

THE PATIENT PREACHER.

The patient preacher plods along Through theological deeps...

THE WILL OF THE HALF-BROTHER.

BY E. IDA WILLIAMS.

"Leave me, Annie, you need fresh air; I will stay with your uncle."

"Dear, good papa, if it is not too late, I would like to go and stay at Rosie's till tea time."

"Certainly, my pet," answered Mr. Allen, with almost unseemly haste...

"I'll cut him off without a farthing!" he said, determinedly.

"To found a society for reforming young men," said the brother, shutting and opening his eyes...

"Confound your churches and your societies! No—if home influence fails, what's the good of either?"

"I don't know, John," he had said, "but I've been too hard with the boy, after all; I think, some of these days, I'll put a codicil to my will, giving him something, if he'll reform."

"Yes, very good; do so," answered John. "I'm sure I can't bear to see a father hard to his child; and the chances are that, if he promises he will reform he will, and if he don't—well, the chances are even."

"That doubtful 'if' had the desired effect; there was no haste, and the reluctant parent would wait awhile."

know that I've made a new will?" "A new will!" John Allen's face blanched.

"I've given all to the boy." "Yes?" "Well, I feel better, John; I tho't perhaps you would be angry, and I wanted you to know from me—it's a natural fatherly feeling, eh, John?"

"Very good." Disappointment was torturing John Allen too much for him to say more than a word or two.

"I must burn the last," he said to himself, in a guilty whisper. "Which is the last?" There was no clew.

"Papa—uncle," she said, breathlessly, "here is Cousin Horace! Isn't it funny he knew me, for when he saw me last I was only a school-girl?"

"Now I can die happy—if you'll promise to be a good boy." "Indeed I will, father! And in proof, see here."

"Good-by—I am happy—God bless you—I am dying. Brother—" A smile of perfect contentment hovered over the dying man's face.

Every ceremony over, John Allen, who had rather delayed the opening and reading of the will, sent for the executor, saying all was ready, and they were soon gathered in the library.

"Well, my friends," said the attorney, "our dear, deceased friend was a man of a somewhat erratic turn of mind, and though some of you may feel that in the disposition he has made of his belongings he has not dealt quite fairly with you, your love for him will make his peace."

"Certainly! Certainly!" said John. He felt he ought to speak like that, to appear indifferent.

"Never mind, sir!" answered John, in an exceedingly brusque manner. "Yes, but I do mind, and you, too, must. I had given up all idea of becoming my father's heir."

"She has it," groaned John. "Is a year too soon?" "Annie stole her hand in his for answer. At least John's daughter was not beggared."

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