Cap'n Warren's Wards

By JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

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THE CAPTAIN REFUSES TO GIVE UP THE TRUST THAT HAS CAUSED HIM SO MUCH TROUBLE.

Synopsis.—Atwood Graves, New York lawyer, goes to South Densboro, Cape Cod, to see Captain Elisha Warren. Caught in a terrific storm while on the way, he meets Cap'n Warren by accident and goes with the latter to his home. The lawyer informs Cap'n Warren that his brother, whom he had not seen for eighteen years, has died and named him as guardian of his two children, Caroline aged twenty, and Stephen, aged nineteen. The captain tells Graves he will go to New York and look over the situation before deciding whether he will accept the trust. The captain's arrival in New York causes consternation among his wards and their aristocratic friends. The captain makes friends with James Pearson, a reporter; then he consults with Sylvester, head of Graves' firm. The captain decided to accept his brother's trust. Sylvester is pleased, but Graves expresses disgust and dismay. Pearson calls and is surprised, for he had known the young Warrens and their father. Caroline asks the captain's aid for a servant whose father was hurt by an auto. The captain finds that Malcolm Dunn had caused the injury, and makes him help in paying the sufferer's expenses until his death. Pearson tells the captain of a difference he had with Rogers Warren because he refused to help the latter in a shady transaction. The captain plans a birthday celebration for Caroline, but the latter, who with Steve had been spending the day with the Dunns, fails to return for dinner. The Dunns give the young Warrens a colored view of Pearson's differences with their father. They upbraid both their uncle and Pearson.

CHAPTER XI—Continued.

—11—

"Oh, oh, Steve!" she cried and, turning to her brother, sobbed hysterically on his shoulder. "Oh, Steve, what shall we do?"

Stephen put his arm about her waist. "It's all right, sis," he said soothingly. "Don't cry before him! I guess," with a glance at his uncle, "you've said enough to make even him understand—at last."

Captain Elisha looked gravely at the pair. "I guess you have," he said slowly. "I guess you have, Caroline. Anyhow, I can't think offhand of anything you've left out. I could explain some things, but what's the use? And," with a sigh, "you may be right in a way. Perhaps I shouldn't have come here to live. If you'd only told me plain afore just how you felt I'd—maybe I'd—but there! I didn't know—I didn't know. You see, I thought—* * * However, I guess that part of your troubles is over. But," he added firmly, "wherever I am or wherever I go you most understand that I'm your guardian, just the same. I considered a long spell afore I took the place, and I never abandoned a ship yet once I took command of her. And I'll stick to this one! Yes, sir. I'll stick to it in spite of the devil—or the Dunns, either. Till you and your brother are of age I'm goin' to look out for you and your interests and your money, and nothin' nor nobody shall stop me. As for forcin' my company on you, though, that—

"What?" he shouted. "You mean he's quit?"

well, that's different. I call'ate you won't have to worry any more. Good night."

He thrust his hands into his pockets and walked slowly from the library.

CHAPTER XII.

A Surprise For Pearson.

STEPHEN, the "man of the family," was the only member of the household, servants excepted, who slept soundly that night. Conscious of having done his duty in the affair with Pearson and his guardian and somewhat fatigued by the disagreeable task of soothing his hysterical sister, he was slumbering peacefully at 9 the next morning when awakened by a series of raps on his bedroom door.

"Ah! What? Well, what is it?" he demanded, testily opening his eyes. "Edwards, is that you? What the devil do you mean by making such a row?"

The voice which answered was not the butler's, but Caroline's.

"Steve! Oh, Steve!" she cried. "Do get up and come out! Come, quick! Something has happened."

"Happened? What is it?"

"I can't tell you here. Please dress and come to me as quick as you can."

Stephen found his sister standing by the library window, a letter in her hand. She looked troubled and anxious.

"Oh, Steve," she exclaimed, "he's gone!"

"Gone? Who?"

"Captain Warren. He's gone."

"Gone? Gone where? Caro, you don't mean he's—dead?"

"No; he's gone—gone and left us."

Her brother's expression changed to incredulous joy.

"What?" he shouted. "You mean he's quit, cleared out, left here for good?"

"Yes."

"Hurrah! Excuse me while I gloat! Hurrah! We got it through his skull at last! Is it possible? But—but hold on! Perhaps it's too good to be true. Are you sure? How do you know?"

"He says so. See."

