ROSALYNDE'S LOVERS

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CHAPTER XII.

General Banderet was beaten.

At the last moment his young competitor for the nomination shook a political trump card out of his sleeve with irrestible effect; the Banderet forces were surprised to such a degree that, within the time at command, they could not rearrange themselves to meet the new issue, and all was lost.

At about three in the afternoon the first news of the catastrophe reached Hawford by wire from Indianapolis. Breyten had arranged to have an early message, but a clique of local politicians were ahead of him, and the rumor passed along the street before his first dispatch arrived. He heard men telling one another; some were swearing viciously and some were rejoicing. His first thought was of Rosalynde, whom he had not seen since leaving the Banderet home.

Just before he went to Indianapolis to open what he spoke of as his "headquarters" at a hotel, General Banderet had called upon Breyton, and what he said took the young man somewhat by surprise. The general was nothing if not warm in his manner, and he professed great embarrassment.

"I could not get up the courage to mention it while you were at my house," he said; "and then, as you know, I was at home very little during your convalescence. This devilish campaign took all of my time. But I feel in honor bound to tell you that when the doctors though you were going to die, I looked into your papers, and so discovered who you are." He hesitated a moment, as if expecting Breyten to speak, then added: "But I've kept your secret from everybody. Not a soul but myself knows it. I hope, sir, that you'll not think I did wrong."

"You did exactly right, general," said Breyten, as soon as he could pull himself together. "I am glad that you were so thoughtful, and I can never repay your disinterested and noble kindness. I have been trying to see you ever since I came away from your house; I wanted to tell you ——"

"My dear sir, no—it was nothing, less than nothing. My granddaughter's carelessness in running against you was the cause of it all, and the very least that I could do was the most that I could do, which was poor enough."

"Miss Banderet did not run against me," Breyten replied with emphasis. "I dashed right over her, and, besides, I was on the wrong side of the road, scorching like a blind idiot. She was not in the least to blame; she couldn't have got out of my way to save her life."

"You are generous, and I won't argue the point," the general said suavely; "I only say what she reported. Rosalynde—my granddaughter—said that you were not in the least to blame. She said that she was riding as fast as she could go and paying no earthly attention to what or who might be coming. But let that go. I'm so glad that you're both out of it so well that I don't care whose fault it was."

"Well, I do care," Breyten insisted. "It is an abominable injustice to lay the slightest blame upon Miss Banderet, and it shan't be done."

The old man smiled in his most bland and gracious way—the smile had always been his chief political attraction, and long practice had arranged the wrinkles in his face ready to spring it with the least possible effort on his part.

"I had but a moment before going to my train," the general said, rising and lifting his great smile with him, "and I ran in to say just a word or two." He extended his hand as Breyten rose also. "I must hurry away. Only four days until the convention sits; and I have hot, hard work before me. I dread it."

"I heartily wish you success," said Breyten. "Is there anything that I can possibly do to aid you? If so, command me, general; I am yours for all I am worth."

The young man's transparent sincerity was so different from what General Banderet's experience with political friends had kept before him that it sent something like a waft of refreshment through him. His smile changed, his eyes softened. He said: "Thank you, sir, thank you. No, it's with the party leaders now, and I think I'm all right. From this on the struggle will be along the line of secret combinations with the candidates for the other offices. But I must be off. See you again when I come back."

On his way to the railway station General Banderet stepped into the bank to get some money, and was informed that another credit of ten thousand dollars had been surreptitiously added to his account. He drew a small amount and went his way in a fever of delight, for now he felt sure the money came from the coffers of an enormously rich presidential candidate, who, in his own interest, wanted him nominated; and if this were so, it would follow that the deus ex machina, which, according to political custom, had to be let down in the convention's midst to control things at the last moment, must be favorable to the Banderet cause.

Breyten was not surprised when the rumor of General Banderet's defeat reached him; he had expected it; yet he could not guard against a stroke of unreasonable disappointment, and it irritated him to hear the hotel loungers making their brutal comments. Somehow Rosalynde seemed to him so closely connected with her grandfather's fate that it was as if her name and fame were being bandied by the political rabble.

What would be the effect upon her? His first impulse was to go forthwith to her with a goodly burden of cheer to lavish upon her. Certainly a bright and light-hearted girl of her character would not take a matter of this sort too seriously; and would it not be a proper thing for him to help her turn the optimistic side of the incident firmly outward?

