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Always a river to cross.

There's always a river to cross; Always an effort to make If there's anything good to win, Any rich prize to take. Yonder's the fruit we crave Yonder the charming scene: But deep and wide, with a troubled tide, Is the river that lies between.

For the treasures of precious worth We must patiently dig and dive: For the places we long to fill We must push and struggle and strive, And always and everywhere We'll find in our onward course Thorns for the feet and trials to meet And a difficult river to cross.

For the rougher the wave that we take, The stouter the heart and the nerve : The stones in our path we break, Nor e'er from our impulse swerve. For the glory we hope to win Our labors we count no loss; 'Tis folly to pause and murmur because Of the river we have to cross.

So ready to do and to dare Should we in our places stand, Fulfilling the Master's will, Fulfilling the soul's demand: For though as the mountain high The tillows may war and toss, They'll not overwhelm if the Lord's at the When the difficult river we cross. [helm

My Saint John.

BY JAMES W. LUDLOW. 'Wud yer riv'rince come an' see a mon what's dyin'?"

The speaker, who came to the basement door of a city clergyman's house, was one of the worst bedraggled women off Blackwell's Island. Her voice was as husky and weak in tone as it was strong with the smell of whiskey. Her face was a cold and villainous oneonly that at first glance; but a second discovered the slightest trace of anxiety, just enough to suggest that her woman's nature was not entirely burned out, and that some sparks of sympathy, maybe of love, for somebody, still glowed among its ashes. Her address led into a section of the city which is almost as comple terra incognita to our worthy and even philanthropic metropolitans as is rocky pinnacles of the Sporades were the land of King Mtesa. In the back basement of a filthy tenement house the old hag, who had preceded the visitor, welcomed him to what only the evident fact would warrant calling a human habitation. What had once been kitchen pantry was now converted into a chamber, where there lay a man driv through the blackness, an' the white about sixty years of age, of hard, yet loam was like divil's fingers r-reachin'

body. Starvation was evidently accel rating the work of hasty consumption. An inquiry if he had no friends brought the response.

shrunken remnant of a once powerful

· Plinties on 'em whin ye con go till 'em, an' there's a bit in yer pocky for a drink. All the b'ys longshore knows ole John; but missin's not mindin', an' no one but yersil' an' the ole woman's acrost the doorsill for tour days an' nights. They says till thimsil's, ' May's how the ole cove's shipped agin', 'though it's knowin' they are that me hulk's aground agin the graveyard.'

afloat' and the little comforts which were brought him-not the least of which was the 'bourbon' prescribed by administered homopathically, was ' like friendship itsil' '-soon established the utmost familiarity between John and his riv'rince,' who thus had an opportunity to study human nature in its raw material, unmolded by any conventionality of society, and uncloaked by that aution, if, indeed, it be not hypocrisy, count agin' a ship's lad.' with which we ordinarily conceal ourselves from our best friends. Perhaps both felt that the difference was slight between the real humanity which buttoned itself in broadcloth and that which was wrapped in the pauper's blanket.

Of his early life John could give no very clear account. Of his ancestors he said: 'They niver took no 'sponsi- a body o' death;' an' all acause them bility for me, an' I niver felt no 'sponsibility for askin' afther thim.' To the o' God! an' maybes how I'll see the best of his belief, in his voyage into face o' God, too! an' maybes how He's athis world he 'made port' in England. lookin' at me now, an' a-readin' me log, While a mere child, he fell into the grip of that stern law of the 'survival of the look clane through me soul.' fittest,' and, being fit for nothing on land, took to the sea. For nearly half a century he had drifted about the world, and confess their sins. seeing only the lowest forms of civiliza-

Ship law, under shadow of the yard- bottle there 'ud make me stout an' hanarm and cat-o'-nine tails, was his high- dy the morrow, I'd no be sorry for 'em. th' 'O'! Ate me body and ate me est code of morals, and dread of death his highest attainment in religion.

It was this last characteristic which led him to send for the clergyman. He knew almost nothing of the doctrines of the Bible, and said, honestly, 'I'm no praste's mon, an' no Protistant naither -I'm jist a poor soul what's a-dyin'.'

John's interest in 'the Book' was first caught by the reading of David's like sinnin' 'em over agin to tell 'emdescription of a storm at sea.