She handed him the letter. It was addressed to "My Dear Caroline" and in it Captain Elisha stated his intentions succinctly. After the plain speaking of the previous evening he should not, of course, burden them with his society any longer. He was leaving that morning, and as soon as he "located permanent moorings somewhere else" would notify his niece and nephew of his whereabouts:

For, as I told you, although I shall not impose my company on you, I am your guardian same as ever. I will see that your allowance comes to you regular, including enough for all household bills and pay for the hired help, and so on. If you need any extras at any time let me know, and if they seem to me right and proper I will send money for them. You will stay where you are, Caroline, and Stevie must go back to college right away. Tell him I say so, and if he does not I shall begin reducing his allowance according as I wrote him. He will understand what I mean. And, Caroline, I want you and Stevie to feel that I am your anchor to windward, and when you get in a tight place, if you ever do, you can depend on me. Last night's talk has no bearing on that whatever. Goodby, then, until my next. ELISHA WARREN.

Stephen read this screed to the end, then crumpled it in his fist and threw it angrily on the floor.

"The nerve!" he exclaimed. "He seems to think I'm a sailor on one of his ships, to be ordered around as he sees fit. I'll go back to college when I'm good and ready, not before."

Caroline shook her head. "Oh, no!" she said. "You must go today. He's right, Steve; it's the thing for you to do. He and I were agreed as to that. And you wouldn't stay and make it harder for me, would you, dear?"

He growled a reluctant assent. "I suppose I shall have to go," he said sullenly. "My allowance is too beastly small to have him cutting it, and the old shark would do that very thing. He'd take delight in doing it, confound him! Well, he knows what we think of him. That's some comfort."

She did not answer. He looked at her curiously.

"Why, hang it all, Caro," he exclaimed in disgust, "what ails you? Blessed if I shan't begin to believe you're sorry he's gone. You act as if you were."

"No, I'm not. Of course I'm not. I'm—I'm glad. He couldn't stay, of course. But I'm afraid—I can't help feeling that you and I were too harsh last night. We said things—dreadful things"—

"Be hanged! We didn't say half enough. Oh, don't be a fool, Caro! I was just beginning to be proud of your grit. And now you want to take it all back. Answer me, now, Are you sorry he's gone?"

"No. No, I'm not, really. But I—I feel somehow as if—as if everything was on my shoulders. You're going away and he's gone and—what is it, Edwards?"

The butler entered with a small parcel in his hand.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Caroline," he said. "I should have given you this last evening. It was by your place at the table. I think Captain Warren put it there, miss."

He bowed and retired. The girl satturning the little white box in her hands.

"He left it for me," she said. "What can it be?"

Her brother snatched it impatiently.

"Why don't you open it and find out?" he demanded. "Perhaps it's his latchkey. Here! I'll do it myself."

He cut the cord and removed the cover of the little box. Inside was the jeweler's leather case. He took it out and pressed the spring. The cover flew up.

"Whew!" he whistled. "It's a present. And rather a decent one, too, by gad! Look Caro!"

He handed her the open case. She looked at the chain spread carefully on the white satin lining. Inside the cover was fitted a card. She turned it over and read: "To my niece, Caroline. With wishes for many happy returns and much love, from her Uncle Elisha Warren."

She sat gazing at the card. Stephen bent down, read the inscription and then looked up into her face.

"What?" he cried. "I believe—you're not crying! Well, I'll be hanged! Sis, you are a fool!"

* * * * * * *

The weather that morning was fine and clear. James Pearson, standing by the window of his rooms at the boarding house, looking out at the snow covered roofs sparkling in the sun, was miserable. When he retired the night before it was with a solemn oath to forget Caroline Warren altogether; to put her and her father and the young cub, her brother, utterly from his mind, never to be thought of again.

Why—why had he been so weak as to yield to Captain Elisha's advice? Why had he not acted like a sensible, self respecting man, done what he knew was right and persisted in his refusal to visit the Warrens? Why? Because he was an idiot, of course—a hopeless idiot, who had got exactly what he deserved! Which bit of philosophy did not help make his reflections less bitter.

After breakfast he went to his room, seated himself at his desk and took the manuscript of his novel from the drawer.

He was still sitting there, twirling an idle pencil between his fingers, when he heard steps outside his door. Some one knocked.

"Well, what is it?" he asked.

His landlady answered.

"Mr. Pearson," she said, "may I see you?"

He threw down the pencil and, rising, walked to the door and opened it. Mrs. Hepton was waiting in the hall. She seemed excited.

"Mr. Pearson," she said, "will you step downstairs with me for a moment? I have a surprise for you."

"A surprise? What sort of a surprise?"

