

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

When the morning paints the skies,
And the birds their songs renew,
Let me from my slumbers rise
Saying, "What would Jesus do?"

Countless mercies from above
Day by day my pathway strew;
Is it much to bless Thy love?
"Father, what would Jesus do?"

When I ply my daily task,
And the round of toil pursue,
Let me often brightly ask,
"What, my soul, would Jesus do?"

Would the foe my heart beguile,
Whispering thoughts and words untrue;
Let me to his subtlest wile
Answer, "What would Jesus do?"

When the clouds of sorrow hide
Mirth and sunshine from my view,
Let me, clinging to thy side,
Ponder, "What would Jesus do?"

Only let Thy love, O God,
Fill my spirit through and through,
Treading where my Saviour trod,
Breathing, "What would Jesus do?"

—Rev. E. H. Bickerth, in *Sunday at Home*

THE MAN OF THE HOUSE.

BY PANSY.

(Author of "Mrs. Solomon Smith Locking On.")

CHAPTER XV.

CLARKE POTTER.

From the pasting-room Reuben was called down-stairs to the marking and cutting-room. The queer little machine that bit the corners out of the covers so skillfully, had taken his fancy the day before, and to his great delight he was set to working it. Skill was required here as well as in pasting, but it was of a different sort, and Reuben caught the movement of the machine at once; his eyes brightened with every turn of the bright shears.

"You have a very correct eye," Mr. Barrows said to him, and then his face broadened in a smile.

His success was worse for him, in one sense, than his failure in the upper room had been, inasmuch as it moved certain of the others to envy. They did not approve of the city boy at the best; as if there were not fellows enough in the town to run the factory! This was the way they felt, and this, in some form, was what they growled to each other from time to time. Little attention did Reuben pay to them; so that he guided the skilful shears in biting out those square corners, it was all he asked. The very speed with which it worked was a delight to him. Reuben liked fast things.

Mr. Barrows was moving in and out, talking with first one workman then another, with a general eye to all that was going on. During one of his visits he was sharpening a pencil with a very choice, four-bladed knife, whose pearl handle and polished steel caught an admiring flash from the eye of every boy in the room. Near the busy shears he laid both down for a moment, while he explained to the man who was running the large machine just how a certain kind of board was to be cut. Then came a sudden call for him from the office, and he went away.

It was perhaps an hour afterwards that he came in hastily, and looked among the fast increasing piles of chips that was gathering around the little shears as Reuben still successfully chipped out the corners.

"Boys, have any of you seen anything of my knife?" he asked, and half a dozen pairs of hands paused in their work, and as many pairs of eyes looked up to his; innocent eyes, and certain mischievous ones. But they shook their heads. Before, however, one of the others could speak, Reuben's clear voice was heard:

"Yes, sir; I had a glimpse of it. It is in the upper pocket of my jacket; and the pencil you were sharpening is there too."

Mr. Barrows looked at him in astonishment it is true, but it did not compare with the amazement on the faces of the boys.

"Reuben," said the gentleman in a grave, inquiring voice, "did you fear that the knife and pencil would get lost, and so put them in your pocket for safe keeping?"

"No, sir; didn't put them there at all; but I know they are there, for I saw them

drop in." Then seeing that Mr. Barrows still waited with a grave and not altogether pleased face, he added: "I didn't touch them, sir, as true as I live."

"Will you explain, then, how they got into your pocket?"

"They were put in, sir."

"But not by your hands?"

"Not by my hands."

"Do you know anything about whose hands put them there?"

In that room, at that moment, busy place though it generally was, you could have heard a pin drop. Every boy was listening. One of them had a red face. For just a moment Reuben considered then he spoke.

"Yes, sir, I know just exactly whose hands put them there; but I kind of think it was done just for fun, without much thinking about, or meaning any harm, and if you will take them away, and excuse the hands that dropped them there, I will do."

"Boys," said Mr. Barrows turning from Reuben, "you hear what this new-comer says. He is a stranger to all of you, but I know him a little, and I have some reason for trusting him; still, I will be fair to every one of you, and give you a chance to express an opinion. Do you believe that he has told the truth about my knife and pencil?"

A chorus of voices answered him:

"Yes, sir; we know he has."

"Very well, then, I'll claim my property." And he went to the poor little almost worn-out jacket, and took from the pocket the four-bladed knife and pencil; as he did so, he said, "Now there is at least one boy in the room who has been guilty of a very mean trick, and ought to be ashamed of himself. I don't know which one it is, and don't want to. Since Reuben has asked it as a favor, I am willing to excuse the hands that put them in. I hope the owner of those hands will be manly enough to apologize for the mischief he tried to do, and say 'thank you,' for the kindness shown him."

