



Song.

(Composed by the Rev. Dr. Lilley for the Band of Hope.)

Air, 'Will ye no come back again?'

Children o' oor hopefu' Band,
Rally to your country's side:
By the Temperance banner stand,
Ring its message far and wide.

Will ye no let drink alane?
Will ye no let drink alane?
Better, wiser, ye wad be,
Will ye no let drink alane?

Mony a happy, peacefu' hame
Lies in ruin, bleak and bare,
Stains on mony an honest name
Aye the auld dark curse declare.
Will ye no, etc., etc.

See the drunkard's ragged wean
Shiverin' in his shoonless feet;
See his faither's waefu' mien,
As he staggers doon the street.
Will ye no, etc., etc.

In the prison's iron walls
Lingers lang the helpless sot,
While the tearfu' wife recalls
A' the anguish o' his lot.
Will ye no, etc., etc.

Shall our noble Scottish fame
Still endure the crimson stains?
No! we say with loud acclaim:
No! while love within us reigns.
Will ye no, etc., etc.

By your hate o' cruel wrang,
By the graves that round you lie,
Wake the echoes loud and lang,
Raise anew the pleading cry:
Will ye no, etc., etc.

Peter and Polly.

Peter was standing outside a corn and seed shop in the Walworth-road, his eyes fixed on something in the window. It was not dog biscuits, poultry mixtures, parrots' food, or bird seed that drew his attention. He was looking at a notice in the window—

'A Boy Wanted.'

His countenance continued changing from brightness to gloom and from gloom to brightness, indicating, of course, the workings of his mind. At last a beam of hope settled on his face.

'I'll hav another try,' and he walked into the shop.

Poor boy! Many a 'try' he had made that day and days before, but all his trials had ended in failure and disappointment. Boys were wanted in the Walworth-road, in Newington Butts, and the Borough, but nobody wanted him. Some laughed and others sneered at his applications. In fact, not a single person could be found from London Bridge to Camberwell Green who would take Peter Small seriously. His eyes were red from tears as he looked in at the window of the corn shop, but at sight of the notice he plucked up courage once more.

'I'll hev another try,' and in he walked.

Behind the counter of the corn shop was a short, fat little man with a face like a full moon. Not by any means an unpleasant face, for it gave little Peter a kindly smile.

'Well, young nipper, what may you be after?'

'You wants a boy, sir, please, and I wants a place,' and Peter spoke boldly.

The man burst into a hearty laugh.

'You speaks accordin' to your size, I must say. But what do you call yerself, a boy or a baby?' and again he laughed, but not unkindly.

'If you please, sir, I shall be fourteen

years next month,' said Peter, nothing abashed.

'Oh! oh! gettin' on in years, I see; but what have you been doin' with yerself all these fourteen years to get no higher up in the world than four feet?'

'I couldn't help it, sir; but, an' please, sir, I'm four foot six,' and Peter stretched himself to his utmost extent.

'Well, you can't afford to lose six inches,' and the corn man laughed again. 'What's yer name?'

'Peter Small, sir.'

'Capital!' and again the corn man laughed.

'Well, then, Peter Small, or small Peter, for either 'll do; stand out in the middle o' the shop an' let me take yer measurements.'

He took a slate that was hanging near and wrote down—

'Peter Small. Height, 4ft. 6in.; age 14; face and hands clean; hair combed; clothes neatly patched; shoes home mended; bright-eyed, honest looking.' Then turning to Peter,

'Where do yer father an' mother live?'

'Ain't got none, sir.'

'Humph! Who looks after you?'

'Sister Polly, sir.'

'Where does Polly live?'

'With me, sir.'

'Oh! Who knows you?'

'My teacher at th' mission school, sir, Mr. Bond, as is at th' City Bank up th' road.'

'Good; reference to banker; who else knows you?'

'Th' policeman in our yard, sir.'

'Humph! Known to th' police.'

He looked at the boy for a moment and then spoke again.

'Had any dinner, Peter?'

'Not to-day, sir.'

The corn man then called through a tube to his wife below stairs.

'Mrs. Great, a gentleman to dinner. Please come up,' then chuckling to himself, 'That'll give th' dear soul a fit.'

Presently heavy footsteps could be heard ascending; the door softly opened and a head appeared.

'Sammy, Sammy, who is it?' in a loud whisper.

'Come forward, Mrs. Great, and allow me to introduce you to Mr. Peter Small, an applicant for the vacant post in our establishment.'

'My, Sammy; how you did frighten me!' as, after looking round the shop, she caught sight of little Peter meekly standing in the middle. 'Is it this little mite as wants a place? Well, I'm sure he wants his dinner, so come downstairs, Peter, and we'll find something to eat.'

'That's right, my dear; and while you're attending to his appetite down there I'll attend to his measurements up here, and turn the whole matter over in my mind.'

