



### Temperance Department.

#### JOE'S PARTNER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BABES IN THE BASKET," &C.

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#### CHAPTER VII.—THE PARTNER.

Joe was losing faith in his partner. A whole week had passed and nothing had been heard from Ben White, when one morning a servant on horseback appeared at the little house on the hill.

Kate stepped to the door anxiously. Could it be that Mr. Brown had written to her husband? No. The note that was handed her was addressed to Joe—"Little Joe, the Giant;" that could only mean her darling, and the writer must be the lad whom he remembered with so much interest.

Wild with proud excitement, Joe broke open the note; his pride abated, however, when he found he could with difficulty make out its contents. Ben's hand-writing was but a scrawl, and Joe had never had a letter before in his life, and, to his surprise, he found that it was by no means as easy to read as the well-formed copies in the writing-books.

"You read it, father," said Joe, "and I'll listen. I do wonder what it can be about—the partnership, I suppose," and Joe looked dignified.

Harry Barber read aloud in his best style: "DEAR LITTLE GIANT:—Your partner has been awfully sick—sick in bed—or he would have attended to business. Now I can't come to you to settle matters, so I think you will have to come to me. Ask your mother if she can't spare you for a week. Father wants you to come. It would be jolly to have you to help me for a little, for I am off my legs. Perhaps waiting in the brook all day and sleeping in my wet clothes didn't suit me. At any rate, old 'Pills'—that is what I call the doctor—has been doing that to me, and I am as weak as a cat. Why, he wouldn't let me write to you until now; and, of course, between partners, I couldn't trust our business to a servant. I believe you'll come. If you do you can ride behind Tom, our man. I've often tried it and found it splendid. Bring your Bible, Joe. Partners ought to read the Bible together.

"Yours, &c.,  
"BEN WHITE."

Round the last sentence Ben had drawn a line, making a kind of sacred enclosure, to shut off that part of the letter from the more secular remainder. Ben's life was as yet much like his letter—the serious portion set off by itself—not pervading, sanctifying, and elevating all he thought and said and did. He met his heavenly Father reverently and lovingly from time to time, but he did not live in the consciousness of His continual presence. Ben had much yet to learn as a Christian boy.

As for Joe, he was in a state of perfect delight. He took up his Testament, and with a "Mother, I know you will let me go," he ran to the door to mount behind Tom, like a minute-man in war-time.

Kate did not know whether to laugh or to cry, as she looked at Ben's visitor in his home costume. His patched little blue shirt had seen two days' labor in the field, and his trousers, his only other garment—a pair of his father's cut down in a hurry—and now rolled up to his knees, were in no fashion familiar to town eyes.

"Stop! Stop, Joe," said his mother. "You may go, but not now; not as you are. You will need your other suit, and I must put up a little bundle for you, for a change, and—dear me! your shoes are all out at the toes."

"Never mind my shoes, mother, now. Ben and I are partners, and then, don't you remember how his boots looked the night he was here? They did look hard, though! He won't care how I am dressed."

"But I do," said Kate.

"Poor boy!" exclaimed Harry, as he looked at his eager child. How the father's heart smote him that his wretched habits had brought his children to poverty!

"You don't mind Joe's going, Harry?" said Kate. "He was a nice young gentleman, and I am sure he means well by Joe."

"Joe," said Harry, solemnly, without answering his wife—"my boy, maybe you'll see good things to eat there that you are not used to. Don't touch a thing that's not given to you; and, remember, your stomach's a poor master. Don't let it get the upper-hand with you. Know when you are done and stop! They may have wine there—who knows? You wouldn't touch a drop of drink, my boy!"

"Not if I were paid in gold, father. You may be sure of that!" said Joe warmly.

"But we are keeping the man waiting," said Kate. "I'll tell him you'll be there this afternoon. But where?"

Kate gave the message politely, and got the direction carefully, so that little Joe might have no trouble in finding the house.

"Please, ma'am," said the servant, "Mr. Ben sent this too," and he handed down a basket so heavy that Kate almost dropped it with surprise, as she took it in her hand. On the cover a scrap of paper was pinned, which read as follows:

"FOR MY PARTNER. Here's all I ought to have eaten for a week. I don't know what to do with my share of the family provisions, so I send it to my partner, to make up for that night I was so hungry at his house. B. W."

