

**IN THE DARK.**

I wouldn't have been Robinson Crusoe, not for five hundred year and no slack. It's all werry well being your own foreman and master, and so on, but then such a life to my mind's like a well-flagged deal-board just ready for flooring. You've been over it, and touched it well down with your juck-plane, and finished off with your trying-plane, and there it is—or ought to be if it ain't—scamped just like a bit of satin, every knot just like a smooth brown eye, and every bit o' grain standing out as if polished; but then turn it over, and it's all as rough and shaggy, and splintery as can be. It's all werry well being master and ganger, but then you has to be journeyman and laborer into the bargain. But that ain't it so much, for I wouldn't give a clout nail, let alone tuppence, for a feller as can't turn his hand to anything in a push; it's the lonesomeness of the thing.

I expect it's not liking to be alone made me get married; and I must say that now there's an old bird at home, and five little ones in the nest, I ain't werry lonesome there. How they do open their precious young beaks, and what a sight o' stuff it does take afore you can persuade 'em to shut again! But I ain't grumbling about that, mind, and I hope I never shall. However, as I said afore, I don't like being alone, for it puts me in mind of a werry lonely time; but I do like having a mate come in for an hour's chat, and join me over a pipe and a pint of half-and-half in a quiet, sociable manner, same as you have to-night, Dick Smith.

That's a good trying-plane of yours—the one you had in the shop to-day—but I never did see, and don't suppose I ever shall see, such a tool as one I lost about four years ago—least ways I didn't lose it, for I sold it; but it was a loss, for all that. Fine sound bit o' beech as ever you saw; while as to the iron, there was never a better bar o' stuff came out o' Sheffield. Just show it the illestand now and then, and knock it up to the right set, and then—whish! whish!—the shavings would seem to run off a board as fine, and thin, and soft as—as—well as shavings, you know.

I sold that plane for two shillings, and the next week I'd have given five to get it back, but was gone again, and I've never set eyes on it since. You see, nothing looks worse than for a man to be parting with his tools; and when you see a fellow doing it, he's either one as isn't worth his salt, or else he's werry hard drove.

Now I suppose I do make my salt, mostlings, or else I shouldn't have been two years in this shop; but about the time I told you of, I was going to part with one o' my tools, so you may suppose that I was hard drove. It don't matter where it was, but it worn't a hundred miles from Gray's Inn Lane; and, after being out six weeks, I was took on, and got my order to be off with a lot more down into Survey, where there was a cottage army, as they calls it, a building.

I slips off out o' the yard, ready to bust with the good news, and I was at the bottom o' the lane and across Holborn in no time; and in less than that I was down to court where we lodged, and up two pairs o' stairs, and into the room before my wife had time to hide what she was doing ot.

"Hooray, mother!" I says, "took on!" and then I stops short; for though I would not let her think I knew she had been having a good cry, it all at once struck me that I should be setting her off again; for I'd engaged to go down into the country for a month certain, and I should have to leave her be hind—so I stops short.

"O father!" she says, "I am thankful; for I don't know what could have gone next."

We had, somehow, then got into the way o' callin' ourselves "Mother" and "Father"; and so she said she didn't know what could have gone next; and I'm sure I couldn't have told her, for a many o' our things had gone about that time; for what with no work, and a long spell or two o' sickness, we had to make a good many visits to a certain relative, as I'm sure every honest, hard-working man hates the werry name of.

And now that I ain't speaking fair, for I said we had to make a good many visits; but it warn't we, for I'm blest if I wasn't such a coward myself that I daren't go, but stopped sneaking at home, and let the wife go instead, which warn't at all mauly, says you; no more it worn't.

Howsomever, when she said that, I knew that something must go; and I felt so light-hearted with the idea o' that work that I made up my mind to go myself, and wrapping my old favorite plane up in a red handkercher, I slips out into Fetter Lane and sold the plane for two shillings.