Down in the kitchen Peter had placed before him a good dinner of meat, vegetables, and bread, with a small jug of ale; and the good woman sat in her chair watching the viands disappear with evident satisfaction, but she noticed that the ale remained untasted.

'You don't drink yer ale, Peter.'

'If you please ma'am, I'd rather not.'

'Massy on us!' she exclaimed, lifting her hands in astonishment. 'Why, th' boys I've had down here would have emptied the jug an' called for more by this time. I'm sure you looks as if a drop would do you good. Now, Peter, drink it up, boy.'

'I'd rather not, ma'am, please, in a low voice, but quite firmly.

'Massy on us! What is to be done?' And apparently in deep concern she went to the speaking tube and called to her husband.

'Sammy, here's a Lunnon boy as refused the ale! What is to be done, Sammy?'

'Put him in a glass case and send him to th' British Museum, or I can show him in the window. He'll make our fortins, an' not take up much room.'

Years ago a London street boy who would refuse a jug of ale when offered him would be a much greater rarity than now, and the astonishment of the corn man and his wife is not surprising. They sincerely thought that ale was a good thing, and almost as necessary as their daily bread. Years after they entertained very different opinions. 'He'll make our fortins' was of course spoken in jest, but words spoken in jest have ere

now turned out to be true prophecies. We must not, however, anticipate.

'Now, just tell me, Peter, how it is as you comes to refuse a drop o' good ale.'

'We promised our mother, ma'am, Polly an' me did, afore she died, as we'd never take no beer nor anythink o' th' kind. Our mother was a wictim, ma'am, she was. Drink killed her, ma'am, an' killed our father as well. If they hadn't bin such boozers Polly an' me wouldn't be so short as we be now, so th' doctor says, ma'am. So Polly an' me ain't goin' ever to take anythink like ale or gin as long as we lives, ma'am. I hopes you ain't offended, ma'am.'

'No, no, Peter; I ain't offended, only I don't see how you can work so as to get a livin' without some good ale.'

'I never seems to want any beer, ma'am, but we very often wants some vittels, do Polly an' me; but as soon as I can find a place Polly shall never want no more, ma'am, as long as I lives,' and there was a choking in his throat as he uttered the last sentence; the suspicion of a tear was also seen in the motherly eye of the corn man's wife.

'I expect th' master 'll want you up in th' shop now, an' here's a mutton pie for you to take home to Polly, for I do believe as you're a good boy; that I do, now.'

Peter's face was beaming with joy as he tucked the little parcel under his arm and walked upstairs, for a kindness to Polly was a double kindness to himself.

'Well, young nipper, I've been lookin' over your measurements, an' they seem fairly correct. Then about not taking th' ale; I've bin thinkin' that over, too. An' it comes to my mind as I've had a good many boys here at one time an' another as have all took ale, some more an' some less. The less they took the better they seemed to get on. I've had to sack some for takin' too much, but never had to sack one for takin' too little. So why shouldn't I try one as takes none at all?'

'I'm very much obliged, sir.'

'Don't be too fast, Peter; I shan't say anything now, but tell that policeman to look in to-night when he's off duty; in the meantime I shall look in at the City Bank and inquire as to your account. References to his banker and a bobby!' and the corn man laughed at the idea. 'You can call again to-morrow at ten o'clock, Peter, and bring Polly with you. I want to see Polly.'

Probably some of our young readers may by this time desire also to see Polly, so we will follow the little brother to Barton's-yard and have just a glimpse of Peter and Polly at home.

In a cheerless garret lived these two, enduring day by day the greatest privations, and yet, but for the drink which brought their parents to ruin and death they might have been living in a comfortable home, if not surrounded by luxury, supplied at least with all the necessities of life. In the garret they lived, but never in mansion or palace existed there a stronger love between brother and sister.

Peter entered the yard and rushed upstairs to the garret.

'Look 'ere, Polly,' handing her the pie.

'Oh! Peter, you havn't bin an'—No I know you havn't, because you couldn't; but where did you get it?'

'You eat it while I tell yer, Polly.'

Polly waited not for a second invitation, for she was hungry, and ate away while Peter told her what transpired at the corn man's.

'Oh! Peter, how nice the pie is, and how nice everything is. Let us pray.'

It is unnecessary to say that Peter's interview with the corn man on the following morning was in every respect satisfactory, and at the same time the corn man's wife took a marvellous fancy to Polly. In less than six months the corn man says that Peter will in time prove to be his right hand. The corn man's wife says she wants a right hand too, the result being that very shortly we find both Peter and Polly domiciled in Walworth-road.

In less than five years they are treated and acknowledged as the adopted son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Great. And if you are inclined for a walk down Walworth-road you will see what an excellent business is now being carried on by Great and Small, corn merchants and seedsmen.—'Temperance Record.'