Then suddenly his heart sank as he thought of Rayle standing in his way and forbidding every gentle and tender act. The girl's accepted lover had the exclusive right to what he, Breyten, was turning over in his mind as a ravishing anticipation.

He sat there scarcely aware of the gabbling crowd of excited and beery politicians; their comments no longer irritated him; he was wrestling with himself.

It is not in the nature of a bold-hearted young man to doubt his ability to win the girl he loves over all comers. Breyten felt sure he could make Rosalynde love him to the utter destruction of every claim that Rayle had upon her. He even fancied that already he had stirred her heart. But could he honorably go a single step farther? Was not complete and unconditional abandonment of the field the imperious demand of duty? Duty! That is a cup of wormwood offered instead of the wine for which our whole being thirsts. He made a wry face at the thought. And then there was a fresh stir, with broken ejaculations and a quick grouping of the men around the desk, where messages were being received.

"Dead! General Banderet? How's that?"

"Dropped dead on the platform in the convention hall."

"The devil you say!"

Breyten was listening with suspended breath.

"How'd it happen?"

"Read that dispatch."

Men tiptoed to look over one another's shoulders, while some person in the center of the compact group read aloud:

"Indianapolis, 3:12 p. m.—General Lucien Banderet fell in an apopletic fit while attempting to move the unanimous indorsement of the nominee. He died before medical aid could avail. Great confusion and excitement."

"Pore old man, he was hit hard," said a benevolent looking fellow who wore the opposition badge. "He ortn't to a-run; he was too old."

Breyten let fall his paper and sprang to his feet. In the intensity of his feeling it was as if he saw the blow of the terrible news fall upon Rosalynde.

With a blur of conflicting emotions in his mind he made some hurried inquiries of the men nearest to him, and then sought the quiet of his room to be alone while he considered what he must do. He could not escape from the shadowy half-impression that in some way he had been instrumental in developing the tragedy which must cast upon a young and inexperienced girl a terrible shock and perhaps change her whole life.

In the course of a few moments he received a telegraphic message confirming what had already been made public, with the additional statement that the general's body would be taken at once to Hawford.

Breyten could not think; the whole tragedy, grim and dark, was refractory when he tried to consider it. One thing, however, was clear to him; it would be unbearable to see Rosalynde and not be able to try to comfort her; and besides, what right had he to go to her in her affliction? He walked to and fro with his hands clasped behind him. What was he to do? He could not retreat, he could not go forward.

In fact, he did nothing. He even forgot his dinner and went to bed late to toss from side to side and argue with himself. Next day he avoided the hotel lobby and did not go out to take the walk which since his recovery had been a daily comfort and source of reinvigoration. What was going on in his mind made him feel the need of absolute isolation and, so to speak, insulation.

In spite of himself, a sense of guilt hovered close to every thought, and from this, had he been older, he might have foretold the outcome of his moral ferment. But he was young, and youth is as obtuse and uncertain as it is agile and flexible.

Over and over he said, "It is a question of privilege." And then he leaped up, shaking his head like a young lion. "Love is free. He wins who can!" he cried. His own voice made him recoil.

XIII.

After the funeral of Rosalynde's grandfather it was announced in the newspapers that Dr. Roger Banderet, with his wife and daughther, had arrived from New Orleans and would spend some time at the home of his brother, the late General Lucien Banderet. The public was further informed that, by the general's will, Miss Rosalynde was made the sole successor to her grandfather's estate, and that as soon as the proper formalities of a legal settlement were over she would go with her relatives to live in New Orleans.

Breyten read this, and felt a sudden fear that should he delay longer Rosalynde might be gone away before he could see her, even to say good-by. But could he trust himself to say good-by? Could he say it?

The next day he was called to Indianapolis upon business which to most men would have proved very exciting. His lawyer had hastened from New York with paper for him to sign in connection with a vast estate suddenly falling to him from an eccentric bachelor uncle just dead.

But a few additional millions really meant little to him, nor did his uncle's death disturb him, for he had never seen that somewhat disreputable and very miserly kinsman, nor had he heard the least good of him from any source whatever. He did not at once try to realize what the doubling of his income stood for in the way of personal influence and material power, and his acceptance of the estate was perfunctory in the last degree.

From Indiarapolis he had to go to Chicago and Milwaukee and Minneapolis, where tedious processes of court transfers of large real estate interests occupied him for several weeks. At times he felt that the play was not worth the candle. Why should he waste all this precious time obeying the beck and call of that sordid god, business? It were better to lose all the old miser's grimy treasure than to miss one accent of—

But here he always broke off, for there was something in him that recoiled.