I was hard to work to comfort the wife when she knew that she was going to be left alone; for "O, Tom," she says, "the poverty's hard enough to bear without having to be separated." But I promised her that I'd take a lodging, and get her down with me as soon as I found the work likely to last; but next morning at breakfast I saw more than one tear drip into her teacup.

But it was a bright morning, and I'd been doing all I could to cheer her up; for I wasn't going to start till nine; so I gave young Tom a treat—washed his head for him, and rubbed on the soap till his little nob was all white.

"Now sloosh, farrer," he says; and I slooshed him, and never got the soap soice in his eyes, nor yet up his nose, which wasn't surprising, seeing what a little chap he was then, and no nose at all to speak of.

Well, at last I had my tool-basket ready, and a hammer through the handles to swing it over my shoulder.—There were three clean aprons inside, and some odds and ends I should want; and then there was nothing else to do but say good-by. But there, I won't tell you about it, for she took on a great deal, as it was the first time I had been away from her.

"You will write, Tom?" says she. "Why, of course," I says. "And I've put four sheets and some envelopes in," she says, "so that you needn't write on the back of the sand-paper with your pencil, for it's so hard to make out."

And then, after five minutes' silence, I bolted out, and wouldn't look behind till I was out of the court.

Why, of course, I was sorry to leave her behind; and I went along with my heart feeling as heavy as a lump of lead, and everybody I met looking dim and weary, which I should think must have been indigestion, or something of that kind; but it soon went off, and the clear sunshiny morning seemed to brighten one up, till I felt so hearty and cheery that I was ashamed of myself, for I felt as though I ought to be miserable, like I knew the wife was at home. But there we were, several of us along with carts full of scaffold-poles and material, and before long we were out in the open country.

Out in the open country—God bless it!—with the birds twittering in the trees and hedges; the blue sky overhead, with now and then a light cloud slowly sailing across; the soft wind smelling that delicious, that we opened our mouths and drew in great long breaths, as though we should never be tired. There were flowers everywhere—lilac, laburnum, and may; orchards full of pinkey apple blossom; while as to the green of the fields in the golden sunshine, ah! it was a sight to men who had been cooped up in close London courts, without knowing where the next day's bread was to come from!

Out in the open country, with fresh beauties at every turn. Why, we were like so many boys, running by the carts, larking, shouting, and making regular fools of ourselves, which must, of course, becu owing to the light, free air. I've heard talk of prisoners, and sick men, and their delight at being out once more, but they could not have felt happier than we did, out in the open country, on that bright May day.

Every now and then, though, something dull would keep coming over me, and I wasn't sorry when it did; for what business had I to be so happy and cheerful, knowing how miserable I had left some one at home? But so it was; and the bit o' blackness wore off, and I was as lively as the best of them five minutes after; for, mind you, it isn't money as can give the real gladness of heart.

Well, we got down to the place, and the work went on merrily. The foreman was a good fellow, and made me one or two little advances; and as there seemed to me to be work for a good three or four months, I began to look out for a little place where I could bring some one down to; and a comfortable lodging I soon found, made all my little arrangements, and sent a letter up with a post-office order inside, so that some one and the two little ones could come down comfortable the next day but one.

Every one, I dare say has his own fancie; and I don't mind telling you one o' mine. I don't know any one thing so satisfactory as driving a nail home. You make a small hole with your bradawl; in goes your nail; and then tapping gently at first, you go on by degrees until the head gets nearer and nearer, and at last is driven right into the soft deal board.

Not much in it! says you. Perhaps not to your way of thinking; but every man to his trade, and you may depend upon it, in every trade there's a similar way of thinking. I've seen blacksmiths laugh as they pegged away at their iron; the old cobblers grin as they drew the wax end tight; the painters wag their heads as they laid on the flattin; and something o' the same kind in most trades; for a fellow would not be much of a workman if he did not love his own craft.

