snarl, as it seemed, and were spiteful and insinuating.

The topic they had chosen for that night's consideration was evidently of a very complex and mysterious nature, and they gnawed and mumbled at it with such fierceness and, withal, such selfishness, I could only catch a flying fragment of it now and then, and that, I noticed, was of the coarsest fiber of intelligence, and of slangy flavor. Listening with the most painful interest, I at last made out the fact that the inflection seemed to be in the interrogative, and, with anxiety the most intense, I slowly came to comprehend that they were desirous of ascertaining the exact distance between two given points, but the proposition seemed determined not to round into fuller significance than to query mockingly, "How fur is it? How fur is it? How fur, how fur is it?" and so on to a most exasperating limit. As this senseless phrase was repeated and reiterated in its growing harshness and unchanging intonation, the relentless pertinacity of the query grew simply agonizing, and when at times the car door opened to admit a brakeman, or the train-boy, who had everything to sell but what I wanted, the emphasized refrain would lift me from my seat and drag me up and down the aisle. When the phrase did eventually writhe round into form and shape more tangible, my relief was such that I sat down, and in my fancy framed a grim, unlovely tune that suited it, and hummed with it, in an undertone of dismal satisfaction:

How fur—how fur
Is it from here—
From here to Happiness?

When I returned, that same refrain rode back into the city with me. All the gay metropolis was robing for the banquet and the ball. All the windows of the crowded thoroughfares were kindling into splendor. Along the streets rode lordly carriages, so weighted down with costly silks, and furs, and twinkling gems, and unknown treasures in unnumbered packages, that one lone ounce of needed charity would have snapped their axles, and a feather's weight of pure benevolence would have splintered every spoke.

And the old refrain rode with me through it all—as stoical, relentless and unchangeable as fate—and in the same depraved and slangy tone in which it seemed to find an especial pride, it sang, and sang again:

How fur—how fur
Is it from here—
From here to Happiness?

The train, that for five minutes had been lessening in speed, toiled painfully along, and as I arose impatiently and reached behind me for my over

coat, a cheery voice cried, "Hello, Cap! Want a lift? I'll he'p you with that benjamin;" and as I looked around I saw the grimy features of my little hero of the brush and box.

"Hello!" said I, as much delighted as surprised. "Where did you drop from?"

"Oh, I collared this old hearse a mile er so back yonder," said the little fellow, gayly, standing on the seat behind me and holding up the coat. "Been a-doin' circus-business on the steps out there fer half an hour. You bet I had my eye on you, all the same, though!"

"You had, eh?" I exclaimed, gladly, although I instinctively surmised his highest interest in me was centered in my pocketbook. "You had, eh?" I repeated with more earnestness. "Well, I'm glad of that, Charlie—or, what is your name?"

"Squatty," said the boy. Then noticing the look of surprise upon my face, he added soberly: "That ain't my sure-enough name, you know; that's what the boys calls me. Sis calls me Jamesy."

"Well, Jamesy," I continued, buttoning my collar and drawing on my gloves, "I'm mighty glad to see you, and if you don't believe it, just go down in that right-hand overcoat-pocket and you'll find out."

The little fellow neded no second invitation, and as he drew forth a closely folded package the look of curiosity upon his face deepened to one of blank bewilderment.

He made no motion to untie the little package, and gradually the expression in his eyes changed to one of suspicion and his lips closed tightly together.

"Open it," said I, smiling at the puzzled little face; "open it—it's for you."

"Oh, here, cap," said the boy, dropping the package on the seat, and holding up a rigid finger, "you're a-givin' me this, ain't you?"

"I'm giving you the package, certainly," said I, somewhat bewildered. "Open it—it's a Christmas present for you—open it!"

"What's your idy o' layin' fer me?" asked the boy, with a troubled and uneasy air. "I've been a-givin' you square business right along, ain't I?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Searching Oneself for Truth.

Nothing short of the life of the eternal son of God—the holiness, the purity of God, is the standard at which we are to aim; that is to be reproduced in our circumstances; the divine perfections are to be translated, reproduced in our life, our home, our trials, our difficulties, our age of the world. Let us ask ourselves: What is the special likeness of Christ that he would reproduce in me? What are the features of his life that he calls me to imitate? What pattern would he set before me in my work, my circumstances, my difficulties? What are the inspirations of grace that he would urge me to cultivate and cherish?—Bishop Hall.

