

# The Court of Last Resort

By LAWRENCE T. BERLINER

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When Webster Smith placed his sign outside the door of the cottage he had chosen for an office and living room, he gave a sigh of relief. The first step in his career had been taken.

Smith was a lawyer. An indulgent parent, a leading member of the bar of a nearby city, was responsible for Smith's residence in the suburban village.

"What the deuce will they want of a lawyer out there, dad?" he had asked his father.

"Never mind, Webb," had been his reply. "We are overrun with budding lights and diplomabred attorneys here. You get out where no one ever heard of a lawyer named Smith and let's see what's in you."

So the newly admitted member of the bar had come to the little place, here to satisfy his father than to practise the arts of one Blackstone.

Blairville had never had a full-blooded attorney-at-law before.

Time went on as it has a habit of doing and the attorney still waited his first client.

Repeatedly, he had traveled to town to inform his father that the simple life was too wearisome for him to bear longer.

Webster had become acquainted. What good-looking young man, a stranger in a small town, could avoid it?

There was Sadie Brown, the squirrel's only daughter, a miss of long standing, who always kept a watch out for strangers, in hopes of annexing a husband, despite her advancing years.

Theresa Perkins was another kindly soul who took it upon herself to



look out for the welfare of strangers. Her pity was also for a purpose. Matrimony was the goal she would reach.

The attorney with the ordinary name treated all the damsels with politeness, steadily declining any invitations and spent most of his time reading decisions of the higher courts.

Then Betty Sloan came to town. She was visiting the Turners, up on the pike road. Blairville at once became interesting to the barrister, and he pondered on a way to get acquainted.

Betty was a typical summer girl. When Smith first saw her she was dressed in a fluffy pink gown.

This at once scored for Miss Betty, for Webster Smith had a decided liking for pink. It had been his favorite color at college, and some had gone so far as to call him Pinky.

It was a hot, duty August morning. Seeking a cool nook the young lawyer had ensconced himself in a hammock on the porch of his office, a fan in one hand and a magazine in the other.

Evidently the story had not proved very interesting, for he was aroused from his slumber by a knock on one of the porch posts, while a voice, rather timidly, was saying: "I beg pardon, is this Mr. Smith?"

"Smith hastily leaped from the hammock and bowed low to the vision in black before him, and whom he at once recognized as Betty Sloan.

"Webster Smith, at your service!" he exclaimed. "Won't you step into the office?"

"I would much prefer to sit out here where it is cool and shady, Mr. Smith," she replied. "You see I have come to consult you on legal business."

Her words brought him back to earth. She had come to consult him on legal business. His first case! Smith could not bring his senses together to figure out what kind of a case she could have for him.

"He brought out his large office chair. "A client must confide in her lawyer. I have been told," commenced Betty with an arch glance at the attorney before her, "so first of all I have a confession to make."

"Miss Sloan, is it necessary—" interrupted the young man. "The young woman waved her hand for him to stop, and said slowly: 'That's just it, every one here calls me 'Miss Sloan,' when they should say, 'Mrs.'"

"What!" gasped the astounded man. All his day dreams had slipped away in that explanation. Betty was a married woman. Time and again he had thought of her, a pink slip of a girl, and now she told him she was married.

"You see, Mr. Smith, I have been living up here with the Turners for some time; in fact, long enough to establish a residence with them for an express purpose. I want a divorce." As she said the last word, she lowered her voice to a whisper, and looked young Smith straight in the eyes.

What she saw seemed to please Betty Sloan greatly, for she would have been accused of laughing if Smith's eyes had their usual shrewdness, which was lacking at this moment.

"Yes, Mr. Smith, I want a divorce. I have tolerated his abuse and cruelty as long as human endurance can, and I am tired of it. My folks and his relatives have interposed, but they have failed. Therefore, I have come to the court of last resort, you, a lawyer," she said.