Matters dragged; the careful and plodding lawyer insisted upon patience and orderly attention to every detail as it came up for consideration; and so September was hanging a new moon in her dusky evening's sky when Breyten once more reached Hawford. By this time he had settled the question as to what he would do, and he meant to do it. Rosalynde and Alfred Rayle were lovers and engaged to be married. To interfere, or try to interfere, would be wrong. His duty was clear. He would be a man, in short, and face the inevitable with a grm countenance. All he had to do was very simple; he would call upon Miss Banderet—he sternly thought of her now as Miss Banderet—say good-by, and be off about his pleasure. He was in such haste to carry out this simple plan of action that when he reached the hotel he could scarcely be reasonable and wait until 8 o'clock, which, somehow, he had learned was the hour for evening calls in Hawford.

A pile of letters, accumulated during his long absence from the hotel, lay on his table, but he did not open them, or even look them over. They could wait a few hours longer; in the morning would be time enough.

The streets were empty when he went out; everybody had gone to the opera house to listen to a speech by the candidate for governor. In passing an alley Breyten looked up the forlorn stairway leading to Rayle's studio. The electric light from the saloon opposite shone upon the grimy ladder. It was not a pleasant moment in which to recall Rayle's position as master of fate, and unconsciously Breyten hastened his steps. When he reached the Banderet homestead there was no gleam in the windows. He stood on the threshold in the dark for a while, hearing only a screech-owl and a gentle soughing in the trees.

He listened, and a queer sense of isolation and defeat came upon him; then he banged the heavy koncker until growling echoes and clanking responses seemed to return from every room within. The house was untenanted, as the very atmosphere declared, and Breyten felt as empty as if life itself had gone from him on a visit. He crammed his hands deep into his pockets and stood scowling at the surrounding gloom. There was nothing to do but go back to the hotel and wait until he could find out whither the Banderets had flown. Then he reflected that it certainly was none of his business to be hunting on the track of people who cared nothing for him. So he strode straightway to his rooms with his head high, doughtily smiling to think how strong he was.

Among the letters on his table lay one from Rayle. He knew it as soon as he spied it, although he never before had seen the man's chirography. It may have been the Paris postmark that conveyed the impression, or it may have been intuitive grasp of probabilities; at all events, he tore open the envelop and unfolded the letter with no kindly feeling for the writer, not anticipating anything worth reading, and yet greedily scanning the lines. Somehow the man's name was a burden to Breyten now, the memory of him a shadow in his mind. As for the letter, it surprised him. He read it twice:

Dear Mr. Breyten: When you receive this letter, I shall be in the hands of a surgeon specialist, who is to make my leg straight. He's a great doctor; maybe you've heard of him, Dr. Jules de Montravin. He says that I am to be a perfect physical man in a few weeks. He guarantees it. You know what this means to me, and to Rosalynde. It means more than art or fame or fortune. I am not letting Rosalynde know that I am doing this. She would worry and imagine dire results; and, besides, I want to come home and surprise her.

Now, I've got to tell you more, which you will keep sacredly secret. I have abandoned art. I can't see how I ever began with it. The masters here showed me quickly that I've not the least call to painting; not even sign painting. This has made be willing to undergo the terrible ordeal of the hospital. If I come out all right, I'll go at the law or medicine or real estate or anything. If I die, it's all over.

To be blunt and honest with you, I must tell you that I think you are the one who gave me my chance in life. If I am wrong, you'll not care; if I am right, words are no evidence of the obligation and thankfulness I feel. Rosalynde writes me often about you; she thinks you a wonderful man, and so do I. If I come out of this with perfect limbs, I'll be a wonderful man, too.

I felt bound to tell you all this, which may not interest you in the least. The thought that probably you furnished the money to pay my way seemed to make it right for me to let you know what I am doing. At all events, you have my secret now, and I implicitly trust you to keep it.

I was about to forget one thing, perhaps the most important; certainly the most disagreeable of all. I am writing a lot of letters to Rosalynde, to be dated properly hereafter and sent to her during the time that I shall be under torture and unable to write or dictate or do anything but groan or lie in a stupor of drugs. These letters will tell her how well I am doing in my studies, and all that, to keep her happy. As soon as I'm over it, I shall write the whole truth to her. God bless her and you. Yours sincerely,

—Alfred Rayle.