"B. W. must have been blessed with an uncommonly good appetite, judging from his week's allowance.

Kate looked at Harry. Would he like her to accept the gift?

"It don't do for my pride to stand in the way of you and the children's having what's comfortable after what I've brought you to," said Harry.

Perhaps his pride was a little mollified by the sight of such good cheer, as he much needed just then, and to which he had long been a stranger. As for Mollie, she testified her unqualified approval of the whole proceeding; especially she declared herself satisfied with the contents of the basket.

"I'm sorry you can't go too, Mollie," said Joe: "but, of course, a girl would be of no use. Then, you know, I'm the partner, and I should be the one. Never mind, Mollie, I shall have heaps to tell when I come back. We boys have to see the world, and then the girls hear about it from us."

Mollie was too deep in a seed-cake to make any reply to Joe's apology, and evidently was not in deep grief at the separation.

Joe felt quite like a man when afternoon came, and he started for town. His little bundle was in one hand, tied up in a pocket-handkerchief, and in the other he carried an extempore cane, big enough for an infirm grandfather. This cane was to be Joe's weapon, offensive and defensive, by the way. There was the mill to be passed, and the miller's great dog was sure to stand at the door, opening his mouth wide as if he were fairly longing for a bite of the leg of just such a boy as Joe Barber. He had done it before, and he would be sure to do it again.

As for tramps the very thought of them made Joe grasp his cane tighter, and whirl it round his head, to see how it would operate in a skirmish; and then he tried a quick little run, to make sure that his legs were in training for service, in case sudden flight should be necessary.

Joe had no occasion to put his pluck to the test, by the way. He fairly arrived at Mr. White's door without any adventure worthy of being related, even to Mollie, always a patient listener.

It was well that Joe's courage had not been drained, for he needed all his little stock even to ring at the door and ask for his partner. Very far from that partner he felt as he went up the high white marble steps, and stood in the tiled vestibule. Ben White and little Joe, why, there seemed almost a world between them!

Joe had given the bell a fierce ring, as his spirit conquered his timidity, and the door was promptly opened. He did not need to say a word, for the man who appeared was the same who had brought the note, and he said, with a quizzical look, which Joe did not think quite complimentary, "Mr. Ben's at home, of course, and in a great hurry to see you. He's quite in a fever; you must go up at once."

Joe wiped his shoes, as his mother had directed. It was a dangerous process, and they might come to pieces in the midst of the experiment; and with this little prepar-

ation he entered the house. He felt as if he were in a mysterious and charming dream, as he climbed the long staircase, and then followed the servant to a room where the door stood open.

"Hallo! Partner! That's jolly!" said a voice from a great sofa, where a figure in a dressing-gown lay among heaps of pillows.

"Ben White did not look jolly at all, for he was deathly pale, and his hand trembled as he put it out to welcome Joe.

"Why, Mr. Ben," said Joe, losing all shyness, "you look like Mollie did, when she was getting over the fever; you must have been awful sick!"

(To be Continued.)

#### CIDER.

"I declare!" said Farmer Jones one morning, "I had no idea our golden pippins and other early fall apples were so ripe. Boys, there's work for you in the orchard, and plenty of it too. The best that have fallen must go at once to market. See that there are no bruised ones among those you gather, for I have won a name for the fairest fruit brought to market, and ready sale for all I offer. Nothing like having a good name, boys." And the sturdy farmer drew himself up with pride.

"And what shall we do with the rest?" asked his son David, or Dave, as he was usually called. "Some of them are so dead-ripe they seem 'most ready to rot."

"Well, you can feed the pigs with those. I must see, though, to having the cider-mill in order. Jackson, at the inn, will want two or three barrels as soon as I can get some made. He says I'm always on hand first, and with prime cider too. No need to come up here to test my cider, for my word for it is as good to him as a bank-bill." And again the farmer's eyes twinkled with conscious pride.

It was a merry set of boys and girls who met in the orchard with baskets and barrels to gather a load of ripe fruit for the market. At first it seemed as though more fun and frolic was going on than real work, for the rosy-red and golden fruit was tossed about from one to another in high glee.

"Come, Ben, we won't get this fruit sorted to-day, if we don't hurry," said Dave, going to work with a will. "Father, you know, must go into town early to-morrow morning with them."