Webster Smith was coming to himself. It was not so bad as it might have been. Even though she was married, he might be able to secure a divorce and wed her himself.

Such evil thoughts could not dwell in the mind of an honest person, and the lawyer put them away. He would treat the case as he had planned. Personalities must not count.

He requested her to explain fully all the facts of the case, residence of her husband, his full name and everything necessary.

As Betty leaned over, her flushed face near his own, Smith felt great pity for her wrongs and vowed that he would save her from such a brute as John Sloan.

He learned that she had married Sloan to save her father from some financial difficulty. She had not understood it herself, but her parents' appeal could not be refused, and thus she had become a partner in an unhappy marriage.

Smith promised to prepare the papers. He required more information and this compelled frequent calls to the big house on the hill.

He drove the young woman about in his big racing car. As he learned to love her he tried to stifle the feeling.

No trace of the husband could be obtained. The law required advertisement. Smith shrank from this. He dreaded to post her name in the papers.

How to get around this was more than he could figure out. It compelled him to go out to see Betty once more.

Turner informed him that Betty was not well and was preparing to return to the city.

Stunned with the information, he insisted on seeing her.

"Great heavens!" he exclaimed; "what has brought about this change? Have you heard from Sloan?"

"No, Mr. Smith, I have not heard from Mr. Sloan, and that is what has made me feel so miserable," she said. "You see, there is no Mr. Sloan, and never was."

"What!" shouted the astounded lawyer.

What a relief those words meant to him!

"You see, Mr. Smith," she said, between sobs. "I had not been here long before I heard every one speaking of the new lawyer, who never had a case. I felt so sorry for any one who had to remain here always and not even have any business, so I—I invented a case for you."

"And well, indeed, did you fool me," said young Smith.

"And you will forgive me?" she asked, brightening a little, as she saw him smile.

"Forgive you, Betty. There is nothing to forgive." His happiness had forced him to speak her name.

"The time we have spent together, Betty dear, has shown me that I need a partner. I love you, little girl, I love you and want you to be my wife," he told her.

As Betty looked up his happiness was complete, for he knew she loved him. "Tell me, girl, let me hear you say it."

"Webster, I am glad I came to the 'Court of Last Resort,'" she whispered.

## The Resurrection of Christ

By REV. W. L. MUNHALL of Philadelphia

TEXT—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ.—1 Peter 1, 3, 4 and 5.

It was by the sin of one man that death entered the world. The fountain in Eden was poisoned and the waters have flowed on through the ages in their polluted state.

God in His infinite mercy has provided a remedy, a way of escape, by His Son, who descended into the grave, battled with death and was risen again. The text which I am taking is really too big for a day or an hour, for on it one versed in the word of God would talk a week.

The heart of this text is taken from the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Psalm 16-10 said: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." This was a prophecy by David in reference to Jesus.

Peter said: "Men and brethren, let me speak of David's prophecy, he being dead. But according to prophecy, his seed shall reign and his flesh shall not see death."

David prophesied and Peter spoke of the accomplishment of the prophecy, that he, David's seed, should not see death.

Paul said: "He rose again on the third day." This was according to the scriptures; the old scriptures, for there was no New Testament in those days. All authorities uniformly agree that no fact is so well established as that Christ rose from the dead.

Here we have over 500 creditable witnesses that testify according to the resurrection of Jesus. There can be no doubt of it, yet there are people who doubt. I suppose all of you say you do believe—but do you?

Let me explain. Do you believe that God's people will be raised in body from the dead? You can not possibly believe in the bodily resurrection of your Lord from the grave without believing in the bodily resurrection for God's people. I throw this out by way of emphasis.

Those who deny literal resurrection from premises of their own consequently reach unnatural conclusions. There is no teaching of the resurrection apart from the teaching in the sacred scriptures.

I may take for illustration of the resurrection the hideous worm that spins its own winding sheet and lies in a cocoon. By and by it bursts and a beautiful moth emerges. This illustrates but does not explain the doctrine of bodily resurrection from the dead. The only place to find explanation of resurrection of the dead is in the scriptures.

