

Tommy and 'Gov'ner.'

(Ernest Gilmore, in the 'Christian Intelligencer'.)

Tommy had just been delivering some freshly-ironed clothes at Mrs. Perry's back door when he saw 'Gov'ner' for the first time. He had never been at the Perry's before, consequently did not know that the winding walks were so confusing that he had 'lost his bearings,' so to speak, and was going out of the yard on a different path from the one on which he had entered. Suddenly, as he was swinging the empty clothes basket back and forth he uttered an exclamation of delight. Directly in front of him—as he turned into a winding pathway—stood the nicest goat he had ever seen, harnessed to a pretty waggon. 'Oh!' he cried out; 'oh!'

No one was in sight.

'I wonder whose it is,' he said, talking aloud without being conscious of it.

A man came around from the back of a shed at this moment. He had overheard the boy's remark and now, seeing the radiant fact, smiled grimly.

'You wonder whose it is, do you?' he said. 'Well, I'll tell you whose it was. It belonged to little Gene Perry who died.'

Tommy's face clouded. He felt a great pity for little 'Gene Perry who died.'

'It's too bad he had to die and leave this cunning goat and the pretty waggon,' he remarked. 'I'm sorry.'

The man, smothering a desire to laugh at Tommy's original way of expressing sympathy, came near choking, but rallied sufficiently to say:

'Yes, it is too bad that little Gene had to go and leave us, but so far as "Gov'ner" is concerned, I guess he'll get along all right without him.'

'Who's "Gov'ner"?' questioned the boy.

The man laughed.

'Gov'ner is this goat—don't you see?' he said.

'Oh, yes, I see. Well, I think Gov'ner is the nicest goat I ever saw.'

'Do you?' asked a sweet voice, and Tommy, turning quickly, at the sound of the voice, saw Mrs. Perry (whom he had met when he delivered the clothes) beside him.

'Yes, ma'am; don't you?'

'I certainly do,' she said, a sad look coming into her eyes; 'and so did my little Gene, who died.'

Mrs. Perry and Tommy were alone, Flint, the man-of-all-work, having gone to the rear of the shed.

'I'm sorry your little boy died,' Tommy said, real pity shining in his blue eyes.

Mrs. Perry's heart went out to him for his ready sympathy.

'You like the goat so well that you can drive him around the grounds if you want to,' she remarked, to his great joy and surprise.

This was the beginning of a new life for Tommy. Flint, at a call from Mrs. Perry, appeared again and, after giving Tommy some instructions, ordered him to jump into the goat carriage and take the lines.

Such a merry ride as that was! After it was over Tommy went home with the clothes basket. It was a very poor home that Tommy went to—just two little bare rooms (with Oh so many things needed!), a hard-working mother and a small crippled brother. But he brought a bit of cheer with him when he told them about 'Gov'ner' and his ride.

He brought more cheer as the days went by. Mrs. Perry, whose interest continued in the boy who had sympathized so readily with her, told him to come every day when he could, which, of course, he did. Then when he expressed a desire to clean and rub 'Gov'ner,' she allowed him to do so, and he did so regularly. When the first week of taking care of 'Gov'ner' was up, Mrs. Perry gave him some money, much to his surprise.

'What's it for?' he asked.

'For taking care of "Gov'ner,"' she said, and smiled.

'I love to do that,' he said. 'I'd do it without pay, you know, but—but—' a thought coming into his head that made his face glow.

'But—but?' Mrs. Perry repeated.

'I'll give it to mother to help along.'

One day there were some specially fine large red apples sent to Mrs. Perry. She gave one to Tommy, who thanked her, but laid the apple aside to take home, and, by close questioning, she found out that it was laid aside for Tommy's little crippled brother Fred. Soon after that Tommy was allowed to take 'Gov'ner' outside of the grounds and bring Fred for an outing in the Perry grounds. Their outing was followed by many more, until little crippled Fred's slender form and happy face were frequently seen by the Perrys and their guests.

As the days passed on Tommy was given many little things to do on the grounds. Sometimes it was weeding, sometimes raking, often sweeping the paths. The little home of two rooms was beginning to bloom. Tommy's small earnings were 'helping along.' The face of the hard-working mother had become less weary and there were often smiles on her face. Fred's little face was no longer sad, for there was something every day to divert him. He saw many delightful things when he went out in the waggon with Tommy and the 'Gov'ner.' He even 'helped' sometimes when he was in the Perry yard, for kind Mrs. Perry had told him so, and gave him bright pennies when he helped Tommy weed. Even when he did not help she often gave him something—once, some fine lettuce, once some ripe strawberries, frequently something appetizing for the family table or a delightful toy or picture book that had been dear Gene's.

