

"Thomas," called Mr. Prindle from the parlor.

"Yes, sir," answered Thomas, leaving his work and proceeding quietly to the parlor door.

"Just come inside for a minute. I want to speak to you."

Tommy felt his heart beat very quickly as he obeyed his master and entered the snug little room. Little Flo's eyes were upon him, and he seemed to read in them the success of her cause.

"My little girl has spoken to you this afternoon, I believe," opened Mr. Prindle quietly, "and from what she heard from you she has inferred that you have a sad story behind this disobedient act of yours this morning, which was partly the cause of your refusal to do as you were told. Is this so?"

"Yes, sir," answered Tommy, the blood rushing to his face, "but I would rather not tell what it is, sir."

"Well, I will not force you against your will in this matter; but I think, perhaps, if you did tell it I should feel inclined to overlook the dismissal I gave you this morning—that is, if your action seems as brave and noble as my little girl considers it."

"I will tell you all I know, sir, and that is that twelve months ago we—father, mother, and myself—were pretty well off, and lived in a neat little house some distance from here and were very happy. But somehow or other, father seemed to me to be getting stupid and ill, and he used to get cross and cuff me for nothing. Mother worried about him very much and grew pale and ill; but father grew worse, and used her very cruelly. I have seen him knock her with his fists, and beat her with the first thing he could get hold of. And presently we had to leave the house and came to Baker's Rents, and there we had one room and scarcely any furniture. Mother was dying, so the parish doctor said, and father was still a drunkard. And then, one night—I shall never forget it, sir—father went quite mad, and threw himself out of the window, and was picked up dead. The shock nearly killed poor mother, and the neighbors said it was the old, old story; and when I asked what that was, they said 'drink.' So I made up my mind then, sir, that I'd never touch it as long as I lived, and I never will. I'm poor enough, and mother's ill enough, and we both want money and food bad enough; but I've signed the pledge, and God helping me, I'll keep it. Mother told me to stand my ground, sir, and keep my pledge, and hold to my promises in the face of the world, and I'll do it, sir. My mother's all I've got in the world to show me what I ought to do, and I am all she has to cue for, and I'll stick to her through thick and thin. That's all I have to say, sir." There were tears in Tommy's eyes when he finished his speech, and there were tears in Mrs. Prindle's eyes and in Flo's eyes too.

Mr. Prindle wasn't looking at Tommy just then, but his voice sounded husky when he spoke again, and we may infer that if he had no water in his eyes, he was touched by what Tommy had said.

"That will do," he said: "you shall not go. I admire the boy who loves his mother, and if I thought every teetotaler was as noble as you are, I'm not sure that I wouldn't become one myself."

"Oh, thank you, sir," said Tommy as he retreated from the room; and he had a good cry—for joy this time—directly he got outside.

There was rejoicing in Baker's Rents that night when Tommy arrived home and told his mother what had passed, and together they knelt down and thanked God for giving Tommy strength to stand his test, and prayed for help to sustain him in the future.

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Five years have passed away.

Tommy is still with Mr. Prindle, not as "boy" but as shonman, and Mr. Prindle very often declares "that there never was such a boy, and he cannot think there ever will be."

Little Flo has now signed the pledge, and is using all her best endeavors to bring her father round to accept teetotal principles, and to discontinue the bottled liquor traffic. She hopes to succeed and with Tommy's assistance no doubt she will in time. The friendship between the two young abstainers is, I fancy, ripening into a deeper and stronger affection.

Mrs. Anderson does not live in Baker's Rents now, but in a more healthy and pretty locality. She loves her boy more than ever, and sees in him the stay and support of her declining years, and one who will never forget his widowed mother and her injunction to "stand your ground."

Of course there is a moral to this story; not a large one, however, and I would wish every boy and girl to lay it to heart. It is this—Never be afraid to show your colors. If you are, prosperity

may follow for a time, but it will not be lasting. Do as Tommy Anderson did—stand your ground; and though adversity may be your lot, that, too, will only be for a time, and in the end everybody will admire and be proud of the boy or girl who is true to their pledge.—*J. F. Nicholls in the Temperance Record.*

Our Basket.

JEWELS.

"Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent, and downcast eyes,
We may discern—unseen before—
A path to higher destinies."

—*The Ladder of St. Augustine.*

Enthusiasm is the blossom of which all true greatness is the fruit—imagination the germ of all glorious deeds; and few were distinguished for high practical greatness who could not refer to a childhood of enthusiasm. It is the romance of the boy that becomes the heroism of the man.

It is a great misfortune to have a fretful disposition. It takes the fragrance out of one's life, and leaves only weeds where a cheerful disposition would cause flowers to bloom. The habit of fretting is one that grows rapidly unless it be sternly repressed; and the best way to overcome it is to try always to look on the cheerful side of things.

BITS OF TINSEL.

"Now, children, about what shall I talk to-night?" asked a prosy Sunday-school superintendent. "About three minutes," said a little girl. The witty answer convulsed the church with laughter.

"Fish?" asked the waiter of a visitor at the seaside hotel. "Wall, I dunno," was the reply; "wait till I get suthin ter eat, and then I'll talk with yer about goin' fishin'."

"I'd have you to know, sir," said an irate citizen to a man on the street, "that my wife is a high-toned woman, and I won't allow you to say a word against her." "High-toned," replied the other, "I should say she is high-toned; you can hear her a mile when she is quarrelling with the neighbors."

A woman having some bodily ailment, called upon a doctor to get his advice. After examining her minutely, he gave her a fly-plaster, and told her to put it on her chest. On calling next day, the doctor asked if she had applied the plaster to her chest, and felt any the better of it. "No," replied the woman, "I hadna a chest in the house, and I elashed it on the auld tea-box."

A Walnut Hills lady had been entertaining a friend of her husband, and the next day her little girl said to her: "Mamma, ain't we cannibals?" "Of course not," was the reply; "why do you ask that?" "Because I heard papa say we had Mr. Jenkins for dinner yesterday."

How differently the same sentiment sounds when put in another way. The story is told of a teacher, who was reviewing her class in the last words of great men, and asked a little girl: "What were the last words of Webster?" expecting the answer, "I still live." To her amazement a little girl called out: "I ain't dead yet."

Doctor (who has been sent for at 2 a.m.)—"Madame, pray send at once for the clergyman, and, if you want to make your will, for the lawyer." Madame (horrified)—"Good gracious! Is it so dangerous, Doctor?" Doctor—"Not a bit of it; but I don't want to be the only fool who has been disturbed in his sleep for nothing."

A backwoodsman promised to send the minister fifty pounds of maple sugar for marrying him. Time passed on, and no maple sugar arrived to sweeten the minister's household. Some months later he saw the newly-married husband in town and ventured to remind him. "My friend, you did not send the maple sugar promised." With a saddened countenance the man looked up and replied, "To tell you the truth, governor, she ain't worth it."

One of the British servants at Montreal asked the hotel clerk to tell him of a good locality to catch butterflies. Another taking a horse and buggy at a livery-stable, as the evening was chilly, was asked by the groom if he would like a couple of buffaloes (robes). "No," replied the scientist; "no, we would much prefer horses."