The letter was posted on the day of General Banderet's death. Doubtless Rayle had entered the hospital before the tragic news reached him, or more probably it had not reached him at all, as his doctor would almost certainly forbid anything exciting while an operation so delicate and dangerous was going on.

To Breyten the time had seemed so long that now, as he looked back to Rayle's last interview with him, he found himself wondering if it might not be that Rayle was dead. Surely some word would have come from him had the surgery been successful. But then, while in the hospital he could not write; he had said so in his letter, and, besides, it would be to Rosalynde that the first news would go.

There was another letter, however, lying on the table that very moment, which presently Breyten read. It was from the great Parisian specialist. It ran in substance thus:

Your friend, Mr. Alfred Rayle, who is under treatment with me, begs me to say to you that he is doing very well and will be perfectly cured at the end of two months from this time. He particularly wishes you to tell no one anything about his condition.

Distance takes the reality out of things by hanging over them a mist of vagueness. Breyten had traveled enough to overcome the illusion, but yet he could not feel the immediate touch of fact from what he had read. He tried to imagine how Rayle would look standing up firmly on two good, straight legs. He even attempted to measure the rearranged man with himself. They would be different; but he feared that Rayle might be the handsomer, so dark, so magnetic, so finely and massively regular in his features. He crumpled the doctor's letter impatiently.

Other surprises awaited him in the yet unopened missives on the table. A small protograph, taken from a portrait of his mother painted by a celebrated artist, fell out of an envelop along with a sheet of dainty note paper, on which he read:

Somehow I must have sent the wrong picture in my other note. Won't you please return it to me at Old Point Comfort?

—Rosalynde Banderet.

After a few moments given freely to dizzy gazing at the signature, as if it had been Rosalynde herself, he nervously fingered the remaining envelopes for "my other note" until he found it. His heart quivered, or seemed to, and a tender sense of weakness crept through him when he drew forth another little photograph. Then his eyes dilated dreamily; for there she was, Rosalynde, just as he saw her under the bridge. He almost forgot to read the accompanying note, so long was he absorbed in gazing and remembering.

We are leaving for Old Point Comfort. I saw in the newspapers that you were to be absent some time, so I inclose this photograph, which you told me was of your mother. You left it in a book, and I accidently found it.

The date opposite Miss Banderet's signature was more than three weeks in the past, and he saw that the other note had been posted at Washington city. But the photograph, although a trifle worn, as if by much carrying about and indifferent handling, was sufficiently vivid to hold Breyten's eyes away from everything else. He looked at it and dreamed over it until far in the night. The round, frank eyes, the sweet, immature mouth, the softly oval cheeks, the lissome form, were those of a girl in her mid-teens, a girl just blooming into what Rosalynde was on the day of their meeting at the bridge. A painter might have made much of Breyten's unconscious pose. The picture lay flat upon the table almost between his elbows, while, with his hands in his hair, clutching the bright, short locks on either side of his big head, he gazed and smiled and frowned and chewed his mustache, as though mad and glad and perplexed, but; over all, despairing.

The last thought before he went to sleep was that he would have a copy of the photograph before he sent it back. Nor did conscience seem to take cognizance of his purpose, for early next morning he went straightway and accomplished it without a qualm; and, for fear something might go wrong with the negative, he kept the original until he had his finished copy, a remarkably good one, in hand.

By this time he was ready to write what he regarded as a well-considered and thoroughly disinterested letter to Miss Banderet. He was so fastidious about the composition, indeed, that he was more than a week doing it; but when at last it seemed just what it ought to be, he mailed it with the tiny picture carefully enclosed; nor did he find out, until too late, that, by some unaccountable slip, he had sent the copy instead of the original. Somehow the discovery touched him accurately upon the spring that loosed the jocund spirit so natural to him, and he laughed in his old boyish, hearty way, holding the picture before him and gazing at it as if it had said or done something extremely mirth-provoking, albeit the sweet, open look of the girl's eyes was bewitchingly serious.

"It is preposterous!" he presently thought. "It's outrageous! And what will she say? God bless her!"

He kissed the picture at least twenty times before a wave of soberness checked him, and then he thought of Rayle.

XIV.