As for Tommy, as the weeks and months roll by he is steadily earning money, slowly to be sure.

'But,' he assures his mother, hopefully and cheerfully, 'I'll be earning more and more while I'm growing big, and when I am big, you're not going to ever wash any more—not even one piece.'

The mother laughed.

'Won't I be grand!' she said, entering into his spirit. 'Who'd a thought three months ago that things would have come to us as they have?'—looking about the two small rooms thankfully. 'I'm thankful to the Lord for the change, and—and—' smiling at her elder son, 'I'm thankful too, to Tommy and the 'Gov'ner.'

I'LL NEVER STEAL AGAIN.

I want to tell you how some of the children are treated in the cities where many do not have nice homes and lots of good things to eat. I saw some children in Philadelphia that often are hungry because the parents drink beer and whiskey. The parents often treat the children cruelly, simply because the parents are not Christians.

I will tell you a true story: 'A certain man in a large city got into the room of a tenement house. It was vacant. He saw a ladder pushed through the ceiling. Thinking that perhaps some poor creature had crept up there, he climbed the ladder, drew himself up through the hole, and found himself under the rafters. There was no light, but that which came through a knot-hole and the cracks in the place. He soon saw a heap of clips and shavings, and a boy about eleven years old lying on it.

'Boy, what are you doing here?'

'Hush! don't tell anybody, sir. Don't tell anybody. I am hiding.'

'What are you hiding from? Where's your mother?'

'Mother is dead.'

'Where's your father?'

'Hush! don't tell him. He is drunk, but look here.'

He turned himself on his face and through the rags of his vest and shirt the man saw that his flesh was bruised and the skin broken.

'Why, my boy, who beat you like that?'

'Father got drunk and beat me because I wouldn't steal.'

'Did you ever steal?'

'Yes, sir, I was a street-thief once.'

'And why don't you steal any more?'

'Please sir, I went to the Mission School and they told me there of God and of heaven, and of Jesus, and they taught me, "Thou shalt not steal," and I'll never steal again if father kills me, but please don't tell him, sir.'

'My boy, you must not stay here; you will die. Now you wait patiently here for a lit-

tle while, I am going away to see a lady, and we will get a better place than this for you.'

'Thank you, sir, but please, sir, would you like to hear me sing a little hymn?'

Bruised and battered, forlorn and friendless, mother dead, hiding away from an angry father, he had a little hymn to sing.

'Yes, I will hear you sing it.'

He raised himself on his elbow and sang:

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Suffer me to come to thee,
For I would I to thee be brought,
Gracious Lord, forbid it not;
In the kingdom of thy grace,
Give a little child a place.'

'That's the little hymn, sir, good-bye.'

The gentleman came back in about two hours, but the little boy had fallen asleep in Jesus.

Dear little children, he was a little martyr for the truth he had learned. He will receive his reward when Jesus comes.—'Christian Standard.'

TOADS IN LIVES.

A friend of mine, who has a noble house in Derbyshire, told me that on one occasion there was a total failure of the water-supply. The house is supplied with water by a main, which runs under the road in front of the entrance lodge, and they had never been troubled by failure. But on this occasion the supply suddenly stopped, and there was not a drop of water to be had. They went up to the main cistern, and found that the ball cock, and tap were working perfectly. They went through the house, and could not discover, in any part, the cause of their misfortune. Finally, in desperation they took up the joint between the house pipe and the main, and in the joint between the two they found a great toad squatting, imperturbable and stolid. The mystery was how could it possibly have come there. Its size was enough to fill the orifice, and accounted for the blocking of the water; but its history seemed impenetrable. Finally, a workman who was well acquainted with the district said that it was not the only case of the sort with which he had been familiar, and that in two or three instances a similar obstacle to the supply of water had been discovered. He said that almost certainly the toad had come in as a tadpole, had become fixed in this joint, had lived there by feeding on the nutriment which the water supplied, until it had become large enough to choke the pipe.

The moral of my story is obvious, and I have often used it as an illustration of the way in which some little thing may creep into a man's or a woman's life, insignificant as a tadpole, so tiny as to be hardly worth serious notice; but, as the weeks and months grow into years, it increases until it becomes so considerable that the whole flow of God's grace and life are blocked, and for some reason, which the dearest friend may not be able to explain, the spiritual vitality of some promising soul is suddenly arrested.—The Rev. F. B. Meyer, in the 'Christian Endeavor World.'

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