

BIJAH'S STORY.

He was little more than a baby,
And played in the streets all day,
And he held in his tiny fingers
The string of a broken sleigh.
He was ragged and cold and hungry
Yet his face was a sight to see,
As he lisped to a passing lady—
'Pletho, mithus, will you vide me?'

She drew close her fur-lined mantle,
And her train of silk and lace,
While she stared, with haughty wonder,
In the eager, piteous face.
And the eyes that shone so brightly,
Brimmed o'er with gushing rain,
And the poor little head dropped lower,
While his heart beat a sad refrain.

When night came, cold and darkly,
And the lamps were all alight,
The pallid lips grew whiter
With childish grief and fright.
And as I passed the entrance
Of a church across the way,
I found the poor dead baby
With his head on the broken sleigh.

Soon young and eager footsteps
Were heard on the frozen street,
And a boy dashed into the station,
Covered with snow and sleet,
On his coat was a newsboy's number,
On his arm 'a bran new sled.'
Have you seen my brother, Bijah?
He ought to be home in bed.'

'You see I leave him at Smithers
While I go round with the 'Press,'
They must have forgot about him,
And he's strayed away I guess.
Last night when he said 'Our Father,'
And about the daily bread,
He just threw in an extra,
Concernin' a nice new sled.

'I was telling the boys at the office,
And how he was only three,
So they stuck in for this here stunner,
And sent it home with me
And won't—What's the matter, Bijah?
Why do you shake your head?
Oh, Father in heaven, have pity!
Oh, Bijah, he can't be dead!'

He clasped the child to his bosom,
In a passionate close embrace,
His tears and kisses falling
'Twixt sobs on the little face.
Soon the boyish grief grew silent;
There was never a tear nor a moan,
For the heart of the dear Lord Jesus
Had taken the children home.

WHO SET IT GOING?

(Concluded.)

CHAPTER III.

BABY.

It was Mrs. Crow's birthday—mid-summer eve; as usual, a tea-party celebrated the event. As the assemblage principally consisted of the residents of the "Row," local topics were freely discussed. Mrs. Baldwin introduced the Parkers' name: she had heard that they were going to leave their house the next day.

"And without saying good-bye, or speaking a word to any of us. I think it is most ungrateful," added Mrs. Baldwin, "especially to Mrs. Crow."

"Why especially to me, my dear?"
"Because you have been so very kind to them."

But Mrs. Crow shook her head.
"I have had nothing to do with them since you hinted that they did not wish for my visits—though ready to take any neighbor by the hands, I'm not one to intrude where I'm not wanted."

And then with gentle voice Mrs. Crow said how foolish persons were to give themselves airs, and to look down upon those who were less well off than themselves—as if true hearts and sincere friendships were not of more value than worldly wealth!

And then some one, less well informed than the rest of the party, inquired if the Parkers had come into a large fortune.

"Some thousands," was the reply.
"Did you hear how many, Mrs. Baldwin?"

"I never heard definitely, but I believe it is a large amount," answered Mrs. Baldwin. "Actions speak louder than words, and from one thing and another, I feel sure they have come into property, and the reason that they keep so exclusive is that they want to have nothing to do with us when they get into their fine house."

There was an indignant chorus to the effect that the Parkers need not be afraid, and that those who do not live in the Clapperton Road might be as good and even better than those who did.

"The Clapperton Road! Are they really going there?"

And all eyes were again centred on Mrs. Baldwin.

"You said so, did not you?"

"I feel sure they are going to the Clapperton Road," replied Mrs. Baldwin, "for I have met Mrs. Parker and that solemn looking child of hers coming from that direction more than once, and though I stared at her she pretended not to see me, and on more than one occasion I have seen her go into the upholsterer's—then there has been a van at the Parker's door—and it is my belief that they are having new furniture."

And Mrs. Baldwin felt particularly aggrieved that the inhabitants of No. 5 should have that which she was unable to obtain.

But just then Mrs. Crow's trim little maid threw open the sitting-room door and announced that tea was ready. In another moment hostess and guests would have crossed the well-furnished hall, and entered the apartment in which this welcome meal was served, had not an unlooked for circumstance arrested their attention.

From the window was heard a voice demanding admittance.