Well, I was busy driving nails in a piece o' boarding, thinking all the time about the missus coming down, when I makes a false stroke, hit the nail on one side, and it flew up and caught me in the right eye.

Talk about agony! No one knows what I suffered, for in a short time the inflammation spread from one eye to the other, and I was quite blind, so that I had to be led home to my lodging.—Perhaps you know what a bit o' dust, or a lash, or anything o' that kind is in your eye; you know the pain and worying it gives you; so you can think what I suffered—a great, tall, stout fellow—as I lay turning about with the sweat dropping off me.

Doctor came and did all he could.—Next day came, and the pain seemed easier. Next day after that came, and a letter saying my wife would not be there for another day, and some one had to read it for me, for everything was black as night; and at last, worn out with pain and lonesomeness, and the horrid fear that I was to be a blind, helpless man, I turned over upon my face, and sobbed there till the pillow was quite wet.

Yes, I know it was the act of a child; but I felt one then, as I thought of the bright light of God's sunshine gone from me forever; that I should gaze no more upon the loving face of my own wife, and that the merry, bright eyes of my little ones would sparkle for me no more. That I should henceforth grope about in the dark, seeking like

that sorerer in the Testament, for some one to lead me by the hand. That I, the great man of bone and muscle, should be in a moment stricken down helpless, to be henceforth a burden to my poor wife, and we—poor people.

It was the act of a child, I know; for, with an exceeding bitter cry, I lay there and sobbed miserably, while every tear smarted and burned like melted lead running over my eyeballs. O, yes, it was the act of a child, and I know I was now as helpless as the weakest.—How I lay and thought of poor blind Samson, and pitied him! How I called to mind those with sightless eyeballs whom I had often passed by uncaringly—and how I thought and thought what could I do for my bread in the long, long night that now seemed to be my future.

"In the dark! in the dark!" I kept on groaning to myself as I lay; and then the thought came to me of other blessings which never seemed blessings before, for being mostlings short o' money, I always thought myself hard used, and growled more than I need have done. An at last of all thinking and suffering, my head seemed to get hot, and I turned delirious—half mad, you know—and went on terribly, I suppose, till two days after, when I seemed to wake up in the dark, and lay still, thinking and wondering where I was, till I heard a noise as of some one moaning, and I calls out, "Who's there?" I knew who it was directly, for I just heard the one word, "Tom," sobbed out, and then there was an arm under my head, and tears falling upon my poor sightless face, and such tender, hopeful words whispering to me, as made my heart swell and beat; and I felt that come what might—come sickness, come sorrow, blind, or able to see—I had some one to lean on, and lead me by the hand.

We were werry quiet then, and I lay on my side trying to look through the black darkness at that dear old face that I could feel close by me as some one kneeled down by the bedside; but no, I could not see it with my eyes, though I could with my heart. And then she stopped sobbing, and talked of hoping for the best, and of how the eyes of the blind had been opened, and that perhaps my affliction might, by His help yet be removed. And so we talked and talked and, and she said that we would sorrow no more about it, and then how much she could get by needlework, and all on so hopefully, that I seemed to brighten up; but only for a few moments, for I knew what a dead, helpless burden I should be.—And then she must have seen my face working, and poor lass! she broke down herself, when I said she had better been left a widow.

At last, in the quiet o' that little room, not a sound to be heard but the twittering o' the birds outside the window, I said in better hope, some words with her, as she knelt by me, but we got no further than "Thy will be done."

Dick Smith, I never knowed how much love, and tenderness, and gentleness there was in the world till I groped around in the dark. I'd been bitter, as many a disappointed workman, and railed at my betters; but now, in the midst of my trouble, I learnt that I had walked all my life in the dark, stumbling about, and not seeing the blessings that were spread around me. We never knew what during that dark month which we spent in that pleasant country place, where my wife led me about amongst the sweet spring flowers, while everybody had a kind and loving word for me. The governor allowed me half wages, and somebody did needlework, and they used to pay her double and treble; and send me all sorts o' things, so that were well off. Then the doctor came every day, and told me I wasn't to fret about it, for he hoped I should get my sight yet.

