THE ROMANCE OF A LODGING.

(IN TWO CHAPTERS.)

CHAPTER I.

"It was a little cottage with a porch covered with honeysuckle and roses, and a small garden in front, where the cabbages and potatoes grew in the midst of the flowers. Behind the cottage was a field of corn, and a little further off a wood, where the birds sang all day long. Inside the cottage was a clock that ticked very loudly, and a kettle that sang on the hob. The floor was of red tiles, and there was a large dresser with plates and dishes upon it. Over the mantelpiece were a few colored prints of scenes from the Bible, and a portrait of Mr. Gladstone cut out of the *Illustrated London News*. The table was spread for tea, and there was a pot of honey and a plate of hot cakes upon it. Mrs. Jones was sitting in a rocking-chair by the fire, knitting a stocking for her husband, who was away in the fields. Suddenly there was a knock at the door, and Mrs. Jones cried, 'Come in!' and there entered a young man with a knapsack on his back and a stick in his hand. He was very tired and very dusty, and he asked Mrs. Jones if he could have a night's lodging. Mrs. Jones looked at him for a moment, and then said, 'No, sir, I cannot take you in. I have only two spare rooms, and they are both occupied. Mr. Smith, the lodger, has had the front room for seven years, and Mr. Brown, the gentleman who comes to fish, has had the back room for a month. The only room I have to let is the garret, and that is not fit for you to sleep in.' The young man looked disappointed, and said that he was very sorry, but he must go on to the next village. Mrs. Jones then asked him if he had had his tea, and he said that he had not. She then told him to sit down and have some tea, and he did so. He ate a great many cakes, and drank a large cup of tea. Then he got up to go, and Mrs. Jones said, 'Where are you going to sleep to-night?' He said that he did not know, but that he supposed he should find a lodging somewhere. Mrs. Jones then said, 'Why don't you sleep here? I have a very comfortable bed in the garret, and you can have it for one night.' The young man thanked her very much, and said that he would be very glad to do so. Mrs. Jones then showed him the garret, and left him to go to bed. He was very tired, and he soon fell asleep. Next morning he got up early, and went down to breakfast. Mrs. Jones had got breakfast ready, and they sat down to it together. When it was over the young man said that he must go on his journey, and he asked Mrs. Jones what he should have to pay. Mrs. Jones said that he must pay seven shillings. The young man looked very much surprised, and said that he thought that the charge would be only two shillings. Mrs. Jones said that that was the charge for a night's lodging, but that he had had tea, breakfast, and dinner, and that the charge for those meals was five shillings. The young man paid the money, and went away. Mrs. Jones looked after him for a long time, and then went back to her cottage."

"Well, Fred, what will you say to it?"

"I say it is a very pretty story, and I like it very much indeed. I think that Mrs. Jones was very kind to the young man, and that he was very much obliged to her. I suppose that he went back to London, and told all his friends how kind Mrs. Jones was, and how cheap her lodgings were, and that they all went down to stay with her. I suppose that Mrs. Jones made a fortune, and that she left off selling tea, and bought a carriage and pair, and lived in a large house in the country. I suppose that the young man married Mrs. Jones's daughter, and that they lived happily ever after. Is that the end of the story?"

"Yes, Fred, that is the end of the story. I am glad that you like it. It is a very true story, and it is a story which ought to be a lesson to us all. Mrs. Jones was a very kind woman, and she was very much obliged to the young man for paying her so much money. She was very glad to get the money, and she was very glad to get rid of the young man. She was very glad to get rid of the young man because she had got the money. She was very glad to get the money because she had got