

**APPLETONS' NEW HANDY-
VOLUME SERIES. DR.
HEIDENHOFF'S PROCESS**

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Appletons' New Handy-Volume Series. Dr. Heidenhoff's Process by Edward Bellamy

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EDWARD BELLAMY

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DR. HEIDENHOFF'S PROCESS.

BY
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DR. HEIDENHOFF'S PROCESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE hand of the clock fastened up on the white wall of the conference room, just over the framed card bearing the words "Stand up for Jesus," and between two other similar cards, respectively bearing the sentences "Come Unto Me," and "The Wonderful the Counselor," pointed to ten minutes of nine. As was usual at this period of Newville prayer-meetings, a prolonged pause had supervened. The regular standbys had all taken their usual part, and for any one else to speak or pray would have been about as irregular as for one of the regulars to fail in doing so. For the attendants at Newville prayer-meetings were strictly divided into the two classes of speakers and listeners, and, except during revivals or times of special interest, the distinction was scrupulously observed.

Deacon Tuttle had spoken and prayed, Deacon Miller had prayed and spoken, Brother Hunt had amplified a point in last Sunday's sermon, Brother Taylor had called attention to a recent sudden death in the village as a warning to sinners, and Sister Morris had prayed twice, the second time, it must be admitted, with a certain perceptible petulance of tone, as if willing to have it understood that she was doing more than ought to be expected of her. But while it was extremely improbable that any others of the twenty or thirty persons assembled would feel called on to break the silence, though it stretched to the crack of doom, yet, on the other hand, to close the meeting before the mill bell had struck nine, would have been regarded as a dangerous innovation. Accordingly it only remained to wait in decorous silence during the remaining ten minutes.

The clock ticked on with that judicial intonation characteristic of time-pieces that measure sacred time and wasted opportunities. At intervals the pastor, with an innocent affectation of having just observed the silence, would remark: "There is yet opportunity. . . . Time is passing, brethren. . . . Any brother or sister. . . . We shall be glad to hear from any one." Farmer Bragg, tired with his day's hoeing, snored quietly in the corner of a seat. Mrs. Parker dropped a hymn-book. Little Tommy Blake, who had fallen over while nap-

ping and hit his nose, sneezed under his breath. Madeline Brand, as she sat at the melodeon below the minister's desk, stifled a small yawn with her pretty fingers. A June bug boomed through the open window and circled around Deacon Tuttle's head, affecting that good man with the solicitude characteristic of bald-headed persons when bussing things are about. Next it made a dive at Madeline, attracted perhaps by her shining eyes, and the little gesture of panic with which she evaded it was the prettiest thing in the world; at least, so it seemed to Henry Burr, a broad-shouldered young fellow on the back seat, whose strong, serious face is just now lit up by a pleasant smile.

Mr. Lewis, the minister, being seated directly under the clock, can not see it without turning around, wherein the audience has an advantage of him, which it makes full use of. Indeed, so closely is the general attention concentrated upon the time-piece, that a stranger might draw the mistaken inference that this was the object for whose worship the little company had gathered. Finally, making a slight concession of etiquette to curiosity, Mr. Lewis turns and looks up at the clock, and, again facing the people, observes, with the air of communicating a piece of intelligence, "There are yet a few moments."

In fact, and not to put too fine a point upon it, there are five minutes left, and the young men on the back seats, who attend prayer-meetings to

go home with the girls, are experiencing increasing qualms of alternate hope and fear as the moment draws near when they shall put their fortune to the test, and win or lose it all. As they furtively glance over at the girls, how formidable they look, how superior to common affections, how serenely and icily indifferent, as if the existence of youth of the other sex in their vicinity at that moment was the thought furthest from their minds! How presumptuous, how audacious, to those youth themselves now appears the design, a little while ago so jauntily entertained, of accompanying these dainty beings home, how weak and inadequate the phrases of request which they had framed wherewith to accost them! Madeline Brand is looking particularly grave, as becomes a young lady who knows that she has three would-be escorts waiting for her just outside the church door, not to count one or two within, between whose conflicting claims she has only five minutes more to make up her mind.

The minister had taken up his hymn-book, and was turning over the leaves to select the closing hymn, when some one rose in the back part of the room. Every head turned as if pulled by one wire to see who it was, and Deacon Tuttle put on his spectacles to inspect more closely this dilatory person who was moved to exhortation at so unnecessary a time.

It was George Bayley, a young man of good

education, excellent training, and once of great promise, but of most unfortunate recent experience. About a year previous he had embezzled a small amount of the funds of a corporation in Newville, of which he was paymaster, for the purpose of raising money for a pressing emergency. Various circumstances showed that his repentance had been poignant, even before his theft was discovered. He had reimbursed the corporation, and there was no prosecution, because his dishonest act had been no part of generally vicious habits, but a single unaccountable deflection from rectitude. The evident intensity of his remorse had excited general sympathy, and, when Parker, the village druggist, gave him employment as clerk, the act was generally applauded, and all the village folk had endeavored with one accord, by a friendly and hearty manner, to make him feel that they were disposed to forget the past and help him to begin life over again. He had been converted at a revival the previous winter, but was counted to have backslidden of late and become indifferent to religion. He looked badly. His face was exceedingly pale, and his eyes were sunken. But these symptoms of mental sickness were dominated by an expression of singular peace and profound calm. He had the look of one whom, after a wasting illness, the fever has finally left; of one who has struggled hard, but whose struggle is over. And his voice,