

rupt. The hope of the present cannot be in the religion of the past, but in the faith and in the life of the present.

"And in the third place (and I speak very practically), if you think thus, if you believe that faith and Christ have their place in the present, you have an immediate and a life-long duty, that of expressing the faith in your words and character, that of giving to the world in your life the truth, the purity, the public spirit and the self-sacrifice of Christ Himself."

## Family Department.

### Over The Sea Wall.

#### CHAPTER VII.

##### A DAY OF ANXIETY.

"Cousin Olivia! Cousin Olivia! Have you seen Guy this morning?" I was just finishing dressing when I heard Maudie's voice outside my room, speaking in tones of audible anxiety. I opened my door and let her in.

"Seen Guy, dear? No, I have neither seen nor heard him. What is the matter? Is he missing? That is nothing so very wonderful, is it? He often goes out early by himself."

"I know," answered Maudie, trying to smile; "but somehow I'm afraid he has done something more to-day. Didn't you notice yesterday how excited he was, and how he kept asking such a lot of questions about Brother Reginald—where he was and when he would come? He wasn't quite like himself all day; but, then, I didn't feel quite like myself either. I don't think we can tell till we know what is going to be done with us. And now this morning Guy is gone; and he must have got up much earlier than he has ever done before, because he had to let himself out by the window of the garden room, so that nobody could have been up to open a door for him. Cousin Olivia, I wish I knew where he was."

Maudie was not generally disturbed by Guy's vagaries, which often kept him missing for several hours together, and so I was rather surprised at her present anxiety.

"He will turn up safe and sound, I have no doubt, very soon," I answered. "Why should he not, Maudie?"

"Oh, I don't know—but I'm afraid."

"Afraid of what, dear?"

"I'm afraid he has run away, to be out of Brother Reginald's way. Don't you remember he was always talking of having a hiding place? He hasn't talked so much about it lately, because you and Aunt Lois told him he would have to stay and see Brother Reginald; and I said so too, because I knew we ought. But I am afraid he has had the idea in his head all the time, and has gone alone. I wish he wasn't quite so brave. He is never afraid of anything."

"Well, Maudie, if he has gone and hidden away somewhere, you may be sure that he will get tired of it, and come out again pretty soon. He will be hungry before dinner time."

"But he may have got some food with him. Mrs. Diggles makes us such lots of cakes, and she always gives Guy anything he asks for."

"Well, but you will see he'll get tired of cakes a good while before he will expect to do so, and we shall have him coming home to ask for something different. Long before Brother Reginald is here—he is not coming till eight o'clock, you know—Guy will be back all safe and sound. I really do not think you need make yourself unhappy, Maudie. I never knew anybody with a better talent for taking care of himself than Guy."

Maudie smiled a tremulous little smile, and then her eyes filled with tears, and out came

the real fear which had been weighing on her spirits all this while.

"Oh, Cousin Olivia, I am so frightened lest he should have gone off to join the gipsies!"

"The gipsies!" and I started at the suggestion. "What do you mean, Maudie? What gipsies?"

"Don't you remember, Cousin Olivia—the gipsies he went and talked to on his birthday? He has often said how jolly it must be to live in tents and go wandering about. He thought they were very nice kind people; and, you know, there was that pony. He has often spoken about that pony, and said he meant to have it for his own some day. I am so afraid that he has run away to them to get out of Brother Reginald's way. If he has, perhaps they will steal him and carry him right away, and we shall never see him any more!" and Maudie fairly broke down, and sobbed aloud, whilst I felt a very different sort of fear entering my mind, and I ran hastily across to Aunt Lois' room to take counsel with her.

It was the very day on which Mr. Douglas was expected. He had taken rooms for himself at the hotel, but he had answered a letter from Aunt Lois, explaining the children's whereabouts, by a politely worded intimation that he would do himself the honor of calling at our house at 8 o'clock in the evening, if we would excuse the lateness of the hour, to see his brother and sister, and thank us for good offices to them. We had all been rather upset and excited by the thought of what might follow this visit, and of course Guy had entered into the situation with his accustomed sharpness and vivacity. Really the little fellow was so daring and so independent, that there was no knowing what he might attempt or accomplish. He was so engaging in his ways that he always made friends, and hardly ever met with a rebuff, and his love of adventure might well prompt him to think that the life of a wandering gipsy tribe would be just such as would suit himself.