"Oh, a pleasant one—at least I think it is going to be a pleasant one for all of us. But I'm not going to tell you what it is. You must come down and see for yourself."

On the second floor Mrs. Hepton stopped and pointed.

"It's in there," she said, pointing.

"There" was the room formerly occupied by Mr. Saks, the long haired artist. Since his departure it had been vacant. Mrs. Hepton took Pearson by the arm and, leading him to the door, threw the latter open.

"Here he is," she said.

"Hello, Jim!" hailed Captain Elisha Warren cheerfully. "Ship ahoy! Glad to see you."

He was standing in the middle of the room, his hat on the table and his hands in his pockets.

Pearson was surprised—there was no doubt of that—but so much at the sight of his friend—he had expected to see or hear from the captain before the day was over—as at seeing him in that room. He could not understand what he was doing there.

Captain Elisha noted his bewildered expression and chuckled.

"Come aboard, Jim!" he commanded. "Come in and inspect. I'll see you later, Mrs. Hepton," he added, "and give you my final word. I want to hold office's council with Mr. Pearson here fust."

Pearson began to get a clew to the situation.

"Captain Warren," he demanded, "have you—do you mean to say you've taken this room to live in?"

"No, I'm not. Of course I'm not. I'm—I'm glad. He couldn't stay, of course. But I'm afraid—I can't help feeling that you and I were too harsh last night. We said things—dreadful things"—

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"Captain Warren," he demanded, "have you—do you mean to say you've taken this room to live in?"

"No, I ain't said all that yet. I wanted to talk with you a little afore I said it. But that was my idea if you and I agreed on sartin matters."

"You've come here to live! You've left your—your niece's house?"

"Ya-as, I've left—that is, I left the way the Irishman left the stable where they kept the mule. He said there was all outdoors in front of him and only two feet behind. That's about the way 'twas with me."

"Have your nephew and niece"—

"Um-hm! They hinted that my room was better than my company, and, take it by and large, I guess they was right, for the present anyhow. I set up till 3 o'clock thinkin' it over, and then I decided to get out afore breakfast this mornin'. I didn't wait for any goodbys. They'd been said, or all I cared to hear"—Captain Elisha's smile disappeared for an instant—"last evenin'. The dose was sort of bitter, but it had the necessary effect. At any rate, I didn't hanker for another one. I remembered what your landlady told me when I was here afore, about this stateroom bein' vacated, and I come down to look at it. It suits me well enough. Seems like a decent moorin's for an old salt water derelict like me. The price is reasonable, and I guess likely I'll take it. I guess I will."

"Why do you guess? By George, I hope you will!"

"Do you? I'm much obliged. I didn't know but after last night, after the scrape I got you into, you might feel—well, sort of as if you'd seen enough of me."

The young man smiled bitterly. "It wasn't your fault," he said. "It was mine entirely. I'm quite old enough to decide matters for myself, and I should have decided as my reason and not my inclinations told me. You weren't to blame."

"Yes, I was. If you're old enough I'm too old. I call'ate. But I did think—however, there's no use goin' over that. I don't want you to think that I've have overboard that 'responsibility' I was so easy and fresh about takin' on my shoulders. It's there yet, and I'll see you squared with Caroline afore this v'yage is over if I live."

"It wasn't your fault," he said.

His friend frowned.

"You needn't mind," he said. "I prefer that you drop the whole miserable business."

"Well, maybe. But, Jim, you've taken hold of these electric batteries that doctors have sometimes? It's awful easy to grab the handles of one of those contraptions, but when you want to drop 'em you can't. They don't drop easy. I took hold of the handles of Bije's affairs, and though it might be pleasanter to drop 'em I can't—or I won't."

"Then you're leaving your nephew and niece doesn't mean that you've given up the guardianship?"

Captain Elisha's jaw set squarely.

"I don't remember sayin' that it did," he answered, with decision. Then, his good nature returning, he added: "Well, Jim, there's just one thing more. Have I disgraced you a good deal bein' around with you and chummin' in with you the way I have? That is, do you think I've disgraced you? Are you ashamed of me?"

"I? Ashamed of you? You're joking!"

"No, I'm serious. Understand now, I'm not apologizin'. My ways are my ways, and I think they're just as good as the next feller's, whether he's from South Denboro or—well, Broad street. I've got a habit of thinkin' for myself and actin' for myself, and when I take off my hat it's to a bigger man than I am and not to a more stylish hat. But since I've lived here in New York I've learned that, with a whole lot of folks, hats themselves count more than what's underneath 'em. I haven't changed mine, and I ain't goin' to. Now, with that plain and understood do you want me to live here in the same house with you? I ain't fishin' for compliments. I want an honest answer."