"Please I want to tom in."

"Bless me! who can that be?"

And with no small amount of curiosity Mrs. Crow and her visitors turned to the casement.

There they saw a wee delicate creature, who plaintively reiterated:

"I want to tom in?"

"Who are you, my dear?" asked Mrs. Crow.

"I'm Baby."

"Baby Who?"

"Not Baby Who—Baby."

A pucker of distress gathered on the speaker's face.

"It is Baby Parker," whispered Mrs. Baldwin, "but how miserably thin she looks!"

"Are you Baby Parker?"

And as the flaxen head gave a nod of assent Mrs. Crow added:

"I wonder what can be her reason for coming to me?"

Baby Parker explained.

"I've brought my mumma's work for 'ou to do, she's asleep and tan't do it. And will 'ou dive my mumma and dada some of those nice things in 'ou basket?'—then eagerly—" 'ou will, won't 'ou?"

What did it mean?

Mrs. Crow looked at Mrs. Baldwin, and Mrs. Baldwin at the other residents of the "Row," with such bewilderment, that, despairing of making herself understood, Baby Parker began to cry.

At this Mrs. Crow suggested that some one should lift her in at the window. This done, all gathered round the wee creature, as disjointedly, but in her own way, she discoursed on her domestic affairs.

She told how "dada touldn't det employment;" how he walked about all day and come home so tired that "mumma" cried; and that some men came and took away all their nice furniture, and that they had only old chairs to sit on, and they were going away from Pratts' Row because they couldn't afford to live there.

"Where is your mamma?" asked Mrs. Crow.

"Mumma's at home, and I want 'ou to dive me something nice for her when she wakes up."

The assemblage stood convicted by the child in their midst.

Fond of jumping to conclusions a melancholy thought occurred to Mrs. Baldwin; an ashy pallor overspread her face as she whispered her belief that Mrs. Parker was already dead.

"Like as not it is the sleep of death," she said.

But Mrs. Crow, who thought a little practical help was worth a ton of sympathy, resolved at once to find the true state of affairs.

Begging her friends to excuse her, and with a request that Mrs. Baldwin would kindly preside at the tea-table in her

absence, she took baby's hand and led her from the room.

But a few minutes before refreshed by a brief interval of rest Mrs. Parker awoke and opened her eyes—even a smile lighted her countenance, but the barely furnished room brought her sorrow back, and with a sigh she covered her face with her hands. An instant later she raised her head.

"Where was baby?"

With a wild, startled cry she ran from the room—the open street-door confirmed her worst fears; while she had been sleeping had evil befallen her darling? She was just imagining all sorts of terrible ills, when to her joy baby herself appeared on the threshold—not alone, but holding fast to Mrs. Crow's hand.

Then the latter, in a few brief words, accounted for her appearance; this done, she laid her hand upon the young mother's, and in tender tones—as woman to woman—asked:

"Why have you kept all this trouble to yourself, my dear?"

The look, the voice, the kind words broke down all barriers; in another minute Mrs. Crow was in the once pretty sitting room, and the distressed young wife was sobbing in her arms.

In that interview both Mrs. Crow and Mrs. Parker conceived a more favorable opinion of one another.

In the face of facts the former saw the baneful effects of gossip and tattle.

If she had not listened to Mrs. Baldwin's reports, if she had not been influenced by the voice of slander, how much misery might have been spared this young couple?

And good old Mrs. Crow's cheeks flushed with feelings of emotion.

"Never mind, my dear—never mind," she said, "we must remedy this state of affairs. It is the duty of neighbors to help one another, and now that we know how matters really stand, I do not think you will complain of lack of sympathy in Pratt's Row."

With warm and affectionate kisses to mother and child she took her departure, leaving behind two welcome guests, hope and trust.

Her sympathy did not end here; there quickly arrived at No. 5 a well-filled hamper, the contents of which greatly delighted baby.

That night was the era of better things. In consequence of a suggestion of Mrs. Crow's, which Mrs. Baldwin, who was heartily ashamed of her aspersions, gladly seconded, a subscription was forthwith started by the inhabitants of the "Row" to assist the Parkers out of their difficulties.

Added to this, Mrs. Baldwin's husband took up Lawrence Parker's cause, and it was owing to his influence that the latter, before another week was over his head, was once more in a situation.