Now, this is what Breyten wrote:

Dear Miss Banderet: Both of your notes were on my table when I returned, nearly a month after they were written. I read the second one first; then I was in a great hurry to open the other, and when I did open it the inclosure surprised and delighted me. The photograph shows you exactly as you looked that day under the bridge. I see you before me while I write, your eyes gazing past me with a vast, sweet, ravishing indifference. Precisely so does this little photograph which I so grudgingly will return to you in this letter.

I am of half a mind to keep this forlorn little picture of you. Somehow I feel that possession of its original in my deepest memory has proven my right to hold fast the shadow. As I probably shall never see you again, and knowing that you are not to be troubled with what I may tell you about yourself, I am going to say the whole truth. The moment that I saw you at the bridge out yonder you took adeep hold of my heart. I feel that I have loved you passionately every moment since we met. But since I found out your engagement to Mr. Rayle I have been trying to reconcile myself to the inevitable. I cannot do it; I can only stand upon my honor; I can only say to myself that you are beyond my reach—that I must not try to reach you. You love Rayle; he is a splendid fellow; he loves you; you two are engaged to be married; that is all. I am outside and must stay there. I see in the eyes of this picture that from the first you were sealed against me; you were reserved for Rayle. It is hard on me; but then what a stroke of high, sweet fortune for Rayle! I go down, he goes up. What a weight it is that bears me down, and what a life of joy is his! I ought not to wish or even dream of shifting my burden to him.

In writing all this to you I feel doubtful and uneasy about my right to do it—not my right to love you, for somehow that seems unquestionable and a thing to die by. The trouble is Rayle. The man rushed into my sympathy and regard at our first meeting. He seemed so earnest, so sincere, and so brave under great disadvantages, and it seemed to me that you must have given him his courage.

When I returned and found that you were gone, my first impulse was to follow you, to keep you in sight, to linger near you. But what right have I, I thought, to go where she is? So I am not going to follow you; I am going as far from you as I can, not to try to forget you—I can never do that —but to be sure that you shall not suffer on my account.

Just now, when I looked up from this writing to your picture, the face seemed to smile upon some one far off, past me. And then I suddenly was under the bridge, and the storm was on, and your arms went around me tight, tight, so that I felt a great, sweet joy tingle all through me. I can write this frankly, because I am never to see you again, and because your love for Rayle will prevent everything that else might come of such a confession; but it seems unnatural, somehow, that you should have loved any man but me, and I tell you now that I shall never feel differently about it, no matter what cames.

Doubtless I am seeming very folish to you, as you read this; for I think it is quite impossible to make intelligible explanation of an inward condition like mine, or to give any adequate excuse for what I am compelled to write. My whole future seems uninteresting, not worth living in, and I am without aim. Why should I have met you at the bridge out yonder? Why did you nurse me back to life?

I do not mean to be foolishly sentimental; what good could it do? And, besides, it is not my nature to pule and mope; but what is life worth when a man loses as I have? What would life be worth to you were you to find that Alfred Rayle loved not you, but another girl? That is a practical question which makes my condition somewhat within your reach. Look at it seriously. What would life be worth to Rayle if he were to discover that you were in love with some other man? Imagine the thing in that brutal way. You see that it would be like the end of my life.

But how shall I end this letter? Something drags at me and tells me that I ought to tear it up and end it so. A weight of doubt—about my right to tell you how I feel—hinders thought and confuses my language, so that I do not say just what I wish to. Yet I am somehow quite sure that your dear heart will tell you what I cannot.

I inclose your picture. I want to keep it, and I do not want to keep it. It is you, and it is not you. It gladdens me, and it overwhelms me with despair. I do not know what I am going to do. No need to stay here; for I hear that you are not coming back any more, and I do not expect you to answer this letter. You cannot answer it. What could you say? You are happy and deserve to be happy always, and it cannot matter with you if I never again find the old careless, merry life so suddenly snatched from me. But one thing I know, you will never forget

—Frederick Breyten.

After this absurd letter—it seemed to Breyten to grow in absurdity as days went by—had floated down the stream of the mail going eastward, and after a whole week of unaccountable listlessness, Breyten began to expect an answer. But how could there be an answer? He had had nothing to write, and he had written worse than nothing. Rosalynde would be a strange girl were she to take any notice of such an epistle. Still, there he was for more than a fortnight, lingering at Hawford, and growing excited whenever the postman arrived at the little hotel.