"Yes, and we must be sure that he has the very best," replied George, "for he says he depends upon us to help keep up his good name for the earliest and very best produce coming from any farm hereabouts."

"That's so! Father prides himself upon his good name," replied their sister Jennie, "and since 'many hands make light work,' Maggie and I will help you to gather the apples."

David said very little, but was the first one to fill a bushel-basket of really tempting fruit.

"What makes you so glum, old fellow?" called out Ben. "There you are working for dear life, and never a word to say. Take things a little easier, as I do."

"Dave's in one of his brown studies," said Maggie with a laugh. "A penny for your thoughts."

"Yes, let's have your wise cogitations," added George. "Are you calculating how much is to be made out of the apples and cider toward getting you off to college this fall?"

"Not exactly," replied Dave with a smile. "Truth is, I want to go to college bad enough, but I'd rather count the cider money out this year and altogether."

"Count it out? What do you mean? There's nothing more jolly than when the cider-mill is going. Lots of boys are already smacking their lips in anticipation of a sip of our prime cider." And George drew himself up in almost comical imitation of his father.

"That's just it, George. I'm afraid we are giving the downward start to some of the boys, as well as cultivating ourselves a taste for liquor."

"Of all things!" And Ben and George joined in an uproarious laugh at David.

"Laugh away, boys, but it's a fact. Cider, first sweet, then strong hard cider, has in many, many instances been found to be the first wrong step in a drunkard's life. And I for one don't mean to gather apples for the cider-mill; that's the long and short of it."

"Hoity toity! what does all this mean? Setting yourself up as a temperance lecturer,

eh? Better wait until you are asked to gather apples for the cider-mill," said his father in a displeased tone as he unexpectedly drew near. "The cider-mill has been worked for years, first by your grandfather, and now by me, and I guess we know what we are about. Cider make a fellow tipsy? Bah! It is only such crack-brained chaps as you, Dave, who get such silly notions in the head. If it's book-learning you want you shall have plenty of it."

And Farmer Jones made it convenient to send David to college, "out of the way," he said, "of preaching such ridiculous notions."

A few years later, however, when Ben and George went to the cider-barrel rather too often, after it had become slightly fermented, and from there to the tavern-bar for something still stronger, and he found the good name he had so prided himself upon was slipping away from him through his sons' drunken carelessness, and they no longer a comfort to him, he saw his error and wished he had listened to David's warning voice against making cider.—Selected.

#### JOHN DARRYLL'S DREAM.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

One day, as he strolled down the village street, John Darryll chanced an old friend to meet,

"How are you, old boy?" was the greeting warm.

"Come in for an hour, out of the storm,

"And we'll have a chat and a smoke together, And a drink to offset this wild March weather."

And he linked his arm in John's, and led The boy's feet on toward a sign ahead,

Where "Wines and Liquors," in great gold letters, Linked together like demons' fetters,

Told the passers-by that within was sold Sorrow, and ruin, and shame untold.

They crossed the threshold and entered in Where never before the lad had been.

Warm and pleasant, and fair to see, This starting-place to misery.

"Something to drink," the boy's friend said, And John walked up to the bar with dread.

But he dared not say as he knew he ought, A firm, strong "No." "Just this once," he thought.

He drank the draught that his friend held out— His first and his last, beyond a doubt!

Ah! little, how little, we think or know Of the easy path that leads down so low.

One step—and the others come fast and free— And before we know it comes misery.

Then he and his friend sat down to chat Of old school-day friends, and this and that,

It seemed to John that a wizard's spell On him and those about him fell.

The present vanished. The future was here, He had lived in a moment full many a year.

He stood in a room that was cold and bare, And a man was alone in the shadows there.

A man with a face like his, but old In a life whose shame can not be told.

Old in shame, but still young in years, A fitting sight for an angel's tears.

John Darryll looked on the wreck and cried, "This man is myself! Would God I had died

"Before the fetters were forged on me That bind my soul eternally.

"I must die like a dog, and be forgot, Save by the few who could help me not.

"A drunkard! May God forgive me the woe I have caused the mother who loved me so!"

He woke from his dream with a sob and a moan, And found himself on the street alone.

"Thank God, it was only a dream?" cried he. "God in his mercy sent it to me

"To warn me of danger. Never again Shall the draught that is ruin to souls of men

"Pass these lips of mine." An old man now, John Darryll remembers and keeps his vow.

—Church and Home.