

# LITTLE TU'PENNY.

BY S. BARING GOULD.

## CHAPTER V.

### HOW SHE WAS SPOILED.

The incidents recorded in the last chapter were the beginning of a friendly intimacy between Joe and Little Tu'penny. Indeed, Joe was the only person from whom Miss Tripolema Yellowleaf Redfern would endure to be called by this nickname.

It was a curious fact that Joe, so reserved and unobscured by his fellows, unbent to the girl. He did not grudge a talk with her, or the time spent in her society; he learned even to smile at her odd and audacious remarks. He even encouraged her to visit the mill. He knew that she got harm at home. He knew that she had alienated the girls of her own age, her former associates, by her conceit, and he hoped to be able to supply some little check to the mischief which was going on. When the sails were in full swing, and Trip was being made giddy, he had put on the drag and saved her; perhaps now he might do something of the sort morally. I do not know that he thought this all out for himself, but a dim sense of pity for the child filled him, and a desire to befriend and better her was like a warm spark in his heart.

One evening his mother said to him, in reference to Trip, who had been into the cottage to beg for bread and honey. "It is a bad lookout for the little lass. With a careless father and a foolish mother, she will go utterly to the bad in the end. I see it all before me. It cannot be other. As you bend a plant so it will grow. What are you sighing about, Joe?"

"Sighing, mother? I'm blowing the flower out of my lungs."

Next day he was not in his usual amiable frame of mind when the girl appeared in the mill door, a lovely apparition, dark against the brilliant sky behind, standing on one leg, with a hand on each doorstep, looking in and singing. His gray eyes rested on the graceful figure. The face was in shadow because a sunlit white cloud was behind it, and he blew the flour again out of his lungs.

She continued warbling, standing on one leg.

"Hush!" said Joe, starting to the stairs. "There is the bell ringing; the hopper is empty."

When Joe had gone aloft, Trip produced her whistle and piped. He did not come down till he had filled the hopper. Then he descended leisurely. He found the girl seated on a flour sack, pouting.

"You care for the hopper more than for me," she said; "when the hopper rises you run up to it, when I whistle you will not come to me."

"Because I am really needed at the hopper; as I have already told you—when you really need me, I will come to you."

"If I whistle?"

"Without your whistle. When you were flying or rather falling you did not call me, but I came."

"Yes at—the right moment, dear Joe."

She sat on the sack, thinking, with her finger on the dimple in her cheek, and he looked at her, not without sadness on his brow.

All at once she brightened, turned her dark eyes on him, and said: "Miller Joe, you are going to let this sack down into the basement. It is on the trap. Give me a ride down."

He shook his head. He took her hand and lifted her from the sack, and made her stand on one side.

"Run down, little woman, below. The sack, it is true, is going to be let by the trap into the basement, but never, and in no way, will I let you down. Go below and stand on the trap, and when the sack is removed I will haul you up."

She went out at the door, ran down the steps, and presently he saw her through the hole in the roof of the weighing house and floor of the flour chamber, holding the chain of the lift, and looking up. He heaved, and up she came, with bright, uplifted face and fluttering white hair, and smiles in her dancing eyes. Then he knelt, put out both his hands, and lifted her on to the floor and closed the trap.

"So, Little Tu'penny!" he said. "Never down; too many who know no better are doing that with you; I will always put out my hands and help you up."

But she understood nothing of his meaning. How should she? She was but a child.

## CHAPTER VI.

### OF CAUTIONS GIVEN.

As a child, her mother's talk had not taken great effect, though it had taken some hold of Trip, but as she grew out of childhood it fired her imagination.

She had been so nursed in the notion that she was to have a grand future, and that the only way in which this grand future was to be secured was through a grand marriage, and the only way in which a grand marriage was to be arrived at was by personal ornament, the cultivation of complexion and hair, and by coquetry, that as Trip grew into young womanhood she qualified for it with even greater eagerness than she had qualified before for idleness by passing the fourth standard. A life of luxury and extravagance, of wearing of fine dresses and of seeing sights, of being admired, and of doing nothing was held up to her as the reward of passing the fifth standard. That fifth standard was the captivating and catching of a wealthy husband.

In spite of the deterioration of her character, in spite of her mother's re-

monstrance, the friendship with Joe Western was not broken; it lasted on with fluctuations, it lasted in spite of Joe's ill-humor and her provocations, that ill-humor in Joe being the result of her provocations.

But good there was, lying deep below the surface, buried under a wonderful accumulation of frippery and folly.