'The man what wrote that, sir, foller'd the sea. Was he a captain?"

was first a shepherd boy, then a soldier and a king, but never a sailor, he declared, 'Ah! mister, yer much larnin' decaives ye: for ye see there's ividence in's manner o' spaich that 'im what wrote it was a sailor lad, or may's like a 'venturer on the wather. Now list! 'Their soul's milted because o' trouble. It's it 'zactly. I'se niver frighted in the storm; but me soal's jist milted mony's the time. 'At their wit's ind!' an' 'Cry till the Loard!' Ye see. mister, I didn' know nothin' 'bout the Loard, an' av' tol' 'im to damn me oftin, because I didn't b'laive ther' was ony Loard. But when the soul's milted ye 'opes as 'ow ther' may be a Loard lookin' after yez in the storm, but not thinkin' it worth's while to be a-follerin' o' ve win yes only foolin' an' profanin's an' don't mane what yez sayin', but only askin' o' 'im to damn yez playful-

From that time David was treated with all the confidence of an intimate friend by John, who was ready to hear what the 'seafarin' king' had to say.

Another biblical acquaintance was introduced to the sick man in a similar manner by the reading of the story of St. Paul's shipwreck. It happened that John had often 'fared 'long' that same north coast of the Mediterranean, and been 'driven up and down in Adria.' Once he had expected the ship to go to pieces at the base of the Taurus. The hung with mementoes of his drifting th' wist. Ye cud no measure th' far among them. His manner became tragic as, with wild tones and gesticulation, losing himself in actual mania with the vividness of his remembrance or the morbidness of his imagination, he described an awful night off Sicily. rather intelligent, countenance, and the out o'it; divils a-roarin' in the timpist an' acraichin' in the riggin'; but there must ha' bin a hangel somewhere, for in the mornin' the ship stood as livil as the risin' suubame. But, mister, me ole cratt's goin' down this time. An' was ye arnist when ye said a hangel would git on board o' me now likes? Loard o' mercy, sind th' hangel, for John's at 's wits' ind!'

From exhaustion the poor fellow fell back in unconsciousness upon the pillow After this he was always anxious to 'hear a bit o' what said the lad what saved the ship,' meaning St. Paul.

In response to the reading, ' Not one Daily visits to him while he 'kept doeth good, no, not one,' he confessed

that he had been a bad man. But why's the not, sir? Ye can't make posies grow in ship's ballust, ap' a physician, and whose taste, though sailor lads ain't saints nat'ral like. But, mister, I'll no bemane mesil' before ye, or though I'm no good un, it's honest I am whin I testifies till ye that John niver sthiffened nobody what wasn't worser nor 'im, 'cept's maybe whin the shore-grog was in; but alack! yer Davy an' yer Pauel wud niver let that

But John could not feel self-complacent. 'D'ye know what troubles me? It's a-thinking of that sailor king and t'other lad, as clane souls in this wicked worl' as you sun-peep on the dirty floor, an' the one o' 'em a-sayin', ' Me sin's ive afore me, an' to'other sayin', 'I'm no more clane nor a dead corpus, than gem'men had seen likes it was the face and a takin' off me flesh, so's to git a

of forgiveness to such as are sorry for,

population along the wharves of sea- kind o' mane to say as how's I'm sorry d'ye mind th' injy ink, th' hanchor, an' everybody what knowed the old cove, You might have sat by him during some the time in this world and half in hell. | more. Mayhap, mister, if that in the An' don't the Loard know that John don't know hissil' when he says as how's | itself np in a convulsive heap beneath he's sorry? O Loard! is it sorry, or feared I am? An' confess 'em? How 'ud that diffrince the Almighty? He knows 'em allriddy. Doesn't Davy say he did 'm ' in Thy sight'? Ay, ay, sir, He saw 'em plainer nor I did mesil.' An' whyfore confess 'em? 'Twould be I'll no confess 'em, the dirty, bloody things! I'll no think o'em. But what's it I'm sayin'? I'll no think o' 'em ! Upon being assured that the Psalmist | Alack! they think thimsil's into me-They're likes to the crewlo' dead men, with dead faces a starin' out o' the riggin', an' up from the hatches, an' ablinkin' in the shiplights, an' a-moanin' down in th' hold-allers there!

'I don't mind a confession till ye. yer riv'rince, for though yer a 'oly perfishon, ye's got, maybe, a sin o' yer own, an' wadn't be too hard-thoughted on a sailor lad. Oh, it's a long wake o' sins John's got behin' 'im, an' it don't die down like, but stays there amarkin' me cruise. I can see it (mapping it with his finger pointing to the walls) like a great white sarpint, lyin' across both the great seas, an' kinkin' itsil' up into ivry port I iver dropped anchor in. An' th' Loard's a-lookin' at it too. Ye says th' Loard will forgie me? Na! na! it's not raison He will. Isn't th' Loard juster nor me? But I'm no so bad a mon as iver to forgie mesil', an' how's th' Loard o' goodniss goin' to forgi John? I thank yer riv'rince for yer intintion to coomfort a poor felly, but ye can't be manin' it; it's not raison-like.'

