

Slipping Away.

They are slipping away—these sweet, swift years,
I like a leaf on the current east;
We never a break in the rapid flow,
We watch them as one by one they go
Into the beautiful past.

As sweet and swift as a weaver's thread,
As an arrow's flying gleam;
As soft as the languorous breezes hid,
That lift the willow's long golden lid,
And ripple the glassy stream.

As light as the breath of the thistle down,
As fond as a lover's dream;
As pure as the flush in the sea-shell's throat,
As sweet as the wood-bird's wooing note,
So tender and sweet they seem.

One after another we see them pass
Down the dim-lighted stair,
We hear the sound of their steady tread
In the steps of the centuries long since dead,
A beautiful and us fair.

There are only a few years left to love;
Shall we waste them in idle strife?
Shall we trample under our ruthless feet
These beautiful blossoms, rare and sweet,
By the dusty ways of life?

There are only a few swift years—ah, let
No envious taunts be heard;
Make life's fair pattern of rare design,
And fill up the measure with love's sweet
wine,
But never an angry word.

LOST IN LONDON

By the Author of "The Man Trap."

CHAPTER II.

GIP'S HOME.

WHETHER GIP was naturally stronger than Tom and little Vic, or whether Sandy had learned by experience how to take better care of her, she outlived the first fatal twelve months, and bid fair to struggle through another year. It is true, she was pinched and stunted, her poor little arms were thin, and her face was sallow, with great black eyes in it, usually very solemn, but ready to twinkle merrily upon Sandy. She had been fed with more gin than milk; Sandy could only recollect twice or three times that she had had a draught of sky-blue milk given to her by a kindly woman, who now and then spared them a bit of bread. But her teeth were coming, which would be a help to her, if he could find any thing for them to eat; and he watched their growth with much delight, often nursing her as she cried and moaned all night long upon his knees, while the mother was unconscious in a drunken sleep. Gipsy was growing cunning, too, and caught quickly at the pretty tricks which the other babies had died too soon to learn. Now that she held out a promise to live, he began to wonder how she would grow up, and what he should do with her when she was a big girl. Anything would be better than being like their mother: if he could only find some way of getting on himself, that he might help GIP when she was growing up!

Small chance was there for Sandy to get on. His cares and duties were increasing fast; and with them the urgent need for earning more money in one way or another. GIP wanted more food; and before long his old jacket, which she wore, would be falling into shreds, to say nothing of his own ragged and tattered condition. He made himself very troublesome about the Mansion House, and other places, by pursuing gentlemen, and beseeching them to buy a box of fuses. More than once he had been handed over to the police, who had given him a not unfriendly cuff on the ears, and bade he mind off about his business. What was his business but to provide for himself and GIP, and by one means or another snatch up enough food to keep them alive? Unfortunately, there was a second branch of business—to buy now and then some old thing in Rag Fair, without which he would not be allowed to wander about the streets, and would be compelled to remain at home and starve. Sandy was sometimes on the very verge of despair; but at the worst, times would mend a

little. His mother, in her drunken forgetfulness, would let fall a sixpence, or once even a shilling; and Sandy's quick eyes would see it, and his quick fingers would seize it, like a fortune. Or one of the neighbours would give him a day's work at pushing a barrow, paying him sixpence for it, with some small potatoes or frost-bitten turnips into the bargain, at the end of the long day. Then GIP and he would make up quite a feast.

"Where are I to go, GIP?" he asked one day, after the police had been more than usually hard upon him—"where are I to go, and what are I to do? Go about your business, oh? Well! suppose I can't get no business? And I am t likely to have no business anywheres, as I can see. I don't know what you and me was born for. They'll begin to tell you to go about your business as soon as ever you can run in the streets."

GIP looked shrewdly back at him with her bright black eyes, as if she understood the difficulty, but could not help him out of it. She could talk a little by this time, and could manage to get down to the entrance of the alley, and watch for him coming home, till she saw him, and then toddle to meet him, with such tottering steps—for her thin little legs bent under her weight—that Sandy's heart would throb fast with the fear lest she should fall. Sometimes she did fall; and with a shout that made all who heard it turn to look at him, he would dash forward, and pick her up in his arms before she had time to scream. GIP could trot too, beside her mother, holding on by her tattered skirt, as the woman dragged her slipshod feet down to the nearest spirit-vault. She would come at the child sometimes, but more often took her inside, and poured the last drop or two of her glass of gin down GIP's throat, when her grimaces and antics made all round her laugh loudly, as though the puny creature's excitement was a source of great mirth. GIP was learning the road to the spirit-vault readily, and would make her way there herself, when she was tired of playing in the gutter with other children, and wanted to find her mother, for she was too heavy for Sandy to carry her out with him, and she was too young to run by his side as he tried to sell fuses along the streets.