They had their quarrels, when Trip bounced out of the mill, vowing she would never again revisit it, because Joe was glum and had not a word to cast at her; or when Joe, angered at some foolish remark or exhibition of petulance, gave her a sharp reprimand. Sometimes these quarrels lasted a week, once or twice a month, when they neither met nor spoke. Reconciliation always came from the side of Trip. Joe never sought her out; but when she reappeared, penitent, with downcast head—pitiful entreaty to be forgiven—and pleading eyes, he could not resist the appeal. They shook hands, and were friends again.

"My dear Lema," said her mother, "I don't half like you to see so much of Mr. Western. He may be, and no doubt is, a respectable young man. But respectability is not what we look at; we look miles beyond that. So my dear Lema, give him no encouragement. If ever it should happen that he persuaded you to become Mrs. Joe Miller it would bring my gray hairs—no, they are brown, and not gray yet—with sorrow to the grave."

"Mamma, what a comical idea! Joe!"

"Let it remain an idea, and a comical one, Lema. As an idea only it is like cold water trickling down my backbone. My dear, if you were to be such a fool as to take Mr. Joe Western, I'd wash my hands of you. Flying would be as out of the question as when the wings are clipped. You'd stick to the soil. I'll tell you exactly what it would be like. I was once at a show—a sort of mixed circus and menagerie—and it was advertised and given out in public that an elephant was to ascend in a fire balloon. Well, I suppose pounds was taken at the door of people that went in to see. I went in. True enough there was the elephant, and there was the fire balloon. The balloon was hooked on to a belt—a very ornamental belt it was, of all the rainbow colors—passed round the body of the elephant. There was a catch at the top, and into this catch went an iron hook from the bottom of the balloon. Well, Lema, a fine lot of low and spirits of wine was lighted in the balloon, and I will say this for the balloon, I believe it did its best to rise, but it couldn't, because of the elephant. It could neither lift the great beast nor rise itself. So at last the cord was cut, and away flew the balloon without him, and we looked after it till it was no more than like a star in the sky. But the elephant didn't budge an inch, not he. He didn't even look up after the balloon."

"Where did it come down, mamma?"

"Oh, I don't know, nor whether it ever came down at all. They ought to have returned us our coppers as the elephant didn't go up, but you may be sure we got nothing back. Now, my dear Lema, true as I stand here, that was a picture of an unequal match. So, if you think of taking and fastening of yourself on to any elephant; you're a fire balloon, and ordained to rise to be a star."

Much about the same time Mrs. Western was addressing a word of caution to her son.

She had watched Joe for long with the anxiety of a mother and the perception of the loving eye. At one time he seemed to be escaping from his silent ways, to become more glib and sociable; but of late his curious closeness had closed over him again, and had become more confirmed and intensified.

Something weighed on his mind. His mother was sure of that; but what it was she did not at once discover. For a time she suspected that the business was not prospering, that his accounts had not been paid to Christmas, that something was wrong with the machinery of the mill, which would entail a heavy outlay which he did not know how to meet, that custom was falling off—but she abandoned all these suppositions, there was no evidence to substantiate them, and the man was able to satisfy her that everything went well with the mill.

What was the matter with Joe?

She observed that his fits of deepest depression occurred after his interviews with Trip. Nevertheless, she did not arrive at the right solution even then; it seemed to her prepossessed mind that Joe would never care for any girl who was not as grave, sedate, and systematic as himself. That so frivolous, inconsiderate a coquette as Trip should have seized on her son's heart was inconceivable by her for long. She resisted the thoughts—she fought against evidence when it came on her. No—Joe was ill, he was suffering from some internal malady.

She asked him if he had any illness hanging about him; anything the matter with his liver? He shook his head and answered, "I am quite well, mother."

"Have you been clipping the stones, and the grit got into your lungs, Joe?"

"My lungs are sound," he said.

"And there's nothing the matter with your heart?" she asked.

Then he stood up, shaking his head, and went out to his bees.

She watched him through the window. She saw him presently standing looking at his hand and squeezing it. She went after him into the garden.

"What is it, Joe?"

"A bee has stung me, that is all. I have drawn out the sting. It will hurt no more."

"Will you have the blue bag for it, Joe?"

He shook his head. "No; when the sting can be drawn out the hurt is soon

over; it is where the sting goes deep and remains, that it rankles and aches and poisons the blood."

He was not thinking of the bee. She was sure of that. He spoke of another sting. Her eyes were opened. She saw all plain. Then her face became very grave.