One day I sat trembling in my chair, with the doctor operating—not trembling at the pain, but for fear he had been deceived; somebody stood there, too, holding my hands, for she had got leave to be present. All at once there was a bright flash of light, and then I felt my head swim, and I fainted dead away, for I could not stand up against the swelling joy that burst upon me.

As keen a pair of eyes, as ready a pair of hands, and as willing and hopeful a heart as I hope are to be found in any workshop in England, Dick Smith; and I'm a humble and thankful man for it. But the Lord bless you, I has my fits of ill-temper when things goes threecornered; and then Patty comes and whispers—God save her—in my ear, when the sun shines again, and I think of old times before my accident, and say to her—

"Eyes shut, Patty. I was in the dark!"

—Senator Fessenden is sick with varioloid.

—General Thomas and family are rustating at Lookout Mountain.

—Clement C. Clay was released from Fortress Monroe.

—Mr. Joseph Coltart, for more than forty years a business man of Pittsburgh, died on the 19th ultimo.

—Mrs. Horace Greeley and daughter, and Mrs. H. E. Johnson, nee Harriet Lane, are visiting Havana.

Hon. Charles Shaw, Mayor of Biddeford, Maine, has been appointed Commissioner to the Paris Exposition.

—When is Echo like a visiting acquaintance? When she returns your call.

**DRUG STORE.**

**BORDWELL & MESSENGER,**

DEALERS IN

DRUGS,

MEDICINES,

LAMP OIL,

PAINTS,

LEAD,

LUBRICATING OIL,

TANNER'S OIL,

PERFUMERIES,

VARNISH,

BRUSHES,

DYE-STUFFS,

CONFECTIONERIES,

RAISINS,

CITRON

WATCHES,

JEWELRY,

FANCY ARTICLES,

ALBUMS, STATIONERY, NEWS

VIOLIN STRINGS, BIRD-CAGES,

TOBACCO & SEGARS,

PURE LIQUORS,

FOR

MEDICAL PURPOSES, ONLY,

INSTRUMENTS & IMPLEMENTS

PERTAINING TO THE

DRUG BUSINESS GENERALLY.

BORDWELL & MESSENGER,

RIDGWAY, PA.

**FOUTZ'S**

CELEBRATED

**Horse and Cattle Powders.**

This preparation, long and favorably known, will thoroughly reinvigorate broken-down and low-spirited horses, by strengthening and cleansing the stomach and intestines.

It is a sure preventive of all diseases incident to this animal, such as LUNG FEVER, GLANDERS, YELLOW WATER, HEAVES, COUGHS, DISTEMPER, FEVERS, FOUNDER, LOSS OF APETITE AND VITAL ENERGY, &c. Its use improves the wind, increases the appetite, gives a smooth and glossy skin—and transforms the miserable skeleton into a fine-looking and spirited horse.

To keepers of Cows this preparation is invaluable. It increases the quantity and improves the quality of the milk. It has been proven by actual experiment to increase the quantity of milk and cream twenty per cent, and makes the butter firm and sweet. In fattening cattle, it gives them an appetite, loosens their hide, and makes them thrive much faster.

In all diseases of Swine, such as Coughs, Ulcers in the Lungs, Liver, &c., this article acts as a specific. By putting from one-half a paper to a paper in a barrel of swill the above diseases will be eradicated or entirely prevented. If given in time, a certain preventive and cure for the Hog Cholera.

Price 25 Cents per Paper, or 5 Papers for \$1.

PREPARED BY

**S. A. FOUTZ & BRO.,**

AT THEIR

WHOLESALE DRUG AND MEDICINE DEPOT,

No. 116 Franklin St., Baltimore, Md.

