

about the cup of cold water, you know, sir. Thinks I, it's hard if I can't give that, and I've tried since to do the little I can that way, and I was never so happy before.* How folk can make a merit of works, I can't make out. It's precious little anybody can do, and then for the very littlest thing you can do you can get such a lot of pleasure that it seems somehow as if you was only shamming to be kind to get somethin' for yerself—throwin' away a sprat to catch a salmon like.

"But I haven't told you how I've got my living? That's true, sir, ar' really I don't see that there's much to tell. I've only done what everybody that hasn't got tin's forced to do, if he doesn't want to starve, or to steal, or turn cadger, or go into the workus. I've been at the toy-making off and on for about five years now. The pay's light, but so's the work, so far as strength goes, and that suits me now, for I'm getting shaky. It's pretty kind of work, too, I reckon. There ain't much room for taste, it's true, but it wants a little bit of gumption sometimes to manage the strings and things. Anyhow, I like it, and try to make 'em the best I can. It's nice somehow to think that I'm makin' playthings for poor folks' kids that can't get anything better. I've got queer fancies sometimes, sir. I wonder whether Christ, when He was carpenter, ever made anything out of the chips for the little uns that peeped into the shop? There's no sin in fancyin' that, is there, sir? He was so fond of children that I can't help thinkin' He'd ha' done anything that was right to please 'em.

"What did I do before? Bless your heart, sir, I've been a Jack of all trades, 'cept a navvy, and a coalheaver, and such like. I used to see a good bit of coal-heavers once, though. My second master went about in the Pool selling hot beer to the sailors. We was run down in a fog one day, and the poor old man was drowned. They hooked me out on to a steamer, and put me ashore at Greenwich. I couldn't help crying a bit, for I'd lost all except my Bible leaves and the clothes I stood in. So the mate pitched me an old broom, and told me to go and fight for a crossing. I got one without fightin', however, on Maze Hill, and made a pretty good thing of it; but I used to lodge in Mill Lane, and one night tramps cleaned me out. My first place was to clean boots and knives at the coffee-house where the machine man put me down. I've sold watercresses, and walnuts, and lark turfs, and gr'un'sel, and such like; but I never took much to those out-door things—they didn't seem respectable.

"I thought I was getting up in the world—I was about thirteen then—when an old fellow who kept a second-hand bookshop in the Goswell Road hired me to sit inside and watch the books. He didn't give me much wages, but I got lots to eat, and a good bit of reading too on the sly. I'm afraid now it wasn't quite right: but I couldn't help it when I got the chance, and, after all, he never lost anything by me.

"Well, sir, since I got that billet at the bookseller's I've always managed to keep myself by some indoor work or other—except, of course, when I've been in hospital. It was when I got a fold-