"Now, Joe," she said, "put the thought from you. It never can be. She is not the sort of wife for you; with such an unreasonable name, too. Tripolema Yellowleaf! It would give me the bronchitis to call her by it every day."

"Mother—oh mother!"

"It is of no use your 'mothering' me. I can see. I know what consumes you. You love her because she is beautiful and winning. I don't deny all that; but she is not for you. If you had her you would be utterly miserable."

"I know it."

"Yes, Joe, you know it; and yet you love her, that is it. Your reason says that she would drive you mad if she were yours, and make your home a hell, and yet you have not the moral courage to think no more of her. You think of her all day and all night—when you work, when you pray, when you dream."

He put his hand to his heart.

"Then, Joe, pluck the sting out; pluck it out and cast it away."

"Mother, I cannot; it is too deep. It poisons me, that is true—but I cannot. Indeed, I cannot!"

## CHAPTER VII.

### HOW THE CHANCE CAME.

There was a small inn, called the Dog and Pheasant, between the park and the mill. Sometimes, when any visitors were at the hall, the servants who could not be accommodated in the house were sent to the Dog and Pheasant. It was a tidy, respectable, old-fashioned inn, low, yellow washed, with russet tile roof, and a vintage Black Hambroough, trained on a trellis over the porch, where it ripened well in warm summers. The host had been a butler to the old squire before the property was sold to the successful Oxford street tradesman. However much the host might turn up his lip of scorn in the privacy of his own room with his wife over these parvenus, he was most urbane and obliguous to the public.

for Mr. Tottenham was his landlord, and the hall brought a good deal of custom to the Dog and Pheasant.

Throughout the neighborhood of London the old families have well nigh disappeared. They have migrated, and sold their estates and mansions to wealthy tradesmen, who live in the old seats in far grander style than did the plain country squires.

Ringwood had belonged to the family of Ringwood for three hundred years, then came a spendthrift, then a rash speculator, bad times, finally a breakup. Squire Ringwood was obliged to sell his ancestral estate and manor house, and it was bought by the Tottenham of the firm of Tottenham & Sons, Oxford street.

One day there arrived at the Dog and Pheasant a gentleman of engaging exterior and manners. He wore a black frock coat that fitted him admirably, lavender pants, and kid gloves, a crimson ribbon round his throat, a Glorie de Dijon rose in his buttonhole. His name—she showed his cards—Mr. Algernon Beaufort. He had a delicate complexion and a slight cough. He came into the country because he had been ordered country air, and to Ringwood because Ringwood was prescribed as specially salubrious.

He strolled about the neighborhood for a day or two, and found it dull—an endless tract of London clay, broken by old tile pits and puddles. In time one may have too much of a good thing; it takes very little time to have enough of London clay.

Mr. Beaufort, standing in the bar, drawing on his gloves, with his elegant lavender legs wide apart, asked if it were permissible for strangers to stroll in the park. The host of the inn hesitated. It was not a favor generally accorded, but if the gentleman would not mind taking a message of thanks from him to the keeper, whose lodge was in the park, for a brace of rabbits he had sent his man, it might serve as an excuse. Then Mr. Beaufort could look about him, and see the trees, and the deer, and the lake; and the keeper might, perhaps, take him over the warren.

Mr. Beaufort was much obliged. His Glorie de Dijon was faded, so he ventured to beg a China rose of the landlady, which suited his complexion better even than the Glorie de Dijon, assumed his highly polished hat, curled up at the side, took his cane, lighted a cigar, and sallied forth. He entered the side gate of the main entrance, sauntered about the well wooded grounds, came to the keeper's lodge, delivered his message, and asked to be allowed to sit down and drink a glass of water. His appearance, his complexion, his address, struck Mrs. Redfern as aristocratic. She made him very welcome, entered into conversation with him, assured him that her marriage had been a come down in life, and that, though she lived under a cottage roof, she knew what good society was, having lived in baronial halls. This was a little bit of an exaggeration, but it did not matter. Baronial halls—even when converted by an infirmity of the speaker's, into halls—sounds well.

Mr. Beaufort assured the lady that he quite believed it. Something in her speech and bearing struck him as out of the common when he first saw her. Then she told him how she had acquired her finished address and polite bearing. She had been lady's maid to the Misses Tottenham, of the great house, one of whom was now married. The other was

still single, but said to be engaged. It was a sad blow, she said, to old Mr. Tottenham that his eldest son had married an actress; he was not allowed to remain in the firm. He was given an annuity, and did not come to Ringwood.