An explanation of the doctrine of salvation through Christ, ending with a quotation from the Psalm, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. brought David into temporary disrepute with the sick man. 'But that sailor king was no' much of a sailor. niver wint aroun' the 'arth, or he'd niver said nothin' 'bout the far o' th' aste an' that's betwixt 'em wi' all th' longitudes, than y'd fathom th' ocean dipth wi' th' log-line.'

The next day, however, he accosted his visitor with- 'I've thought all th' night 'bout th' a te an' the wist. That Davy was a mighty navigator, sure. axes pardon for suspicionin' 'im. An' thim words o' his has sailed all 'roun' me soul. Let me 'splain till yez th' aste an' wist. D'ye list? Th' fastest ship what iver cut water, crowdin' her sails wi' barricane abame, or stame or the divil in her biler, startin in th' aste 'ud niver come till th' wist-Th' wist's a 'orizon what's allers a cadin' an' recadin' as ye goes afther i

Now list till I makes known till yez Captain Davy, his manin'. John's sins is like th' wist, all a-flamin' rid, as whin sun's goin' down, scarlet like as ye rid yisterday; an' John's th' ship a-drivin' afther 'em with's conscience a-thumpin' an' all his soul a creakin'; but th' Loard o' mercy's is a-drivin' 'em away! an' by'n by he'il plump 'em down out o' Johu's sight foriver an' iver. I think mister, as how's it was th' hangel told me that manin' last night, whin th' ole woman was sleepin', an' th' ile was gone; for it seemed day like, an' th quiet, wi' not a rat a-gnawin', was spackeful like. Maybe I dramed it But mightn't dyin' be dramin'? Now, yer riv'rince, ony time ye sees I'm unaisy an' frighted, jist say till me, Aste an' wist! John, aste an' wist! For sometimes thim sins comes a-rushin' on me like seas astern, an' I'm hanchored like wi' me bad feelin' an' can't ride 'em, an', as th' captin says, 'All th' billows goes over me.' Then I thinks, 'Tain't seas like, John; it's aste an' wist like!' an, I falls to dramin' agin.'

John had still a great trouble. He could not overcome the natural shrinking from death.

ums? I cud ate the worums asier than anither. We's the b'ys, some from I can bear to think o' the worums ship and some from longshore, what a-aitin' o' me. D'ye mind that arrum used to see John after the consumption not praste folk,' said one with seal hon-The visitor quoted the Bible promises (showing the shrunken muscles of his struck 'im, an' he couldn't go no more esty of face and manner. arm)? It cud sthiffen ony mon on ship- to mast nor roll a bar'l on dock. An' board; but how thin it's got! Maybes | when we missed 'im, we kind o' thought | yourselves could tell him nothing about

Ow! th' nasty worum 'll crawl along last night. an' ate out th' 'J' an' th' hanchor an'

name!' The shrunken form gathered the blankets, and moaned: 'Ow! the dirty worums. I don't want to die!'

The clergyman talked to him of the resurrection, and reminded him of the promise in the Book of Revelation: ' I will write upon him my new name.' And 'His (God's) name shall be in their foreheads.'

John's face emerged from the blankets: 'Say that agin, mister.' And, ye mind haulin' through that agin?"

A deep light seemed to fill his sunken eyes as if his whole soul was condensed in them. The harsh features relaxed into something very like beauty. A little superstition would have seen a light overspreading the features and the halo about the head. The clergyman saw neither of these; but thought of them, and thought, too, of the title which is prefixed to the story- My Saint John.

In a few moments the man came out of his rhapsody, and in a voice which itself told of the elation of his thoughts: like's a new-born babby; an' God He's new name, an' He'll name me afther an' naither th' saints nor divils 'll know nothin' o' old John an' his sins.'

He raised himself with the remnant of his fast-failing strength, and, lifting both arms, cried out, as if passing into the vision, 'Oh, but that's glorious! that's glorious! I thauk me God!' and fell back upon the pillow in utter exhaustion.