Sandy returned home one evening very low and down-hearted. It had been a rainy day, and nobody had stopped in their hurried tramp about their business to look at his damp fuse-boxes. They were completely soaked; though he had done his best to keep them covered under his jacket. But then he was quite wet through himself, and the water was dripping from his thick, uncombed hair, and trickling coldly down his face and neck. Night had set in, yet still the rain fell in torrents, driven along the streets by a strong westerly wind. The light from the lamps glistened in pools of water lodging on the pavement, through which he splashed hoodlessly with his bare feet. The pipes that drained the roofs leaked, and poured down in waterfalls upon him, as he hurried along, keeping close to the houses for as much shelter as they could give. GIP could not be waiting and watching for him such a night as this, and it was very well she could not, for he had brought nothing for her—positively nothing—not even one of the stale buns which he begged for her sometimes. It was harder than anything else, worse than the rain, to think that perhaps she would be forced to go to sleep hungry—crying for food, while he had none to give her.

No, GIP was not at the corner. He looked closely into the doorway, where she often sat, as he passed, and felt his heart sink a little lower, as if he were disappointed not to find her there.

For once the alley was quiet and deserted, not a creature who had a home was out that night. Two or three of the windows twinkled dimly with the light of a candle in the room within, and so helped him to avoid the gutter, where the water was running as noisily as a brook. But the room where his mother lived was all blank and dark—not a gleam of light in it, either of fire or candle. He lifted the latch, and went in, calling softly in the darkness, "GIP! little GIP!" Not a sound answered him, GIP's dear shrill voice was silent. Perhaps she was still

with her mother in the spirit vault. Or, perhaps, she was only keeping quiet in fun. For it was one of her pretty tricks to hide, and be as still as a mouse when he came in, while he pretended to search for her everywhere in that empty cupboard, and under their mother's bed, and even up the chimney, as if GIP could be there! till she would break out suddenly into a burst of laughter, and run at him from her fancied hiding place, where he had seen her all the time. Sandy stole carefully across the dark room to the candle, which stood in the neck of a bottle on the chimney piece, and tried to strike a light with some of his damp fuses. But they sputtered and glimmered only for an instant, leaving him in the darkness of the quiet and perhaps empty room.

But at length he succeeded in getting a match to burn long enough to light the candle. He could see at a glance everything in the small bare room. There was his mother's old flock bed on the floor, and there was his mother herself lying upon it in a dead sleep, her face swollen and red, and her ragged gown drawn over her, for long since the only blanket and old counterpane had gone to the pawnbroker's shop, and there was no chance of them being redeemed. But was GIP there? Sandy could see plainly enough there was no little GIP under his mother's gown, or beside her on the bed. She was not there; she was not anywhere in the room. He stood motionless in his bewilderment; his eyes wandering round the bare walls, and his heart beating painfully. If little GIP was not at home, where could she be?

He could not bear his pain and dread long. He ran to his mother's side, and shook her roughly by the shoulder, shouting as loudly as he could in her ear. But she was almost like one dead. It was hard work to awake her, and still harder to bring her to her senses. She lifted herself up in bed, and struck at him; but Sandy slipped out of her way. Once again, at a safe distance, where he was quite out of reach, he shouted his question at her.

"Where's GIP?" he cried. "Mother, what have you done with my little GIP?"

"GIP?" repeated his mother, in her thick, drunken voice. "GIP? I lost her. couldn't find her anywheres. She's somewhere."

That was all. Sandy's mother fell back again on the bed, and sank into her deep sleep. Little GIP was lost.

(To be continued)

THE DEVIL'S KINDLING WOOD.