He got it. Pearson looked him squarely in the eye.

"I do," he said. "I like you, and I don't care a blank about your hat. Is that plain?"

Captain Elisha's reply was delivered over the balusters in the hall.

"Hi!" he called. "Hi, Mrs. Hepton."

The landlady had been anxiously waiting. She ran from the dining room to the foot of the stairs.

"Yes?" she cried. "What is it?"

"It's a bargain," said the captain. "I'm ready to engage passage."

The captain gets a hint that there are more rocks ahead. Read about this development in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

American Girls Who Marry Young.

The census bureau finds that hundreds of American girls in every twelve months are married at fifteen. Thousands annually are married at sixteen. Out of every 100 women in this country eleven have married before passing nineteen. In New England (according to the census data) only one woman in fifteen gets an acceptable proposal before she is twenty. In the south, the desirable man offers himself to one out of five or one out of six girls of nineteen or under. It is shown by the census that a young woman's chance of offers is decidedly better in a rural community than anywhere else.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

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LESSON FOR JUNE 2

THE PROPHETIC OUTLINE OF THE INTERVAL BETWEEN CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION AND HIS COMING AGAIN.

LESSON TEXT—Mark 13:1, 14:9.

GOLDEN TEXT—He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.—Mark 13:13.

DEVOTIONAL READING—Ephesians 2:1-10.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL — Matthew 13:1-25, 46; Luke 21:5-38; I Thess. 5:1-24; II Thess. 2.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Jesus among his friends.—Mark 14:3-9.

JUNIOR AND INTERMEDIATE TOPIC—Our best for Christ.—Mark 14:3-9.

The printed text (14:1-9) may profitably be used by the primary, junior and intermediate grades, but the adult classes will more profitably confine their study to chapter 13. In order to avoid confusion in this study, let it be clearly borne in mind that two matters are presented—the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies and the glorious return of the Lord. The two are sometimes so closely interwoven as to make the threads difficult to disentangle, but if we see the coloring in the graphic picture of the destruction of Jerusalem as adumbrating the revelation of the Son of God in glory, we shall have no serious trouble.

I. The Occasion of the Prophecy (vv. 1-4).

As Jesus was passing through the temple for the last time on his way to the Mount of Olives, where he gave this discourse, the disciples reminded him of the splendor of the building, to which he replied that not one stone should be left upon another. When seated upon the mount three disciples came privately with a threefold question, according to Matthew 24, requesting further information.

1. When shall these things be?

2. What shall be the sign of thy coming?

3. And of the end of the age?

That which follows is given in answer to these questions.

II. The Characteristics of the Age During the Absence of Christ (vv.5-23).

1. Appearance of deceivers (vv. 5, 6).

Since Jesus went back to heaven many false Christs from time to time have pressed their claims as being the Christ. As the age draws to a close these claims doubtless will increase.

2. Wars and strife among the nations (vv. 7, 8).

The history of the centuries since Christ is written in blood, and the river increases in volume as the age goes on toward its consummation. Jesus warns against making any particular war the sign of his coming. Many good people have seriously blundered in this respect because they did not heed this warning.

3. Earthquakes and famines (v. 8).

Though these calamities grow increasingly severe as the days lengthen, the intelligent, believing disciple is not surprised or alarmed, for these are the precursors of a new order, the birth pangs of a new age, the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ upon his earth. Let the child of God in this present darkness look up, for his redemption draweth nigh (Luke 21:28).

4. Universal evangelism (v. 10).

The gospel of the Kingdom, according to Matthew 24:14, shall be preached in all the world for a witness. This is not the Gospel of the grace of God which we now preach, but the new evangelism which shall be proclaimed by elect Israelites immediately preceding the coming of Christ to establish his Kingdom (see Rev. 7:4-10; Rom. 11:25).

III. The Lord's Glorious Return (vv. 24-27).

This is the superlative event, the one to which all prophecies have pointed, and all ages are moving with unfailing precision. It will usher in the golden age of which the wise and great of all ages have dreamed, and for which they longed. The coming of the Lord will put an end to earth's sorrows; wars and strife will not end until the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord and his Christ (Rev. 11:15). This event will be accompanied by great physical disturbances and Jesus will gather his elect from the ends of the earth.