Then Mr. Barrows went away. Reuben made the little machine bite out the corners as fast as it could, and did not raise his eyes. Not a boy spoke. After a little one of them whistled, then several of them laughed. Reuben worked on. It was not until the great bell in the church tower around the corner rang out its six-o'clock call to come home to supper, that the tongues of those boys were let loose. Then while they rushed for caps and coats and mittens, they all talked at once; not loud enough for Reuben to understand what they said, but loud enough for him to know they were talking about the knife and the pencil.

"One, the oldest and most lawless looking, lingered while Reuben hunted among the chips he had made for a bright bit of paper that he had a fancy to save for Beth. "Honor bright," said the boy, "do you know who put the knife in your pocket?" Reuben turned full bright eyes on him and answered quickly:

"Know as well as though you had told me all about it beforehand; you did it yourself."

Whereupon the boy gave a sharp little whistle. "What did I do it for?" he asked presently.

"I don't feel so sure of that. I thought maybe it was just for what some fellows call 'fun'; I don't see much fun about it, but I thought perhaps you did, and if you meant nothing but that, why there is no harm done."

"Suppose I meant a good deal more than that?"

"Then there's lots of harm done; you feel mean over it by this time, and folks don't like to feel mean; at least I don't."

"Why didn't you tell Mr. Barrows which of us did it?"

"I didn't see any good in that. He got his property and that is what he was after, and I proved all around that I had nothing to do with putting it where it didn't belong, and that was what I was after."

"Well," said the other, after a somewhat longer pause, "my name is Clarke Potter, and I didn't mean a single thing only to have some fun, and tease you a bit; I thought you was a spooney little fellow away from his mother, and we might as well have a little fun with you as not."

"All right," said Reuben gravely. "I'm a little fellow, that's a fact; look younger than I am, and I'm away from my mother. As for being spooney, I don't feel any too sure that I know just what it means down

here in the country. Perhaps I am a spooney, and perhaps I ain't; never mind. The knife is where it ought to be, and I guess you and I will be all right after this."

"I guess we will; I mean to stand up for you. Only I'd like to know this; are you one of the goody-goody sort?"

"Don't know them," said Reuben in utmost good humor. "What are they like?"

"Oh bother! you're not so green as all that. Are you one of them that thinks it is wrong to wink, or sneeze, or whistle, and that tells your mother every time you turn around, and says your prayers, and all that?"

The merry twinkle went out from Reuben's eyes, but he looked with clear, steady gaze at Clarke Potter, and answered slowly:

"I'm good at whistling, or bad, I don't know which to call it; mother says I almost deafen her sometimes. I like to tell things to her first-rate, when I don't think they will worry her too much; you see it is different with me from what it is with most boys; my father has been dead a long while, and I'm the only boy—in fact, I'm not a boy at all. I have to do what I can to support the family. I've been the man of the house these three years, so I have to think about things. As for saying prayers, I never did much of that—forgot it, you know—after I got too old to say them with mother; but one night a while ago I was in awful danger—didn't expect to get home alive—and I just asked God to help me, the same as if I could see him, you know, and he did it. Since then I've thought it would be a good plan to ask him about things."

Said Clarke: "You are a very queer chap! A very queer chap indeed!" he added gravely, after a slight pause. "But I'll stand up for you though thick and thin; I will, so. And when Clarke Potter makes a promise, it means something."

Work went on quietly after this for two days. The boys tried to tease Reuben occasionally, but there were two things in the way of their doing much in this line; Reuben was hard to tease; he was good-natured over what would have made many boys angry, he laughed when they expected him to frown, and whistled when they had planned for him to growl; besides, he soon discovered that Clarke Potter was a sort of leader among them, and when he said: "Look here, fellows, if you know when you're well off, you'll let that little chap alone; he's a friend of mine!" the boys knew he meant it.

Reuben's success in the box business was a surprise to himself. He learned rapidly. Not that he was any smarter than most bright boys of his age, but he had a mind to do his best all the time; and the box trade is, like most others, easy to learn when a wide-awake fellow goes to his best.

He discovered from Mr. Barrows' manner, rather than from any thing he said, that he was giving satisfaction, but on Saturday the gentleman spoke:

"Reuben, Mrs. Barrows thinks it would be a good plan for you to hire a woman to clean the little house, and get it ready for your mother. What do you think about it?"