"And this, sir," she said, as Trip appeared, "this, sir, is my daughter."

"Your sister, surely," exclaimed Mr. Beaufort, starting to his feet and bowing gracefully, with a wave of his hat.

"My daughter, an only child, sir, aged eighteen."

"Impossible, madame!"

"Pray be seated," urged the flattered Mrs. Redfern.

"If I might offer you some of our modest ale and humble cake, sir, or unpretentious biscuits—"

"With the highest pleasure. My name—I ought to have introduced myself—is Beaufort," he put a card on the table.

"You may chance to know the name; if you study the peerage, you will have observed that there is a duke of my name."

Mrs. Redfern was giddy with excitement. She whispered to her daughter:

"Lema, put on your myrtle green with coffee trimmings; in it you look beautifullest." Then she hastened to produce cake, biscuits, glasses, and a jug of ale and place them on the little table under the balcony of the picturesque cottage.

After a pause, and the eating of a biscuit, Mr. Beaufort said:

"So you, my dear madame, were lady's maid at Ringwood. A position of great responsibility—next to that of the butler, the most."

"Responsibility!" exclaimed Mrs. Redfern. "I should think so. I've had thousands of pounds' worth of jewelry pass through my hands. My young ladies were awful careless, and left their brooches, and bracelets, and necklaces about. I've had times out of mind to put them away for them. I didn't think it right that they should be left littering anywhere."

"And where did you put them away, madame?"

"In morocco cases, locked in a jewel box, which was kept in the wardrobe. But there is not quite so much now as was, as the eldest of the young ladies is married, and took hers away with her."

"I suppose the plate of the family must be superb?"

"Soup-erb ain't the word for it," said Mrs. Redfern.

"What sort of a gentleman now, is the butler?"

"Mr. Thomson. Oh, polished as his plate."

"Would it be possible for me to see over the house? I am thinking of building Beaufort court in Gloucestershire, and am interested in gentlemen's places. One can take hints everywhere I find that is, if one has an intelligent mind."

"Well, sir, Ringwood ain't generally shown; there's generally some of the family here, though they do go to London a deal. The ladies find it dull in the country, and the old gentleman has been so much in business all his life that he must be doing something in his old age, so they make over to him the hosiery branch of the affair. But I dare say, the house might be looked over. The family are mighty proud of their pictures, painted by the most d—, I mean fashionable artists, and which have cost the old gentleman pounds on pounds. Come here, Tripolema. My daughter and I will be pleased to walk with you, sir, to Ringwood. Mrs. Podgings, the house-keeper, is a very superior person and eager to oblige me. Mr. Thomson, I have no doubt, will allow himself to be coaxed into letting you have a peep at the plate." Then, aside to her daughter, "My dear, go on with the gentleman. I will follow. The opportunity has come. Now is your chance. Lay hold."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HOW SOME ONE SEIZED A CHANCE.

"Mr. Beaufort," said Mrs. Redfern, graciously, "would you mind stepping on with my daughter? I'll follow directly. I'll first slip on my seal skin and hat."

She allowed Tripolema to go most of her way with the stranger. Trip looked charming, her color was heightened. Her mother's words had kindled her fancy. The gentleman at her side was good looking, faultlessly dressed, polished in manners, presumably rich—he talked of Beaufort court which he was rebuilding, and a man cannot build without money—certainly well born. He had a duke in his family. That was better than a Bart. Trip put on her best graces; and when Trip wanted to be gracious she was irresistible.

Mr. Beaufort chatted pleasantly, admired everything, had flattering remarks to make to his companion, with whom he was really struck.

Ringwood house was of red brick, a large stately mansion, with long windows, plaster quoins, plaster cornices and vases and balustrades, which looked well with the old red brick.

Mrs. Redfern came up with her daughter and Mr. Beaufort before they reached the back door.

"Dear me!" said the gentleman, "this strikes me as the perfect ideal of a house. If the interior arrangements are equal to the exterior perfection I shall take a notion of taking away with me. For my part, I like neither comfort sacrificed to architectural design nor architectural beauty neglected for internal comfort. I shall be most interested to see over this house."

The housekeeper, Mrs. Podgings, was accommodating. She liked to have a chat with Mrs. Redfern. The butler was gracious; he had a liking, indeed an unbounded admiration for Trip, and vowed he only wished he were ten years younger to make her Mrs. Thomson. Wherewith Trip was wont to toss her pretty head.