If he had known that his letter to Miss Banderet was following her from Old Point Comfort to Asheville, thence to Aiken, and on to Savannah, to Atlanta, to Lookout Mountain, and then to Birmingham, Mobile, and finally to New Orleans—if he had known of that long, slow chase, he might still have waited. But how could he know? Time bore upon him like an atmosphere strangely stale. He walked out to the Banderet place and took a doleful look at it, then went straight to New York, where, two weeks later, he met Rayle, who had just arrived from Paris; and what a splendd figure he was!—straight as an arrow, admirably proportioned, and of noble presence; a dark, magnetic, powerful-looking man. The distinguished surgeon had done his work to perfection.

They met in one of the great hotels, coming face to face so suddenly that both stopped short, and, half recoiling, stood for a moment gazing. Breyten turned slightly pale, but Rayle flushed and looked glad, extending his hand presently with a hearty exclamation of greeting. Two handsomer men, or more opposite and perfect types of masculine beauty, never shook hands in the great city.

(To be continued.)

Sabbath-School Lesson.

FOR JUNE 3, 1901

Jesus Our High Priest in Heaven—Heb. IX. 11-14, 24-28.

By John R. Whitney—Copyright, 1901.

Golden Text—He ever liveth to make intercession.—Heb., vii., 25.

For fifteen hundred years the great truths which have lately come before us were presented to the Jews in a very picturesque manner by the Mosaic ritual. In this ritual they saw the "shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things" (x., 1), but they never realized that it was only "a shadow"—"the patterns of things in the heavens" (ix., 23)—on which they looked. So they were satisfied with religious services which were only outward and visible—just as many are to-day.

Apparently this was particularly the case with those to whom this epistle was addressed. To meet it, the writer, with great clearness, points out the spiritual meaning of the services, the priesthood, connected with the tabernacle which Moses set up in the wilderness, and which was the model for all that was afterwards seen in the temple. To understand the significance of the passage appointed for our lesson, therefore, a brief glance at the origin and arrangements of this tabernacle will be helpful.

About three months (Ex., xix., 1) after the deliverance of the people of Israel from the bondage of Egypt, they were gathered together at the foot of Mount Sinai. There God, in the midst of "thunderings and lightnings and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking" (Ex., xx., 18), spake directly to the people His formulated "law," which we call "The Decalogue," or "The Ten Commandments." After this, "Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was" (Ex., xx., 21), and God gave him various directions to regulate the conduct of the people and special instructions concerning the tabernacle, its construction, its furniture, its priests, its sacrifices and its feasts.

Although the very first demand of "the Law" was "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. xx., 3), and although it was given in the midst of such scenes of majesty and power and impressiveness as led the people to tremble, and to beg Moses: "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Ex. xx., 19), yet when Moses came down from the mount at the end of forty days, he found the people dancing and rejoicing in the worship of a golden calf. They had deliberately and wilfully broken the very first commandment.

Then God turned away from his people, saying: "I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people; lest I consume thee in the way. And when the people heard these evil tidings they mourned; and no man did put on his ornaments." (Ex. xxxiii., 3, 4.) It was a day of great darkness, for they now realized that they had sinned, and were without hope and without God.

Moses, however, interceded for them. His prayer was heard, and God again promised, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." (Ex. xxxiii., 14.) Then Moses went up again into the mount, and again he received "the Law." When he came down he was prepared to instruct the people in regard to the only way in which the presence of God would go up with them. It was in the Tabernacle, and by its services.

The Tabernacle was not "reared up," however, as a place where the people could come together to worship God, as in our modern churches. On the contrary, the only design, in its structure, and in everything connected with it, was to emphasize two great truths, viz.:

First—God's hatred of sin.

Second—God's love for the sinner.

They are the same great truths which are emphasized by the plan of redemption.

God's abhorrence of sin was very impressively set forth by the position and by the general features of the structure itself. Before it was set up, his dwelling place in the cloudy pillar, which hung over the camp, could be seen by every one, at all times and from every place. But now it was only in the tabernacle. This was surrounded by a high wall of thick curtains, through which no man could look, and it is probable that no Israelite was allowed, at any time, to pitch his tent within 2,000 cubits, or between 3,000 and 4,000 feet of it. This was certainly the case when they entered Canaan. (Joshua iii., 4.) And the law said for every encampment, "Far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch" (Numbers ii., 1)(for as a people they could not come nigh God or even look to him.

Within the enclosure, or "court," formed by this high wall of thick curtains, stood the tabernacle. It was divided into two rooms, called, respectively, "the sanctuary," or "the holy place," and "the most holy place," or "the holiest of all." (Hebrews ix., 2-3.)