Reuben's face brightened, then grew sober. "I'd like it first-rate," he said with his usual promptness; "only I don't know whether mother would."

"Why, she's the very one we are trying to please! what's in the way?"

"Well, you see, sir, it takes a good deal of money to move, and we are pretty short in that line, and I don't know but mother would think I ought to have saved the money and let her and Beth do the cleaning."

"I see," said Mr. Barrows, and he looked by no means displeased. After a few quiet minutes he spoke again. "There is a woman living down the lane from my house who wants a cord of wood split and carried into her wood shed. She works at house cleaning, and washing, and all that sort of thing, and she can't afford to pay money for her work. How would it do to turn a job or, are you too tired when six o'clock comes, to think of splitting wood by the light of a lantern?"

"Now was Reuben's face all bright.

"It will do splendidly!" he said with the eagerness of a boy who had a fortune left him. "If I can get the job, mother shall come to a clean house."

"You shall have the job," Mr. Barrows said with well satisfied face. "I promised her this morning I would look out for a boy of the right sort."

An hour afterwards Reuben was down-stairs piling boxes in the hall, ready for the delivery waggon, when Mr. Barrows drove up in his carriage, and jumped out, leaving little Miss Grace in charge.

"Shall I hold your horse, sir?" asked Reuben, bestowing admiring glances on the sleek coat of the handsome fellow.

"No; he is used to holding himself. He is better trained than most horses," Mr. Barrows answered, and passed into the office, where he stood talking with his foreman, and looking over some papers that were handed to him. Grace Barrows leaned out of the carriage and nodded to Reuben.

"How do you like boxes by this time?" she asked him.

"First-rate," he answered heartily, setting down ten of them at once with great care. "Don't you hold the reins when you are left in charge of a horse?"

"Oh, no; Samson never does anything but stand still until papa wants him to go."

"Is that his name? What a queer name for a horse."

"Isn't it a nice name? We call him that because he is so big. Isn't he big?" she said with pride. Just then a paper fluttered from the desk, out of the door, down the walk, stopping at the wheel of the carriage.

"Catch that, Reuben!" commanded Mr. Barrows, in a tone that said "It is an important paper." Reuben sprang after it.

What made a sudden whirl of wind just at that moment bring a great torn newspaper half way across the street and fling it into the very eyes of Samson? Why should a torn newspaper frighten a horse out of his senses? A great many questions can be asked, but who stands ready to answer them? Not Samson, certainly, for he hadn't time. Away he flew as if he had suddenly discovered that his four legs were long and made on purpose for running away. Not Reuben, for he had other business. His hand was on the hind spring, just where he had placed it in the act of stooping for the important paper, and as he did not let go, you can imagine, perhaps, just how fast he was travelling at that moment.

CHAPTER XVI.

REUBEN CONQUERS SAMSON.

Oh dear! What a boy was Reuben for getting himself into scrapes with horses! Here was he being whirled along too fast for thinking, one would suppose, while Mr. Barrows without his hat and with his coat-skirts flying in the air, followed on foot, shouting at the top of his lungs: "Stop that horse! Stop that horse!"

As if one could stop the wind! Men came out from their store doors and stared and winked, and by that time Sam-on had passed them. Meantime a white frightened little heap was curled up in the closest corner of the back seat. This was Grace Barrows.

"Don't you be frightened, Gracie; I'm coming."

This was what she heard in the cheeriest of tones coming from somewhere near the ground behind her. Sure enough! Reuben had not clung to the hind spring for nothing. He had climbed like a monkey to the back of the carriage, and was hard at work with hands and teeth trying to unfasten the curtain; all the time he worked, he kept up a cheery conversation with Grace Barrows.

"Don't you be scared, Gracie; I'll be there in a jiff. Can't you catch hold of the reins? Then perhaps he will stop."

"I can't," said the white, trembling lips. "The horse has dropped away down at the side."

"That so? Well, never you mind; this old buckle is giving way now; in another second I'll be there and I'll get the reins."

"O Reuben! Do you suppose you can stop him?"

"Of course I can. You'll see how quick he will mind when he has to."

What lovely music Reuben Watson Stone's voice was to poor frightened little Gracie! Another vigorous twitch to the strap, and Reuben had clambered over the seat, and was reaching over the dash-board for the reins, all the time talking to Samson in a good-natured tone:

"Old fellow, good old fellow, don't be scared; nothing is the matter; it is just a notion of yours. You needn't go so fast as that; plenty of time, you are scaring your little mistress, and that is mean of you!"

At last he had the reins gathered firmly in his two stout young hands, and had