

The Alabaster Box

(*Prize Story.*)

BY CLARENCE VREDENBURG.

Author's Note

The author submits this story, believing that the tales closest to the life of the Institute are not always enacted in its very halls, and that the "Armour spirit" is found on other grounds than our campus. Surely the mother, by whose perseverance the son largely owes his education, is a large part of our scholastic life and is most truly endowed with the "Armour spirit."

C. V.

Chicago, Illinois, February 12, 1903.

“WELL, Miss Peters, an eddication's powerful tellin'. My George's picked up mighty wonderful since I sent him to the Institute. 'Spect he'll be an injineer some day if my man and me holds out. No tellin'! He's natural bright, George is, — takes after his mother's folks. He knows all about injins and electriz'ty. Goin' to be an electricated injineer. Sometimes, I'm afraid we'll have to give up. We run short in feenancial matters. Sam's no good any more, —got the rheumatiz in his whole body and failin' with the gallopin' consumption, failin' every day.”

“H'aint you 'ad no one?” faltered Miss Peters.

“Certain! Doctor's feelin' o' Sam's pulse now. S'pose I'd better get back. He may want some hot water or liniment.”

The women turned on the creaking stairs in the dingy hallway, one, small and nervous, to tiptoe to a grimy doorway from which came the odor of antiseptics, and the other, tall and gaunt, to return into her apartments.

“It's all nonsense uv folks workin' out their lives for eddication,” she said with an opinionated emphasis to her words.

A few mornings later a nervous knock woke Miss Peters. She opened the door slowly and peered out into the hallway. Presently she distinguished the form of Mrs. Barker.