For Sale by Druggists and Storekeepers throughout the United States.

Sold at Manufactures prices, by Bordwell & Messenger Ridgway, Agents for Elk county.

**AGENTS WANTED TO TAKE ORDERS** for the best selling book now published.

Thrilling Stories of the Great Rebellion.

Comprising heroic adventures and hair-breadth escapes of Soldiers, Scouts, Spies and Refugees; daring exploits of Smugglers, Guerrillas, Desperadoes and others; Tales of Loyal and Disloyal women; Stories of the Negro, &c., with incidents of Fun and Merriment in Camp and Field. By Lieutenant Colonel S. Greene, late of the United States Army. Handsomely illustrated with engravings on steel and in oil colors.

Send for circulars and see the liberal terms offered.

CHAS. S. GREENE & CO., Publishers No. 154 S. Third St., Philadelphia.

**EXECUTORS NOTICE.**—WHEREAS, Letters Testamentary upon the Estate of Daniel Hewitt, late of Jay township, Elk county dec'd, have been granted to the undersigned, All persons indebted to the said estate, are requested to make immediate payment, and those having claims against the same, will present them duly authenticated for settlement.

WM. B. HEWITT, JOSIAH W. MEAD, Executors

Apr.-12/66pt.-pd.

**NEW ARRANGEMENT!**

**TREMENDOUS RUSH TO THE**

**NEW STORE OF**

**FREDERICK SCHENING,**

**CENTREVILLE, ELK CO., PA.**

—o—

**NEW GOODS**

**DAILY ARRIVING**

—o—

**THE PEOPLE**

**AWAKE TO THEIR INTEREST!**

As manifested by the daily throng of customers exchanging "GREEN BACKS" for goods.

—o—

All the Domestic Cotton Goods are high.

Customers one and all exclaim

—o—

**HOW CHEAP YOUR**

**DRESS GOODS ARE**

—o—

My stock consists of

DRY GOODS,

GROCERIES,

HATS & CAPS,

BOOTS & SHOES,

CLOTHING,

CROCKERY,

HARD WARE,

OILS & PAINTS,

PUTTY,

NAILS, GLASS,

WOODEN WARE,

PORK,

FLOUR,

FISH,

SALT.

It is useless for me to attempt, to give a full list of the stock, but invite one and all, to drop in and see for themselves.

**BUTTER,**

**EGGS,**

**POTATOES,**

**GRAIN,**

**HIDES,**

**CALFSKINS**

and all country produce taken at market price, for goods.

**FREDERICK SCHENING,**

**Centreville, June 1st/66-1y.**

**ATTENTION.**

**GREAT EXCITEMENT**

Is kept up by the

DAILY ARRIVAL OF NEW GOODS

AT

**FREDERICK RUDOLPH'S**

**Cheap Cash Store,**

Where he has on hand and for sale

—o—

**MEN & BOYS' CLOTHING,**

DRY GOODS,

LADIES & GENTS FURNISHING

GOODS,

LADIES DRESS GOODS,

LADIES' & GENTS'

SHAWLS, SONTAGS,

BREAKFAST SHAWLS,

NUBIAS, COMFORTERS,

SCARFS, HOODS &c.

ALSO—HATS & CAPS,

BOOTS & SHOES,

A very large and well selected STOCK of the best made, and warranted in every respect

ALSO—GROCERIES,

COFFEE, SUGAR, TEA,

RICE, FLOUR, SALT,

PORK, FISH &c.

ALSO—CONFECTIONARY

AND YANKEE NOTIONS

IN GREAT QUANTITIES

AND QUALITIES

TOBACCO AND SEGARS

OF THE BEST QUALITY,

As I say, to one and all, that my stock is full and complete, and will be sold at small profits.

Give me a call before purchasing elsewhere.

**FREDERICK RUDOLPH**

**St. Mary's, Nov. 26/66-1y.**