I could see that Aunt Lois was a little alarmed at the idea started by Maudie, though she would not show it.

"I don't for a moment suppose he has done anything so daring," she said, "but he is such an audacious mortal that it is just possible he has started off with some such idea in his head. However, a little fellow of his size does not get over the ground very fast, and if we send coachman after him in the dog-cart, he will pick him up before very long and bring him home. Guy always has so many ideas on the way that his progress is never very rapid."

Both Maudie and I heaved a great sigh of relief as we heard this sensible counsel. We had both forgotten the time it must take Guy to reach his gipsy friends, and of course he could be caught and brought back long before he had reached the camp.

At that moment a message was brought up by Mary from the stables. Coachman had been up to the house with it himself.

"If you please, ma'am coachman thinks you should be told that Billy the pony is missing from the paddock, and also the little saddle and bridle that Master Guy uses when he rides. He says that these must have been taken out of the harness-room last night after dusk, for all the doors are locked up, and nobody could have been into the stable-yard this morning before he came. Master Guy so often comes about the stables at odd times, that he could easily have got them whilst the men were at tea or supper. He thought he had better let you know; though he says there is no call to be afraid for Master Guy, as he rides wonderful well, and doesn't know what fear means, and old Billy is very steady, and wouldn't play no pranks even if he had a worse rider on his back."

We all gazed at Mary and then at each other in consternation.

"If he went on the pony he will have got

there before now. He has had more than two hours start."

This was what Aunt Lois said, and Maudie turned pale and dissolved into tears. We all felt much disturbed and anxious, and the first thing we did was to summon coachman to a conference.

We told him our fears and he scratched his head, and said it was true enough that Master Guy was wonderful set on that pony the gipsy-man had told him of. He had talked to them all at the stables about it, and had declared he meant to have it some day.

"And he's that audacious, is Master Guy, he don't know what fear is, that he don't," and coachman's face expressed a sort of proud admiration of Guy's pluck and independence in the midst of his anxiety. "He'd no more be afraid of all them dark-skinned gipsy folks than he would be of you or me. And he don't like the thought of that there brother of his—there's no mistake about that. He's talked a lot of stuff about running away to sea, or doing a heap of things to keep out of his way. It's like enough, this gipsy idea being uppermost in his head, and he that set on the pony, that he's ridden off to their bit of a camp. It's just the sort of thing an audacious youngster like him would like to do. And if you can spare me, ma'am, and think it best, I'll put Black Prince in the dog-cart at once and go after him. The horse can do his ten miles an hour with a two-wheeler behind him, if he's put to it; and old Billy likes to take his time, besides being all soft, having little but grass. I might almost catch him on the road—leastways, I think I shan't be long behind. I can be off in ten minutes, if so be as you wish it."

We were only too glad to do anything toward the recovery of our truant, and coachman was bidden to lose no time and not to spare the horse. We sat down with but little appetite to our breakfast, but were very hopeful as to the result of coachman's pursuit. He was a shrewd man and a faithful servant, and he loved Guy only second to ourselves. Maudie dried her tears and tried to make her pretty excuses for Guy's over-independence and undoubted self-will and naughtiness in this morning's escapade. Aunt Lois smiled at her, but shook her head also.

"I'm afraid, dear, that however much we all love Guy—and we do love him very dearly—we cannot deny that he is showing that he is rather too much spoiled, and that it is time he should be placed under more discipline. If Brother Reginald should decide to send him to a regular school for little boys, you must try not to be too much disappointed, for I begin to think it will be the best place for him, though of course he will not go now before the middle of September, so you will still have a nice long time together."

A reprieve was something, and Maudie was old enough to understand that Guy had overstepped the boundary line this morning between an independence that was just permissible and one that was actual disobedience and naughtiness. Hard and fast rules had not been laid down in the house, because the children were but visitors for a short time at present; but the little boy knew perfectly that he was not allowed to ride alone, and that he had never been on the roads without coachman or one of the grooms beside him. Also he was quite old enough to know that he had no right to go off like this without a word to anybody, and that it would make Maudie, at least, very unhappy and anxious.

"Maudie's unselfishness is teaching him to be selfish," observed Aunt Lois to me, as the little girl went to post herself in a window that commanded a good vista on the road by which the truant might be expected to return, although it would be of necessity a long time before she could expect to see coachman back, however suc-