The next day the clergyman was met at the street-door by some wretched woman, who said: 'You've no need to go there agin, sir. He's dead. Entering the little back basement, there lay the lifeless form on the floor, a pool of blood at the mouth, and the miserable hag he had called his wife dead drunk across the body. John had been taken with a hemorrhage and fallen from his bed, to die upon the floor. This was twelve hours before the visitor's call, and, though the house was crowded with tenement humanity, no one had so much as touched the body

to care for it.

That night however, when the visitor called, he found the room filled with wild, drunken crew of women and men who, with the instinct of ravens, had found the dead body, and were preparing to 'wake the corpse.' In one cornner sat 'the widow,' sufficiently recovered from her drunken stupor to croon her maudlin grief and snarl and snap at the men who, under pretense of giving John a 'dacint sind off,' were robbing her of the bits of silver which the clergyman had given her husband. The police were summoned. The dead body and its living relic were protected during the night from the attack of

The day following, the clergyman was waited upon by a rough but rather fine-featured man, who stood awkward. ly clutching his hat with both hands, and making obeisances sufficient to have sustained the dignity of an ambassador of the Sultan. Finally, straightening himself, he said : . Be you's the clargy assured affirmatively, the visitor announced:

'I'm appointed, yer riv'rince. to inform yer riv'rince that we's goin' to pervide him what's gone with a fussclass fun'ral; and wud yer riv'rince boss the 'casion?'

become so deeply interested; but ventmade for the interment.

society, an' no felliship, 'cept the felli-'Yer riv'rince, do ye likes the wor- ship o' not knowin' much about one it could have felt your kindness?'

ports, which may be said to live half for 'em now, when I can't do 'em no me 'nitials, 'J,' an' 'O' forninst it. an' we dragged for 'im till we got 'im of those long nights, and help him to a

about th' fun'ral, boss! beg pardin', yer riv'rince! We b'lives in stickin' to a cove till he's planted hansom'. Once knowed niver forgot till's name's scratched on th' stun'! that's our feelin'. Got a coffin stained like 'hogany, wi' white nails on't an' a door-plate wi's name as near's we know'd it, to sort o' interdoosh 'm. Don't b'lieve in a feller goin' in wi' th' speerits s'if h' back.' was no better nor a foundlin'. Fly yer flag, ole feller, as ye sails into port o' hivin or t' other place! we all says 'bout after a few moments' pause: 'Wud John. We's goin' to have a fuss-class hearse, unles it goes back on us; for the coffin man said he didn't want his 'stablishment stan'in 'roune thim slums; an' a carridge for the widdy an' you an' me; an' all the b'ys is a-comin', un. bein' Sunday: an' ole John's goin' to have sich a sind-off to 'im that I hopes he'll git so good a reciption where he's

> should be an orderly funeral, not like the scene he had witnessed the night before, the master of ceremonies de-

goin' to.'

At the time appointed the minister me father; an' He'll christen me wi a presented himself at the back basement of them on shipboard. door. The little room was packed with Hissil' jist as if I'd niver lived afore; humanity, exhumed from the lower strata of society. There were rum-sodden old men, and devil-may-care young men, and here and there the frowzy head of an unsexed female. No hat was removed. Every mouth held its pipe or cigar-stump, and through the thick smoke one could discern the shape of the coffin, and through the din of voices catch the drunken wail of the chief and only mourner.

'B'ys, the clargy's come !' announced the caller of the morning. 'Tak' off yer hats and douse yer tabakky!' The last order met with general disapprobation, expressed in such terms as, 'Th' clargy 'll no care !' 'John 'll no smell it!' 'If John can no sthand tabakky, 'ow 'll he sthand th' brimstuu!' An ominous show of shirt-sleeves on the part of the leader, and the injunction, Obsarve th' civil'ties!' from some of the more venerable ones, were, however, effective, and the meeting was soon reduced to a degree of order which may be denominated the mumbling and shuffling state, but which in its contrast with the preceding was sufficiently solemo to suggest the commencement of the service. Elbowing and ankling his way to the head of the coffin, the clergyman read a few verses of Scripture, with the accompaniment of such Selahs as-

'Stap yer scrougin'!'

' Wad yes tip the corpus?'

'Na, be aisy in prisince o' the dead.' 'I'il put yez in wi' John, if ye na mind yersil' 'Riv'rince the clargy !'

With the first lull the clergyman

'My friends, we have-'

a sintimint? As ye said, we's frinds,

frinds togither, an' John's frinds. The clargy's right.' The clergyman resumed: "It was permitted me to have but a brief acquaintance with the deceased, but-"

"We know'd 'im, though,' said the what knowed John-?' On being interlocutor. 'Sivinteen year wi' 'im on shipboard, an' niver out o' me eye since was John.'

