

THE LITTLE BOY'S PLEA.

I'm only a little boy,
As every one may see;
But still I'm old enough to know
That drink's not good for me.

I've joined the Band of Hope,
And hope that you will too;
And if you'll come and help us
We'll find you work to do.

Most doctors in the land
Now with us all agree;
They're helping us both heart and hand
To set our country free.

Think what the Bible says
Against this cursed drink;
It says that wine a mocker is.
Oh! pause—oh! stay and think.

Think of the many deaths
Caused by the drink alone;
And think that every one must stand
Before the Almighty throne.

Perhaps you don't get drunk,
Perhaps you never will;
But while you "take a little"
You're going down the hill.

See yonder drunken man
Go reeling down the street;
He once "just took a little,"
But now can't keep his feet.

I'm but a little boy,
But I can do my part;
And what I do, I'm very sure
I'll do with all my heart.

—*Youth's Temperance Banner.*

THE MAN OF THE HOUSE.

BY PANSY.

A Uthor of "Mrs. Solomon Smith Locking On."

CHAPTER XX.—Continued.

It was a splendid dinner that they at last sat down to; the potatoes were done to a nicety, and the cold chicken, and pie, and cheese, and butter, were a little better than any they had ever tasted before.

"I declare, we ought to have Miss Hunter in, to get some of these good things!" the mother said.

But Beth explained that she was up in mother Perkin's room, making her some tea and toast: she saw her go.

Then commenced Reuben: "O, mother, do you suppose Miss Hunter will move with us? She could get ever so much more work there, and better wages, a good deal better; Mr. Barrows told me to tell her so, and to urge her to come. He said now was her time to get in with some of the best."

Beth looked up, sickly at her mother, to see how she took this matter-of-course way of speaking of moving, and turned to the man of the house with her startling bit of news:

"O, Reuben, don't you think they have raised the rent of this house one whole dollar a month?"

"Raised the rent!" said Reuben in great contempt; "I hope they will get it, or at least I hope they won't. Anyhow, I know they won't from us. But I do wish Miss Hunter would go with us: there is a room in the house that would be just right for her."

"Reuben," said Beth, the color coming and going on her face, "do you really and truly mean you think we are going to move?"

"Why, of course, we are going to move. Haven't I been at work all the week getting things ready? Mother could you go this week, do you think? There's lots of work there waiting; and Mr. Barrows needs me; and if they've raised the house rent here, the sooner we get out the better."

Mrs. Stone looked bewildered; she looked as though she didn't know the least what to say to her eager-faced boy and waiting girl. She glanced from one side to the other's moment in a puzzled way; then she laugh'd. It was more than a week since Beth had seen her laugh.

"Reuben," she said, "I believe you are forty instead of ten. Do you really suppose we could get work right along if we were to move, and get a place to live in, and manage to pay the rent, and all that?"

"Why, mother, I know we could," he said, his bright eyes sparkling. "And I've seen the house we are to live in; fact is, I've rented it, and had it cleaned and all;

and there is work waiting for all of us. The queerest little machines, Beth, you ever saw in your life! Brass, you know, with rows of tiny teeth for you to put your needle through!"

"Put a needle through brass!" said bewildered Beth; and then Reuben laughed, and he couldn't explain, but she would see for herself, in a few days. And then he began at his mother again about moving, and with advice for her to leave the stove behind. Mr. Barrows advised it.

"Horrid old thing!" said Beth, bestowing glances of hatred on it; "I should be too happy to go away and leave it behind. Reuben, you can't think how hateful it has acted since you've been gone; twice as hateful as it does with you."

"I'll fix it to-morrow morning," said Reuben, nodding his head at it; "but, mother, don't you think it would be best to sell it for old iron? That is what Mr. Barrows advised; and, well, to tell you the truth—I was going to keep that for a surprise—he gave me a stove to use in the place of it; one that goes better than that?"

"He gave you a stove?" said bewildered Mrs. Stone.

"Yes, he did," said Reuben, his eyes dancing; he concluded that there were surprises enough left without that one.

To tell you all the talk, and all the plans that there were made in the Stone family during the rest of that day, would make a book. Before three o'clock in the afternoon Mrs. Stone was saying to herself, "If we should move, we ought to let the agent of this house know;" and by evening she said: "We ought to let Mrs. Bemis know about this house; I guess she would like to rent it."

Then Beth and Reuben looked at each other and laughed; that showed them that their mother was decided to move. I must tell you, though, of one thing.