MANITOBA'S AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

REMARKABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THAT PROVINCE DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS.

The past year has shown that the Province of Manitoba, the Premier Province of Western Canada, stands out prominently in point of wealth in her agricultural productions. Manitoba had an excellent yield of wheat in 1914, the oat crop was not so good, and with the high price received, every farmer was placed in a good financial position.

For some years, as is probably the case in all new countries, Manitoba went largely into the growing of grain, and while this paid well for a time, it was found that having to purchase his meat, his milk and a number of other daily requisites, the farm did not pay as it should. Now, there is another side to it. Fodder crops are grown, cattle are being raised, cheese factories and creameries are established, and the result is that the financial position of the farmers of Manitoba is as strong as that of those in any other portion of the continent. Scarcely a farmer today but has realized that the growing of grains alone has a precarious side, and that positive security can only be assured by diversified farming, and securing the latest modern and most economic methods. Therefore timothy, clover, alfalfa, rye grass and fodder corn are universally grown. Most wonderful success meets the efforts of the farmers in the cultivation of these grasses, and the yields compare favorably with those of many older countries, while in many cases they exceed them.

It is worth while recording the acreage of these crops this season as compared with last, because the figures reflect the remarkable progress that is being made in dairying and in the beef and pork industry. In 1913 brome grass was sown on 24,912 acres, rye grass on 21,917 acres, timothy on 118,712 acres, clover on 5,328 acres, alfalfa on 4,709 acres and fodder corn on 20,223 acres. In 1914 the respective acreage under those crops were 25,444 acres, 27,100 acres, 165,990 acres, 7,212 acres, and 10,250 acres and 30,430 acres. Alfalfa particularly is coming into its own, the acreage having been more than doubled last year.

It is simply the natural process of evolution from the purely grain farming which Manitoba knew as the only method twenty years ago to the more diversified forms of agriculture that is responsible for the development along these other lines in this Province. Alberta is coming to it at an earlier stage than did Manitoba. Saskatchewan, too, is following rapidly in the same direction.

Then, as her fodder crop and root crop acreage indicate, there have been increases in the holdings of all kinds of live stock during the past twelve months, according to the correspondent for the Toronto Globe. Beef cattle number 42,000 head this year, as against 37,000 last year; milch cows are 160,474 head, as against 157,963 head; pigs number 325,000 as against 248,000; sheep number 75,000, as against 52,000; and there are 325,000 horses, as compared with 300,000 at this time last year. These are the latest Provincial figures, and they show that despite the great efflux of live stock to the United States since the opening of that market to Canada, the capital amount of live animals has increased instead of having decreased through the extra demand.

Dairying the Principal Industry.

Dairying is the industry, however, which is making dollars for the Manitoba farmer. It is developing at a rapid rate in this Province for that particular reason. The output of creamery butter last year was 4,000,000 pounds, at an average price of 27.5 cents per pound, which was an increase over the previous year of a million pounds. The output of dairy butter was recorded last year at 4,288,276 pounds. The Government department says that again this year a substantial increase in the dairy output will be shown from this Province. From this same source of information one finds that through the splendid growth in winter dairying, Winnipeg now, for the first time in years, is able to obtain a sufficient supply of milk and sweet cream from its city dairies to satisfy its demand throughout the year without having to import large quantities of these products from the United States as was done not longer than two years ago.—Advertisement.

There's a Rub!

He had used persuasion and argument in vain. At last he said in desperation:

"Edwidge, if you will marry me I will take out 500,000 francs of life insurance; if I die you will be safe from want."

"Yes," was the reply, "but what if you don't die?"—St. Louis Star.

Canned.

Four Years (in Sunday school)—We've got a new baby at our house.

Rector (not recognizing him)—And who are you, my little man?

Four Years—I'm the old one.—Life.

Wash day is smile day if you use Red Cross Ball Blue, American made, therefore the best made. Adv.

Along the road that leads to failure we see a lot of pikers sitting on the fence waiting for something to turn up.