The gentleman was invited along with the ladies into the butler's private room. He must insist on their all returning there after having been over the house and inspected the pictures. He trusted a light refectory there would be acceptable all round.

So Mrs. and Miss Redfern and Mr. Beaufort started on their round, conducted by Mrs. Podgings. Fortunately the family were out, the house was accessible in all parts. Mrs. Redfern was anxious to see all the old rooms again she had known so well, and take Mrs. Podgings' attention while the young people talked together. Mr. Beaufort was enchanted with everything. He admired the paintings, the porcelain, the glass, the curtains, carpets, furniture—everything was in admirable taste, and most expensive.

But what fascinated him more even than the pictures and china was the perfect arrangement of the house—so compact, so comfortable. He must ask permission to be allowed to make a few rough sketch plans in his pocketbook for his information and guidance in the erection of Beaufort court, Gloucestershire. The permission was at once accorded him, and pencil in hand, he drew plans, and was too engrossed in them to say much to Trip.

At last when all had been seen the party returned to the butler's room, where they had for them a bottle of dry Sherry. Some had been drunk at dinner the evening before, and a bottle had been reserved by the butler for his own particular friends.

"Mr. Thomson," said Trip, putting on her most coquettish manner, "might Mr. Beaufort have a sight of the silver wheelbarrow?"

"Barrow? Certainly," answered the butler. "Anything you ask, miss, must be complied with." Then, explanatory to the visitor, "You see, sir, Tottenham began life with a wheelbarrow, some fifty years ago, and as an occasion of telling the story, and showing how clever a man he has been, he has had two dozen little silver wheelbarrows made holding glass salt cellars; a salt cellar to each guest, you understand. At a dinner party Tottenham never fails to tell the story apropos of the cellars. He's had on the sides an inscription, 'Propera,' which, I take it, means 'Shove along.'"

"I don't think it," interrupted Mrs. Redfern, "though I'm sorry to differ from you, Mr. Thomson. How 'Propera' can mean 'shove along,' beats me. I see clear enough what it signifies. Proper A means A one, and Mr. Tottenham means that whatever he has, from his pictures, his plate, down to his dinner and salt, is A one, and nothing that isn't A one will suit him."

"It may be, Mrs. Redfern," said the butler, blandly. "But I take it the language is Latin. However, this is interrupting my story. The missus, she don't particularly like Tottenham's boasting of his small beginnings; she is more high in her notions, and she always says an aside to the chief gent that took her in. 'What Tottenham says must be taken, like the barrow, with salt. He was a younger son, and the bulk of the property went to the eldest. If he came off only with the barrow. That is what comes of our laws of primogeniture, which in a civilized and Christian land ought to be done away with.'"

"And so they ought," threw in Mrs. Redfern, "because I don't understand nothing about them."

"But," continued the butler, "about that inscription on the barrows. I know that Tottenham did not comb out of his head. He asked the rector, who is an Oxford scholar, to help him. Propera is what it is. Now, Mr. Beaufort, you can help us to the meaning. 'Shove along' do seem rather vulgar. What does it mean?"

"Sir," said Mr. Beaufort, graciously, "till I see the plate itself I can hardly decide between you and Mrs. Redfern. The letters may be Greek or even Hebrew. Suppose you allow me to look at them."

"Certainly, sir," said the butler, rising and taking his keys.

### To be Continued.

A Legend of the Flight into Egypt.

"Arise, and take the child and his mother into Egypt; and they fled through the solemn darkness of the night."

The next day they came upon a man sowing corn. Some mysterious influence attracted him to the travelers. From the countenance of the mother, or from the earnest eyes of the child she bore in her arms, a softening gleam of grace descended into his heart. He was very kind to them, and permitted them to cross his field, and the young mother, folding her babe yet more closely to her heart, leaned forward, explaining to him that they were pursued by enemies. "And if they cross this way," said the sweet, love voice, "and ask if you have seen us?"

"I shall say you did not pass this way," was the eager interruption.

"Nay," said the blessed mother, "you must speak only the truth. Say: 'They passed me while I was sowing this corn.'"

And the travelers pursued their journey. The next morning the sower was amazed to find that his corn had sprung up and ripened on the night. While he was gazing at it in astonishment, Herod's officers rode up and questioned him.

"Yes, I saw the people of whom you speak," said he. "They passed while I was sowing this corn."

Then the officers moved on, feeling sure that the persons seen by the sower were not the Holy family, for such fine ripe corn must have been sown months before.

RUTH O'CONNOR.