

hop about the ward. His hip had been broken, and he was hardly likely ever to walk without lameness; the most the kind doctor hoped for was that he would not be very lame as he grew stronger. Steve wouldn't have minded much if he had been told that he was to be an inmate of the hospital for life. In fact he would have liked it. He liked the doctor, he liked the nurses, he liked the other sick children—above all he liked John Grainger's visits on Sundays, and these, no doubt, would cease when presently Steve went back to Greek street.

Mrs. Brady had come one Sunday, and her visit that day had excluded John Grainger's. It had disturbed Steve so much that the doctor had barred her admittance afterwards. Steve's soul was so proud and sensitive as though he had grown in a palace instead of in a gutter, and it fretted him dreadfully that Mrs. Brady should only think of him as having led Micky into danger, instead of having saved him at the cost of his own suffering and permanent disablement. Poor Mrs. Brady was quite kind-hearted, but chronically miserable, her burden being too great for her nervous shoulders. It was always a relief to her when she could blame someone.

'Not that woman again, please, Sister,' were the doctor's orders, 'but the big man, whose voice is like the hum of bees, as often as he comes.'

John Grainger did not seem to get tired of coming as the weeks grew to months. Sunday after Sunday he sat by Steve's bed in the ward, or by the open window when summer at length arrived and Steve was able to sit in a basket chair and look out on the courtyard with the few beds of hardy flowers in its shabby turf. In those visits it was wonderful how much the boy came to know about the man. All the simple quiet life, with its joys and its sorrows, he came to read like a book. He knew that John Grainger had lost his wife and son and was lonely without them for ever. He knew the house with its green porch, standing back from the road, where the windows had green outside the shutters. There was a little kitchen, and a bedroom and a parlor, and all day while John Grainger was away Trusty, his collyie, lay in the shelter of the porch and guarded his master's property. In the parlor there was an old man and woman, in a shell house, one of whom came out for fine weather, the other, with an umbrella, for wet. There was a fine glass ball with a little house in it, and when you shook it the snowstorm raged inside it. There were Scripture pieces on the wall in sampler stitch, and the most beautiful fruit in wax under a glass shade on the table. Outside there was a little kitchen and flower garden with a hedge of sweet briar, and there were beehives under a roof of thatch on a stool by the house-wall. Beyond were the fields where John Grainger earned his living by growing flowers, fruit and vegetables. Yesterday it might be daffodils, to-day asparagus, lettuce and young peas, to-morrow strawberries.

John was an epitome of the seasons as they came. He had begun by bringing violets and daffodils; then came anemones and little sprays of lilies of the valley. One Sunday there was a bush of flowering may, big as a Christmas tree. Now this last Sunday of all there were roses.

This day Steve presented a very different aspect from the dirty and ragged boy who had come in the day of the accident. He supposed they had burnt his old clothes. Anyhow, it was a pleasure to find himself in a clean linen smock, with knickerbockers underneath, and stout shoes and grey woollen stockings, even if he had to share them with Paddy Brady presently.

'Tis the last Sunday I'll be comin' to see 'ee here,' said John Grainger.

'Yes,' said Steve, and in spite of him a big tear escaped down his cheeks. Life wouldn't be more tolerable in Greek street now that he was lame.

'Ye'll be ready noon a-Wednesday. I've got strawberries for Covent Garden, an'll be back by that time.'

'I'm to see you again, then?' said Steve, with an uplifting of the heart.

'Bless 'ee, didn't think I was goin' for ever?'

'Shall I see you in Greek street, then?' asked Steve, with a new hope.

'Th'art not goin' to Greek street no more. Th'art goin' home wi' me.'

'With you!'

'Aye, little lad, place of him I lost. You're nobody's bairn, they tell't me over yonder, but you're mine. We'll never leave each other.'

Steve closed his eyes and lay back. At first the joy seemed too much for him. 'Oh, sir!' was all he could say.

'Not, sir, Steve, but Daddy,' said John Grainger, taking one of Steve's thin hands and crushing it between his own.

Then Dr. Heys came in and smiled at them, and the two Sisters came up and looked, and smiled and went away, and during the rest of the visit neither Steve nor John Grainger spoke, but sat hand in hand with a bashful delight in each other.

After three days packed full of the painfully sweet anticipation, Steve was carried out in his new father's arms, with his crutch across his shoulder, and set in a comfortable old straw chair in a great empty-roofed waggon smelling deliciously of strawberries. A basket of strawberries was placed in his lap, and John Grainger, sitting just under the tilt of the waggon, drove Dobbin at a walking pace through the dreary miles of streets.

But at last they passed the last row of squalid dwellings and the last of the brick-fields and came out among the fields, and then Dobbin broke into a steady trot, and the air grew purer and sweeter, and there were wide fields and woods, and sometimes they passed a bridge over a stream, or they went through a village of the most delightful cottages, bowered in roses.

It was all more exquisite than Steve could have believed possible, though he had listened greedily to the tales of happy children who had gone on Sunday-school treats into the country.

About four o'clock in the afternoon they reached the cottage of Steve's dreams, and he was set down in the little flagged yard while Dobbin was taken out and turned into his own paddock, and Trusty came and laid his head on Steve's knee.

'He fretted sore when little Willie was taken,' said John Grainger, watching the dog.

Afterwards he carried Steve into the cottage, and setting him down in the chim-

ney-corner began to light the fire and boil the kettle for tea.

'You'll do all this, lad, i' the time to come, an' mak' the tay when Dobbin an' me turns the corner o' the road,' he said.

But Steve was looking about him in bewildered happiness. The birds were singing in the little cottage garden without, and there was a sleepy hum of bees, and the cottage was flooded through its open door with sunshine and warmth. Steve felt as though he had died and wakened up in heaven. Were all the days to come to be really like this?

John Grainger had boiled a generous supply of eggs, had made the tea hot, strong and sweet, and had set a cup of it, with a great slab of home-made bread, served with honey, before Steve. All the time he was gravely smiling to himself.

'Seems as though Willie were come back,' he said at last. 'It was lonely here this goodish while back.'

Without a Guide.

Several dreadful accidents occurred recently in the Alps, involving loss of life and widespread sorrow. In each instance an adventurous climber attempted to ascend lofty and icy peaks, by perilous paths, without the help of a guide. These ambitious young men were warned of the dangers which they dared, and of the risks which they incurred, but eager, light-hearted and confident of themselves they laughed at warning, and perished on the icy slopes or at the foot of some deep precipice. Is not the moral course of multitudes fitly symbolized by the incidents of disaster to which we have briefly adverted? To attempt the work and the journey of life, involving hardship, peril, suffering, trial and assailment of a manifold sort; to set out on a course that may last through scores of years, and yet which may, without notice, summarily end; to do all this without availing oneself of the assistance and knowledge of a guide, when one is at hand—is not this a foolish and heedless policy? Does it not forebode ruin?

There stands along the highway of life at every turning point a guide-board, containing simple and urgent directions taken from a Book which is a lamp for human feet and a light for all earthly paths. There comes to every instructed child, to every thoughtful youth, to every awakened soul, at certain times especially, if not every day, a divine voice, offering companionship, comfort, wise counsels, help in trouble, and guidance through perplexed and tangled thickets of difficulty. To those who trust in Jesus Christ as a divine Lord the assurance comes from his own lips, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' Why venture, then, along untrodden defiles and slippery roads, alone and unaided, when he offers safety, instruction, and help, along with his own companionship for every step of the way from earth to heaven?—'S.S. Times.'

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