HARD TASKMASTER IS GENIUS

Possession That Sets a Man Apart From His Fellows Keeps Him Constantly at Work.

Genius, what is it but the power of being able to read? No respecter of birth, it chooses the cottage gladly, hiding in the rags of a tinker, loving the hovel, the plowland, the grimed and smoky roof. It is a personality, a living creature, a greater-than-man in man, a reading master, an angel of kindness and a tyrant of cruelty, smiling at the pupil one time, scourging him another; and as the body comes to its power with years it hears the master always teaching, never at rest, speaking with a distinct voice, unfolding pictures without end, and the amanuensis cannot keep pace with this tyrant who hurries him on with, "See this," and "See that," working while the body sleeps, showing portions of the way and work of life which are still far ahead, planning out the whole life right up to the end, giving everything eagerly, if with pain, when the time comes. That is genius, the power which works not for the man, but against him. No labor can make what is not there. Application makes a man able to learn, but not to teach, and if the master is absent no learning will call him, just as without learning—or great tribulation—he cannot be awakened; for genius is nothing but the power of reading what has been written upon the mind of an unknown tongue; and without a Daniel the writing cannot be interpreted; and Chaldeans and astrologers will strive in vain.—From "Granite," by John Trevena.

Gave It Up.

Two pickpockets were standing on their trial, notorious thieves. None the less, they contrived somehow to put up a good defense, thanks mainly to the cleverness of the lawyer whom they employed. The detective who had effected the arrest spent a miserable twenty minutes in the witness box, contradicting himself repeatedly. "Then what made you suspect the men?" asked the lawyer. "As I said before, one of them was wearing an overcoat with a slit in the lining, so that he might operate more easily." "Come, come," said the lawyer, "would you arrest me if you saw me wearing such an overcoat?" "No, sir. I happen to know who you are. You're a lawyer." "Well, what's the difference between a lawyer and a pickpocket?" The detective shook his head. "I really don't know," he muttered.

YOUR OWN DRUGGIST WILL TELL YOU Try Murine Eye Remedy for Red, Weak, Watery Eyes and Granulated Eyelids. No Smarting—just Eye comfort. Write for Book of the Eye by mail Free. Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.

Explaining It.

"Jim says he's a self-made man."

"That accounts for his seamy appearance."

Red Cross Ball Blue, made in America, therefore the best, delights the housewife. All good grocers. Adv.

When a woman promptly admits the age you suggest, mark it down she is older than that.—Omaha Bee.

HOXSIE'S CROUP REMEDY SAVES LIFE, suffering and money. No nausea. 50c.—Adv.

The school of experience is open 24 hours daily.

Are Your Kidneys Weak?

Do you know that deaths from kidney troubles are 100,000 a year in the U.S. alone? That deaths from kidney disease have increased 72% in 20 years? If you are run down, losing weight, nervous, "blue" and rheumatic, if you have backache, sharp pains when stooping, dizzy spells and urinary disorders, act quickly, if you would avoid the serious kidney troubles. Use Doan's Kidney Pills. There's no other medicine so widely used, so successful or so highly recommended.

A Kentucky Case

Andrew Tutt, shoemaker, Morgansfield, Ky., says: "I could hardly endure the pains in my back and after working, it was hours before I could straighten up. My head pained me constantly and I had awful dizzy spells. The kidney secretions were irregular and painful in passage. After I had doctored without relief, two boxes of Doan's Kidney Pills fixed me up in good shape."

Get Doan's at Any Store, 50c a Box

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N. Y.

Mountains of Rock Salt.

Near Jelfa, Algeria, is to be seen a mountain of rock salt, 300 feet in height and nearly a mile in diameter. Two other hills of this character are known in Algeria, both being near Biskra, and in all cases the salt is surrounded by triassic marls and clays. A curious feature of the Jelfa hill is the fact that in spite of the very soluble character of the material composing it it stands up in high relief from the surrounding clay and contains no valleys or other sign of erosion. It does, however, contain a number of sink holes, as in a limestone country. When the brief torrential rains of winter occur the water sinks almost at once into these cavities and soaks through the permeable salt, emerging at the margin of the hill in salt springs.

And That Helps.

"How does he keep the wolf from the door?"

"I don't know; but I know his wife boils cabbage nearly every day."