Some say man and horse are the same; that they live and die all the same. This doctrine is not what men say and believe. It is purely and only a revelation from God. What says the scriptures? If you have nothing here that gives you hope, you have nothing. Psalm 16: "Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices. My flesh also shall rest in hope. Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." David knew there was resurrection. David trusted in God and could say, looking death in its hideousness in the fact: "Oh death, where is thy sting—grave, where is thy victory?" We have been made one with Him and have a living hope through Him.

At the death of the spirit returns to the God of David, and the soul departs to its place of felicity until the second coming of Christ, when we enter into our own. Of the wicked—they have a soul, but no spiritual life. At their death the soul departs to torment. The body of all goes into the grave and resolves back to the dust of the earth. "The dust of the earth shall rise" (the bodies).

That which is in the grave comes forth—there is nothing; but the body in the grave, therefore it is the body which is raised.

Allow to a certain extent the premises the we are as animals; that Jesus was born of woman, like us; that Christ was developed into manhood by the laws of nature. At 33 years He was nailed upon the tree; His body was taken down by kind hands.

On the third day an angel rolled back the stone. The same physical body came out of that tomb. Women knew Him (we will also know Him), and He said: "Go tell My disciples that I ascend."

He ascended, directly returned and allowed women to touch Him, when before when He had met them He has said, "No, I have not ascended." This was in accordance with an old Mosaic dispensation which did not allow women to touch a priest who was engaged in the ceremony of sin offering. Christ, is a priest, and was a sin offering, and could not be touched until He appeared before the Father and completed the offering. He then returned to earth and allowed the women to touch Him. He also let doubting Thomas touch Him. He appeared in their midst and told Thomas to reach forth his fingers, saying probably: "This, Thomas, is the same hand I used in ministering to the needy and suffering and sorrowing. This was the same body born of woman, crucified, buried and risen from the dead."

For forty days He was with the disciples, walked, talked and even ate with them, and was seen no less than eleven times.

What Would Suppress the Saloons. A genuine revival of pure religion and undefiled in all the churches, in the hearts and lives of all church members, would be the best possible means of suppressing the saloon, because it would speedily remove many of the causes of drunkenness. Behind the saloon is apathy, neglect—a lack of the earnest and loving spirit which goes out to relieve distress and win the straying. Let us labor as earnestly as we ought to purify the evil atmosphere in which the saloon flourishes, and the saloon itself will soon disappear.—Cumberland Presbyterian.

## TIMELY SUGGESTIONS THAT WILL HELP THE HOSTESS

### Greetings for the New Year.

Child of eternity, child of the silence, Fair New Year,  
Wise with the wisdom sages have left thee,  
Lift up the veil that covers thy features,  
Strange New Year,  
Rainbow a promise over the darkness,  
Lest we fear,  
Bury our yesterday, foolish and empty,  
Follies deep;  
Leaving the mound unmarked, unended,  
Where they sleep,  
Then shall the morrows find us valiant,  
Scorning fear,  
Meeting thy glance with glance undaunted,  
Glad New Year!

This charming welcome to the New Year was written some time ago by Ellen Burns Sherman. May we all meet this first day of 1911 with courage and confidence, forgetting all the sadness and sorrow, remembering only the joy and gladness in the days that are past.

We all need to forget, it is an art much in need of cultivation, especially in our social life. To be a gracious hostess, to keep our entertainment simple, to extend true hospitality is an end and aim worthy of all. Madame Merril's great wish is to come closer to every reader of the department, to be a real friend and a real helper in every problem that comes to puzzle either old or young, rich or poor. If cases need immediate attention, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope, otherwise questions and answers will appear in the department as soon as possible after being received; space being limited, it is often several weeks before they appear. May this New Year bring health, happiness, joy and peace to all. "God bless us, every one."

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