The clergyman expressed his readi- his speech to the colloquial disposition he seemed to find rudimentary traces of ness to do anything to attest his respect of his auditors. 'Well,' said he, 'if you for the memory of one in whom he had knew him so well, why did no one of you go to see him when he was sick? ured to ask what society the man rep. He told me that none of you had come resented, and what provisions had been to give him a kind word. It is well to bury his corpse honorably; but don't To which he responded. 'We's no you think that it would have been better to have cared for his poor body when

> But, mister, what cud wes tolk be tion? sayin' to a cove what's dyin'? We's

drink. And may be his hand would not Ye needn't have no manner o' fear have grown cold so soon if some of you had now and then held it for him in real sympathy.

'B'ys,' said a dilapidated creature, who tried to straighten himself against the corner so as to attract attention, 'b'ys, the clargy's right. Yez orter be more shimpathitic. We's drinkt wi' John whin h' was on 's feet, an' we's orter coddled to 'im whin h' was on's

'Our friend who has departed,' resumed the preacher, 'in telling me something about his life, confessed that he had been a very sinful man, and-'Sintu', is it,' said one to another.

John was no sinfu'.' 'But,' replied the man so addressed,

'John was no good, He was a hard

'Ay,' was the rejoinder; 'but a hard un is no sinfu' hypicrat. John was no sinfu' at all.'

The clergyman took the occasion to The clergyman, stipulating that it explain that to be a 'hard case' and no 'good' was equivalent to being sinful; and that the Bible did not mean by sinners meek-faced people, who went clared: 'Give us your grip on it, yer to church publicly and served the devil riv'rince. It shall be a clane fun'ral, in private; and then repeated to his 'I'm goin', thin, until the nixt worl' or, bedad, we'll bury more'n old John.' audience John's statement that, bad as

'Ay, yer riv'rince has us right. We's nane o' us good,' said a rough voice, in subdued tone.

' And that is just what the Bible tells us' said the minister. 'There is not one that doeth good; no, not one."

'Is that in th' Book?' inquired one.' Bedad, but it's thrue, though it be in th' Book.'

The speaker assured them that, if they would read the Book, they would find that it knew them thoroughy, even better than they did themselves. But he thought that John was not so bad a man as he made himself out to be, because he was so willing and frank in confessing his faults.

'Yer right agin,' responded one. I've obsarved that th' warst mon is th' mon what won't let on till it. The hypicrat is th' divilist. I wud no forgie my own brother if he no confiss his

'There, again, you see how you and the Bible agree,' said the clergyman. 'The Book, just as if there was a living spirit in it, which read your thoughts as clearly as you read its letters, says: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

'Is that in th' Book?' asked the former questioner. 'Bedad, I dinna faith th' Book ; but that's thrue, though

th' Book do say it.' The preacher then told the story of his various conversations with John, much as has been related in the former part of this narrative, illustrating by . John's experience the Scripture promises, and drawing from his audience At which point a serious-faced old more responses than would have been soaker said: 'Wud yer riv'rince 'low heard in any of our liturgical churches and those which showed as hearty conviction of the truths of sin and grace as are usually breathed into scented handkerchiefs or lifted by choir incense into groined ceilings. From boisterous thoughtlessness, the company soon passed into a serio-comic state of mind and ultimately into undoubted solemnity. Religious truths which are trite to my readers were thoroughly novel 'We know'd 'im,' chimed a dozen to that audience, and dogmatic statements which we have trained ourselves The minister saw at once that any to doubt were received as axiomatic. connected discourse was out of the To the clergyman came a new evidence question, and, as best he could, adapted of the inspiration of the Scripture, for the great doctrines of the faith in the native convictions of the commonest humanity.

There seemed no division of sentiment among his hearers until he spoke of the 'basis of salvation,' when he was interrupted by-

'Will the clargy sthop a bit, an' tell us jist what is the fundament of salva-

The questioner was answered from the other side of the room by a man as bristling with excitement as was his 'True,' said the clergyman, 'you of chin with a seven days' beard, who, 'Sorry for 'em! But divil was I how's the wirum's inside it now an' what had come till 'im. So we jist death and life beyond; but you could finger of the other at his antagonist, tion, among that morally amphibious sorry for 'em when I did 'em, an' I feel tastin' me, fore dinner's riddy. An' chipped in a quarter or a tenpence, have told him you were sorry for him. while he shricked, 'Whist ye than;