Make the Liver Do its Duty

Nine times in ten when the liver is right the stomach and bowels are right.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS gently but firmly compel a lazy liver to do its duty. Cures Constipation, Indigestion, Sick Headache, and Distress After Eating.

SMALL PILL, SMALL DOSE, SMALL PRICE.

Genuine must bear Signature

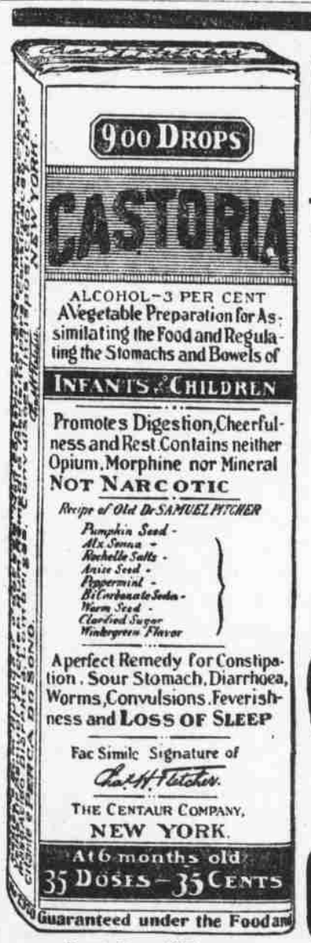
Brent Good

PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM

A toilet preparation of merit. Helps to eradicate dandruff. For Restoring Color and Beauty to Gray or Faded Hair. 50c. and $1.00 at Druggists.

Men Wanted to sell our products and hire salesmen. Good pay and chance for advancement. Knight & Bostwick, Newark, New York, Dept. A.

W. N. U., CINCINNATI, NO. 51-1914.



Exact Copy of Wrapper.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

The Kind You Have Always Bought

Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher

In Use For Over Thirty Years

CASTORIA

THE CENTAUR COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY.

COLT DISTEMPER

Can be handled very easily. The sick are cured, and all others in same stable, no matter how "exposed," kept from having the disease, by using SPOHN'S LIQUID DISTEMPER CURE. Give on the tongue, or in feed. Acts on the blood and expels germs of all forms of distemper. Best remedy ever known for mares in foal. One bottle guaranteed to cure one case. 50c and $1 a bottle; $5 and $10 dozen of druggists and harness dealers, or sent express paid by manufacturers. Cut shows how to positive throats. Our free booklet gives everything. Local agents wanted. Largest selling horse remedy in existence—twelve years.

SPOHN MEDICAL CO., Chemists, Goshen, Ind., U. S. A.

CHEW MAIL POUCH TOBACCO

WHY TRY IT AND SEE

STEADFAST IN THE FAITH

"Firmest" Christian Is the Rock Upon Which the Church of God Has Been Built.

The crown of life goes to him who endures, who, having done all that he can aggressively, knows how to stay where he is when the enemy attacks him. We like the ring of that simple Anglo-Saxon word "steadfast," from "stede, a place," and "faest, fast," and meaning "fixed in position." The Christian is expected by the great Commander to be steadfast in the faith, which does not mean stuck in the mud, rooted in prejudice, or aground on the shallows of tyrannical convention, but balanced and ballasted in belief, riding at anchor to the pull of a heavenly hope, and swinging to the right principles of moral action.

A Christian man is not to be a fossil, but he should be settled in the faith, convinced in his religious opinions, and dependable in his private character. Certain tools made nowadays are advertised as "firmset," which means that they will not draw out, or go to pieces, but, each part remaining in its place, the whole compact mechanism will be available at any time for service. We ought to have fewer ramshackle, loose-jointed, tied-with-a-string church members, and more "firmset" Christians. The need today is for less flabbiness, and more muscle, in the texture of professing Christians. Modern Christianity is too easily confused in doctrine, too readily scared out of its reform positions. The call is for more daring Daniels, more steadfast Pauls. Is your character flimsy, poorly knit together, unreliable, quickly moved away from its proper doctrinal moorings and moral position, or is it well-articulated, thoroughly "joined together," compact and "firmset"? On a proper answer to this question depend the momentous issues of eternity.—Zion's Herald.