"I don't know how we would ever get money enough together to buy what will have to be bought, and get ourselves ready!" This was one of Mrs. Stone's objections. It made Reuben whisk out his pocket-book, over which Beth exclaimed in delight.

"I've got some moving money here," he explained. "It isn't a present, mother; Mr. Barrows said so; he said it was rightly mine, because I had saved him a good deal. I don't know how much there is; he sealed it up, and told me I had better not open it on the cars. But he said I would need it to move my family."

Then he broke the seal. Out came the bills, four of them. Reuben's breath began to come quick, and the flush on his face grew brighter. One bill was a five. What if some of the others should be!

"If there should be as much as fifteen dollars, here," he said, stopping and looking at his mother, "what would you say?"

"I'd say that you must have worked most uncommon fast for a boy of ten," she answered, and her tone was not altogether one of pleasure. She did not fancy folks taking pity on them and giving them money.

Reuben laughed, and looked down at his money; he had a story to tell that he fancied would satisfy his mother, even if there should be fifteen dollars. But then he began to act very strangely. He gave such a sudden jump in his chair that Beth held to the side of the rickety table. Then he leaned his head on the table and actually burst into tears.

"Why, Reuben Watson Stone!" said Beth, "what on earth is the matter?"

"My dear boy!" said his mother; and she felt almost frightened, it was such a strange thing to see Reuben cry.

He came around to his mother and buried his head in her lap; but not until he had dropped the four bills on the table before her, and she saw that there were two fives and two twenties. Fifty dollars!

"I'm sure I wouldn't like to try to describe to you the commotion there was in that family for a little while.

Mrs. Stone was perfectly bewildered; to give a boy ten, or even fifteen dollars for a week's work, because a rich man felt sorry for him and thought he had a great burden to carry, would be unusual enough; but to give fifty dollars! She thought for a few moments that there was some wicked plot to ruin her boy, and almost expected to see a policeman appear and arrest him on a charge of stealing.

But Reuben's tears did not last long. He had been taken by surprise, and following

hard on so much excitement, had forgotten his dignity, and cried it out with his head in his mother's lap.

Now he brushed back his hair from his hot forehead, wiped away all traces of tears, and told his remarkable story, beginning with the ride behind Samson, and the paper worth a thousand dollars that tried to blow away and didn't, and ending with the story of the locked kitchen door and the two boys who were prisoners. It was a long story, and very well told. The mother who, when it began, was all ready to resent the fifty dollars almost as an insult offered their honest poverty, by the time it was finished declared that she didn't know as fifty dollars was any too much to show his gratitude. As for Beth she laughed and cried half a dozen of times during the account, and half smothered Reuben with kisses when it was finished. This is the way in which the matter of expense of moving was settled, and by night the Stone family were actually packing! There was only one drawback. It didn't seem as though they could make up their minds to go and leave Miss Hunter behind. She had heard the whole story told over by Beth, and enjoyed it quite as much as that small lady thought she ought; and she had heard with pleasure about the room that would just suit her, and the chance for plenty of work at good prices. Then she had grown thoughtful, and finally had owned that she couldn't see her way clear to leaving poor old mother Perkin's alone. To be sure she hadn't known her but a week, but the nice old lady was getting used to her, and liked to have her come in, and liked her toast, and relished an egg dropped in water, and was getting pretty feeble, and the long and short of it was, she didn't believe she ought to go and leave her.

"It is your duty to go, of course," she said to Mrs. Stone; "you've got Beth and Reuben to think of, or, anyhow, he has you to plan for, and he's done it like a man, I'm sure—a first-class man at that—and of course it is your duty to go along with him; like enough I'll come trotting behind after a little while, there is nothing in life hinders me but the poor old lady. But I can't make up my mind to leave her, and that is fact."

So Reuben and Beth felt doleful all one evening because Miss Hunter couldn't see her way clear to leaving mother Perkins. But they need not have wasted a sigh over that.

The fact was, their Father in Heaven saw the way clear all the time. He meant to have Miss Hunter go with them, and he knew exactly what to do for mother Perkins so that she should not miss the loving care of her new friend. I'll tell you what he did: that night in the silence and the darkness he sent his unseen angels, and they came without sound of footfall or rattling of keys; passed swiftly and silently through the door that Reuben himself had locked but two hours before, and when they passed out again they had mother Perkins with them.

In the morning Miss Hunter found her still body and her wrinkled old face lying just where she had left it the night before; but she came and called Mrs. Stone and Reuben and Beth.