This is what Rev. C. M. Southgate, of Worcester, calls cigarettes, and the term is none too strong. In one of his admirable sermons, entitled "A plain talk with the boys," occurs this passage in regard to smoking:

"Do you want to know where a boy usually begins to be fast? With a cigarette. It is the lad's first step in bravado, resistance of sober morality, and a bold step in disobedience. Just now take the matter on the scientific side. Tobacco blights a boy's finest powers, wit, muscle, conscience, will. Nations are legislating against it. Germany, with all her smoke, says, 'No tobacco in the schools.' It spoils their brains and makes them too small for soldiers. Knock at the door of the great military institutions of France. 'No tobacco' is the response. Try West Point and Annapolis, 'Drop that cigarette in the word. Indeed, smoking boys are not likely to get so far as that. Major Houston of the marine corps, who is in charge of the Washington navy-yard barracks, says that one-fifth of all the boys examined are rejected for heart disease, of which ninety-nine cases in one hundred come from cigarettes. His first question is, 'Do you smoke?' 'No sir,' is the invariable reply. But the record is stamped on the very body of the lad, and out he goes. Apply for a position in a bank. If you use tobacco, beer, cards, the bank has no use for you.

"Business life demands fine brain, steady nerve, firm conscience. Watch the boys. See one sixteen years in age, twelve in size, twenty in sin, and he smokes, probably chews and drinks. Babe of seven and eight years are at it. The vice in-

creases. I could pile up statistics by the hour, testimony from the highest medical authority, of the misery preparing and already come. The use of cigarettes increases enormously, but only increases the use of stronger tobacco. In August, 1889, 23,000,000 more cigars were made in this country than in the year before, and the firm that made this statement credits the increase to the cigarette, and the fault to careless parents.

"Tobacco is murdering many a lad. Where they do not fairly kill, cigarettes are the devil's kindling wood. They start a craving for stimulants that liquor is quick out to meet. And why is it that 'fancy pictures go with them as prices unless licentiousness comes next? But can't a man smoke and be good, be a Christian? I suppose so. But by the time tobacco has killed a few more generals like Grant, and a few more emperors like Frederick the Noble, and a few more business men and bright boys, a smart boy may get it through his head that it doesn't pay. And not till the smart boys quit will the poor and dull lot it alone. The highest style of man does not smoke, will not submit to its slavery, nor be responsible for the example."

PUTTING HEART IN IT.

THE customer was a prudent matron from the country—careful in her shopping. "It is a pretty piece of goods, she said, 'and just the colour I want; but I am afraid it will not wash.'

One of the shop-girls behind the counter bowed indifferently and turned away. The other said, eagerly, "Are you going to another part of the store, madam? For it is my lunch hour, and I will take a sample of it to the basement and wash and dry it before you come back."

The colour of the fabric proved to be fast, and the customer bought it and asked the name of the obliging shop-girl. A year afterwards she was again in the same store, and on enquiring learned that the girl was at the head of the department.

"She put as much life into her work as ten other women," said the manager.

One of the most prominent business men of New York said once. "I have always kept a close watch on my employees and avoided myself of any hint which would show me which of them possessed the requisite for success for themselves and usefulness to me. One day, when I was passing the window of my counting-room I observed that the moment that the clock struck six all of the clerks, without exception, laid down their pens, though in the middle of the sentence, and took up their hats. One man alone continued writing. The others soon passed out of the door.

"Pettit, said one, 'has wanted to finish his paper as usual.'

"Yes; I called to him to come on, but he said that if this was his own business he would finish the paper before he stopped work."

"The men caught sight of me and stopped talking, but after that I kept my eye on Pettit, who worked after hours on my business because he would have done it on his own, and he is now my junior partner."—*Youth's Companion.*

BOY HELPING A HORSE.

"MAMMA, I've been helping a horse pull a load of coal up the hill. I saw a little, happy-looking boy, one with sandy hair, mamma. The man was very happy, mamma, with front and eyes, and I felt so sad to see the horse struggling to get up. I remembered that last winter papa had some coal carted on the road, so I got some of my wheelbarrow, and with my spade spread them on the hill. The man then said, 'Get up, my good horse, and he was soon at the top of the hill! Then, mamma, the man said, 'Thank you, my little man, you have helped my horse to pull this load of coal up the hill.' I feel so happy, mamma."

"You have done a good action, my dear child," replied the kind parent, "one that is not only pleasing to me, but also to your heavenly Father. Never forget to show kindness to animals."