In the latter was God's chosen and peculiar dwelling place. It was a room closed in on every side and without any window. In it the only article of furniture was "the ark." This was a small, box-like structure, made of "incorruptible wood," overlaid with gold. Within this "ark" wer deposited the two tables of stone on which the law of God was written. It was, therefore, sometimes called "the ark of the testimony." The cover was made out of "pure gold," and was called "the mercy seat." Upon this, at "the two ends," stood "two cherubims of gold," each "beaten out of one piece," and with their faces looking toward each other and toward "the mercy seat." Ex. xxxvii., 1-9.) Between these cherubims was "the shekina," or the symbol of God's presence, and its glorious light filled the whole room. There was no other light in it. Rev. xxi., 22-27.) Here alone could God ever be approached.

But to approach Him one must enter into the "Court" surrounding his dwelling place by one—and only one—door. For the ordinary Israelite this was as far as he could ever go. None but the priests could go a step further, and even they could go no further than the outer room—or "The Holy Place"—of the sanctuary. And—like the "Court"—to it there was but one door of entrance.

Entering through this door on the right was "The Table of Shew-Bread." Immediately oposite it was "The Golden Candlestick," the light from which illuminated the whole room. At the end of the room stood "The Altar of Incense," near the great curtain, or "veil," which effectually separated "The Holy Place" from "The Holiest of all."

Out of all the milions composing the camp, however, there was only one man, the high priest, who was ever permitted to pass through "The Holy Palace," into 'The Holiest of all" and to stand at "The Mercy Seat." And he could go there only "once every year." (Heb. 9:7.)

Nothing could more distinctly impress upon the people how sin separated them from God. For he could be found now, only in one place, by one way of access, by only one man, and only once a year. No rank of person, no abundance of riches, no cultivation of mind, no attainment of moral character, could give access to God by any other way, or in any other place. It was a wonderful and striking type of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When "the first man, Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45), sinned, in all of the creation of God there was found no man who could "by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him." (Psalm 49:7.) No angel, archangel, cherubim or seraphim was equal to the task. "But God sent forth his son," (Gal. 4:4.) He "was made flesh and dwelt," or "tabernacled" (R. V., margin) "among us." (John 1:14.) So "being come by a greater, and more perfect, tabernacle, not made with hands—that is to say—not of this building" (v. 11), God's own son, Jesus Christ our Lord, himself declared, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the father but by me." (John 14:6.) Therefore the apostle also declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.)

But whilst "the Incarnation," like the setting up of "the Tabernacle," declared God's abhorrence of sin, it also—like it—proclaimed his love for the sinner. For both declared that there was provided one way by which and one man by whom—the sinner might come before him and find mercy.

This was more fully set forth, however, by the services of the Tabernacle, than by its structure, or position. For the chief figure in these services was the high priest. He was the one, only, man in all Israel, who could ever approach God. All other "priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year." (v. 6-7.) It was on the great "Day of Atonement." (Ex. xxx., 10; Lev. xvi., 2-34, xxiii., 27.) Then he went, not as an individual man, but as the representative, or substitute for all Israel. But being in himself only a man, he needed "to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's." (vii., 27.) Having offered "the bullock for the sin offering, which is for himself (Lev. xvi., 11), he killed "the goat of the sin offering that is for the people." (Lev. xvi., 15.) With the blood of this goat, as with that of the bullock, he entered "within the veil," and sprinkled "it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat," where God had his dwelling place. Thus he made an atonement for the people.

Then he took a live goat and, laying "his hands upon the head of the live goat," he confessed over it "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat." This "scape goat" was then sent away "by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness," bearing "all their iniquities into a land not inhabited." (Lev. xvi., 20-22.) Thus the sins of the people were "taken away."

But it was not because of anything that they did, individually or collectively. It was entirely because of what their representative and substitute, the high priest, did. When he brought the blood of the appointed sacrifice before the throne of God, and God saw the blood, the evidence that one who was innocent had died for the guilty, he accepted him and his offering on behalf of the people, and he forgave them their sins.

But now "Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Verse 24.) "Being come an high priest of good things to come" (verse 11), he needeth not to "offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place once every year with the blood of others, but now, once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Verse 25-26.)

He was thus the antetype of both "the high priest" and "the sacrifice" of the Tabernacle service. When he ascended into heaven, "by his own blood he entered at once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (v. 13.) For he "was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (v. 28.)