"Look here," she said, her voice grave and yet sweet, "come up here, something has happened; something that we don't have a chance to see very often. Look at her face; did she ever smile like that when she lived here? I'm glad I kissed her last night when I tucked her up. The Lord must have touched her in a very little while after that. He left a little gleam of the glory right here on her face, so we could feel sure of what had happened. Well, Reuben, there's nothing to hinder my moving along with you now. Since the Lord wants her in the palace, of course she doesn't need me to look after her any more."

So they all waited one day, and the funeral of mother Perkins was held in the sunny south room. Miss Hunter put a rose on the coffin that she bought of a small boy who passed by, and Reuben bought a flower that he saw in a greenhouse window.

"It looked so kind of sweet," he said, "I couldn't help it; it only cost three cents. Will it do to put with the rose?"

"Why, it's a bit of live forever!" declared Miss Hunter, "and seeing she's gone up there to live forever, it is the very thing." So there were flowers and tears at mother Perkins' funeral.

And the very next day the man of the house moved his family to the country.

CHAPTER XXI.

SHOW YOUR COLORS.

Reuben's telegram was sent; you may be sure of that. A boy like Reuben Watson Stone is not likely to forget his first telegram. So when the stage drove up with a flourish at the little house, Reuben saw with delight the smoke issuing from the chimney. Then, oh, what fun he had taking his mother and Beth and Miss Hunter through the pretty rooms—hearing their exclamations of surprise and delight; seeing Beth try to hug the stove, though it was so hot she couldn't, and declare that she would like to kiss the tea-kettle which didn't leak; hearing his mother question in a bewildered way as to how he came to have this, and who thought of that! When that busy, happy evening was done, and Reuben was fairly settled in his new bed, it seemed to him that he had never been so happy in his life.

The excitement kept at white heat all the next day. Reuben had a holiday from the shop in order to help his mother get settled, though, truth to tell, the settling had been so thoroughly done for her before she arrived, and she had so few possessions, that the work was not hard. But there was the box-shop in all its departments to take the wondering Beth through—explaining to her in detail with the confidence of one who had been familiar with the business for years—and the glove factory, in which she saw the wonderful little machine with brass teeth, and discovered that she was to put her needle between them, instead of through them. He had also to introduce his mother and Miss Hunter to the glove factory, where they hoped to get work; and, to crown the eventful day, Mrs. Barrows came with Grace to get acquainted with his mother, and was as friendly as though she had known her for years. The next day they all went to work in earnest.

The first Sabbath in the new home was one to which Reuben always looked back with a special feeling of interest. A great many things happened for him to remember. In the first place they all went to church together, and sat in a pew which Mr. Barrows told Reuben they had better keep for their own if they liked it; and when he with blushing cheeks asked how much it would cost a year, he took a new lesson in church work on being told that pews in this church were not rented, that people selected their seats as I paid what they could for the support of the church. He told his mother before they were fairly out of the building, and she had answered heartily: "That is something like. We can pay a little something ourselves; I've always sat in the gallery and felt like a pauper; if they've found a way of making poor people at home in their churches, I'm glad to hear it." Then Reuben had taken Beth to Sabbath-school, and put her in Grace Barrows' care; and in her new blue merino which Miss Hunter had at last contrived an excuse for giving her, and her fur cape and hood, she looked as well in his eyes as the best of them. In fact, he told his mother that their Beth was certainly the prettiest girl in the class. In his own class there had been much to think about and remember. Almost the first question the teacher asked was, whether he had remembered his promise of the Sabbath before, and when he, with eyes that drooped a little in embarrassment, had still answered firmly that he had remembered, and also that he had decided the question, he never forgot the glow in her eyes as she held out her hand to him and said: "I'm very glad. Now, my boy, remember this: Show your colors everywhere." He thought about this sentence a great deal during the lesson. What chance was there for him to show his colors, he wondered. He was not quite sure what she meant; he thought he would like to know, and he waited a little for Beth, and also in the hope that she would speak to him again after the school was closed. Sure enough she turned to him with that bright, glad smile and asked him one of those direct questions.

"Are you going to do it?"

"Do what, ma'am?"

"Why, show your colors everywhere and always."

Reuben looked down at his plain gray clothes; very little color about them, and that little rather dingy; he had not even a bright neck-tie, like some of the boys.

"How'll I show them if I haven't got 'em?" he asked at last, a glimmer of a smile on his face. He knew that Miss Mason did