The Parker's troubles knitted in closer union the residents of Pratt's Row, and relying on the regard of her neighbors, Laurie Parker's young wife is no longer ashamed to confess how she became the owner of the silk dress which was the root and crown of Mrs. Baldwin's harsh judgments.

In strenuously overcoming her fault, the latter has learnt that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor," and "that he who loveth God loves his brother also."—*British Workwoman.*

WEAR YOUR WHITE RIBBON.

A writer in the *Woman's Journal*, the organ of the W.C.T.U., says:

Yes, there is a power in our badge. When worn so as to be seen—and not tucked away in the bureau at home, out of sight and out of mind. In one of our large provincial cities a young lady attended a party, and as a faithful member of our union had not omitted to complete her toilet by pinning on the white bow. Sitting at the supper table a young gentleman beside her said, "Will you hand me that glass of wine." It was an inspiration that prompted her to look him calmly in the face and reply, "I should have to take off my white ribbon to do that, and then you know the Bible says, 'Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink.'"

Her answer, with the little bow as an object lesson, fastened themselves on his

mind, and haunted him, until soon after he signed the pledge as an honorary member of the union, with the ultimate result of bringing into the work three of his chums who also became honorary members, all of whom, although still young, were already a proof of the two great fascinations of the wine cup.

A young worker from another of our Canadian cities was returning one night in a street car from some mission work carried on under the auspices of the union. As she stepped from the car near her home, she observed that the only occupant, a laboring man left it at the same time and appeared to follow her. She became slightly nervous on noting that as she quickened her pace, his quickened also, but soon reaching her home was about to quickly ascend the steps when he accosted her with the words, "Excuse me, but I see you wear the white ribbon." "Yes," was the reply, as she paused to hear further he added, "I have a wife who is terribly addicted to drink, and a family of small helpless children. I wish you would come to see them, and perhaps you may help to win her back to a respectable life." It is almost needless to add that his address was taken, and investigation revealed the very great need of just such help as their union was able to give.

A young lady from still another of our Canadian cities was travelling in the mountains of California with some friends. A part of the route was to be covered by stage, and for further observation, our white ribboner chose her place beside the driver. In due time they stopped at a wayside inn to water the horses, and the men to refresh themselves with something stronger. On becoming seated again the driver said confidentially to his lady companion, "I generally take a drink myself, but omitted it to-day, as I thought I couldn't sit beside that white ribbon of yours if my breath had the odor of whiskey."

The little snowy knot gave her the services of a clear headed coachman during what is a rough and somewhat perilous journey.

A back number of the *Union Signal* is responsible for the following:—

"A lady was passing along one of the crowded streets of Boston, when a man rough in exterior, with a troubled and haunted expression on his face, and an earnest longing in his eyes that was startling in its intensity, stepped in front of her and pointing to the badge said, "I see you wear the white ribbon." "Yes was reply. "And what can I do for you." "Pray for me," he said "My business takes me in to place after place where liquor is sold, and I must have help to enable me to keep my pledge." The little knot takes on a new beauty when we realize what its meaning may be to some burdened storm-tossed soul. We know not when our opportunity may come to give a word of encouragement to some despairing and faltering one, therefore, let us not fail to wear our white ribbon.

Again, a young "Y" from Canada, travelling alone through the southern states was taken ill by the way. Another white ribboner seeing her wear the snowy badge approached her, offered her services and cared for her during the balance of the journey.

These few simple incidents, which no doubt could be multiplied almost indefinitely, will serve to show the advantage of letting our interest in this great reform be known, which in hundreds of instances we can do in no other way than by letting the little bow be seen.

SOMETHING DISJOINTED.

Does it not begin to dawn upon some of the wise leaders of business and politics that something is out of joint in the social structure? Is it not about time to begin to inquire whether the laws of the devil are the only practicable laws? Whether the maxim, Every man for himself, and so forth, is the true regulative principle of all human affairs, outside of the home and the church? We have kept saying, lo, these many years, says Washington Gladden, that Christ's law would not work in practical life. Certain it is that the law of that kingdom which he came to overthrow does not work very well. Might it not be worth while to try the law so long discarded?