IV. Applications of the Prophecy (vv. 28-37).

1. As these events multiply in the earth we know that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh (vv. 28, 29), as the putting forth of the leaves of the fig tree prove the approach of summer.

2. The Jewish race shall retain its integrity till the end (v. 30).

The perpetuity of Israel is the miracle of the ages.

3. Certainty of fulfillment (v. 31).

The unfailing guarantee is the words of Christ.

4. The time of Christ's coming unknown (vv. 32).

In view of this it is utter folly to set the time. The devil keeps people from the truth of Christ's coming as long as possible. When he can no longer succeed in this, he then tries to get them to set the time.

5. The proper behavior in view of Christ's imminent coming (vv. 33-37).

It is watchfulness and prayer. The coming of the Lord is the grand incentive for watchfulness and earnest prayer.

INCREASE IN WESTERN CANADA LAND VALUES

But Forty and Fifty Bushels of Wheat to the Acre.

During the past year there has been a greater demand for farm lands in Western Canada than for a number of years past. The demand is for good farm lands improved or unimproved. And at an increase of from ten to fifteen dollars an acre more than the same lands could be had for a couple of years ago.

The rise in the price of every kind of produce grown on these Western lands, in some cases to double and in others to treble the price prevailing before 1914, have attracted and are attracting in ever-increasing proportions the men who are anxious to invest their money, and apply their energies in the production of wheat for which the allied nations are calling with voices which grow louder and more anxious as the months roll on, and the end of the war still seems distant. Beef, and more especially bacon, are required in ever greater quantities, and the price of all these things has soared, until it is not a question of what shall we produce, but how much can we produce. Even should this world calamity be brought to a close in six months from now, it will be years before normal pre-war prices prevail, and meantime self-interest if not patriotism is turning the minds of thousands back to the land. The inevitable consequence has been the rise in values of land, especially wheat land.

The Calgary Herald, commenting on these conditions says:

"From inquiries made from leading dealers in farming and ranching properties, and from the information gathered in other ways, it is known that the value of all land—wheat land, mixed farming properties, and even good grazing land—has risen in the last two years 40 per cent. Wheat lands in some districts have practically doubled in price. One dealer in farm lands recently sold three sections for $70 an acre, one extra good quarter went as high as $90, and another brought $100. These are, of course, large prices, but that they will be equaled or even surpassed in the near future is beyond question. There is a feature about this rush to the land from which the most solid hope can be drawn for the success of the movement. The proper tillage of land, to produce large crops in a climate like ours is now understood and practiced as it never was in the early days of the province. It would seem too that with the increase of land under cultivation, the seasons are changing and the rainfall becoming greater and more regular.

"Crops are being harvested, especially in Southern Alberta, which would have seemed impossible to the old-time farmer, with his old-fashioned ideas of breaking and seeding. And at the price now set by the government for wheat and which possibly may be increased during the coming season, the return to the practical skilled agriculturist must necessarily be very large.

"What matters $10 or even $20 an acre extra on wheat land when a return as high as 50 bushels and even more may be taken from every acre sown? While hogs bringing $20 a hundred pounds; beef on the hoof at $12, and mutton $16, while wool under the new government arranged system of handling and sale brings 65 cents a pound (and these values cannot fall to any great extent for some years) the demand for land will continue and values increase in a corresponding degree.

"There has never been in the history of Canada a time so favorable for the farmer as the present; self-interest, the inspiration of patriotic feeling, the aid freely extended by the government, who are permitting the import of certain agricultural implements free, all these tend to still further raise the price of Alberta land."—Advertisement.

Remarkable Gleanings.

Maj. Frederick Palmer, the war correspondent, was talking in New York about his profession.

"Strange as it may seem," he said, smiling, "my work, like other work, requires experience. You wouldn't think so from the war correspondents you meet in the battle zone.

"These green correspondents glean many remarkable items of information. I saw a beardless correspondent of 19 go up eagerly to a bandaged American soldier one day and say, unsheathing his fountain pen:

"'How did you get hurt?'

"'Well, you see, mister,' the soldier answered, 'I was leaning up against the barrage, and when it lifted all of a sudden, I fell into a shell hole and broke my leg.'"

Good Salesmanship.

"Could I sell you a burglar alarm, madam?"

"Are you sure it will work?"

"Yes, madam; I may speak with some authority on the subject. I was once a burglar myself."

"Dear me! What caused you to reform?"

"This alarm."

"I'll take one."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Never insult a small man; his muscles may be well developed.

Home, in its analysis, is not an anchor, but the whole harbor.