Thus as "the Tabernacle" in itself set forth that no sinner can find acceptance with God anywhere but "in Christ," so by its services it also declared that no one can find acceptance with him but by, and through, the vicarious atonement "of Christ."

When Jesus—our divine high priest—died upon the cross, however, "the veil"—which separated "the holy place" from "the Holiest of all" where God dwelt—"was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." (Matt. 27:51.) Then every repentant and believing sinner was made a priest unto God. (Rev. 1:6.) But as every priest in the tabernacle service was accepted at the mercy seat, not because of any holy service which he rendered, but only because of what the high priest did on his behalf, and on behalf of all Israel, so every penitent and believing sinner finds acceptance only because of what his divine substitute and Redeemer has done for him. When the believer would draw nigh to God, therefore, he must always come through the one "Door," which is Christ. He must come by the one "Sacrifice," which is Christ. He must be clensed by the blood of Christ and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Then—like the priests of old—he is prepared to enter into the holy place of service for God.

But it is again by the one "door." Entering by that one "door," he is nourished and strengthened by "the bread," which is Christ; he walks in "the light" of Christ, and he presents "the incense" of his prayers through Christ, his intercessor. When he comes thus before God, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, he finds him not upon a throne of judgment, but on "the mercy seat." There he looks down upon his own holy "law," and all of its demands are hidden from his sight, for they have been met and satisfied by his own son.

So the guilty, but repentant and believing sinner, standing before God in Christ, is presented "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24.) This is the gospel of "the tabernacle" which Paul preached.

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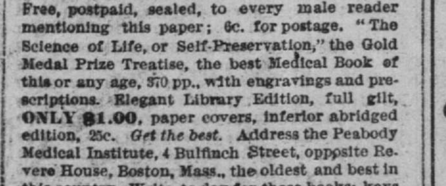

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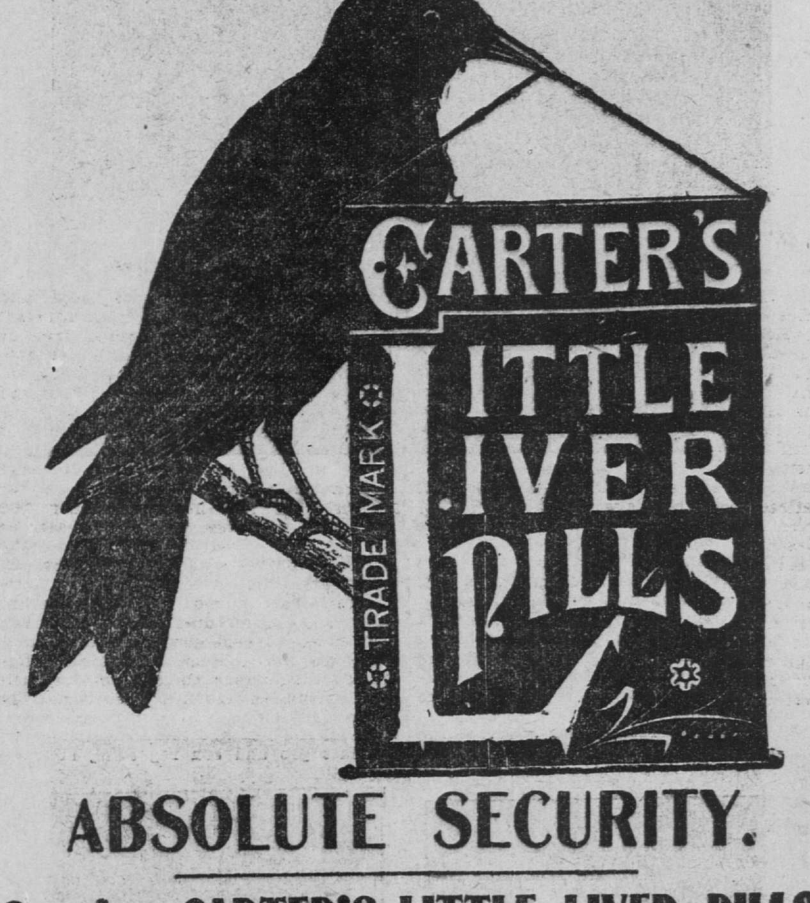

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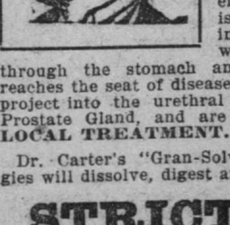

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