

A PLUCKY BOY.

The boy marched straight up to the counter.

"Well, little man," said the merchant complacently—he had just risen from such a glorious dinner—"what will you have to-day?"

"O, please, sir, mayn't I do some work for you?"

It might have been the pleasant blue eyes that did it, for the man was not accustomed to parley with such small gentlemen, and Tommy wasn't seven yet, and small of his age at that.

There were a few wisps of hair along the edges of the merchant's temples, and looking down on the appealing face, the man pulled at them he gave the ends of his cravat a brush, and then his hands travelled down into his vest pocket.

"Do some work for me, eh? Well, now, about what sort of work might your small manship calculate to be able to perform? Why, you can't look over the counter?"

"O, yes, I can, and I'm growing, please, growing fast—there, see if I can't look over the counter?"

"Yes, by standing on your toes—are they coppered?"

"What, sir?"

"Why, your toes. Your mother could not keep you in shoes if they were not."

"She can't keep me in shoes anyhow, sir," and the voice hesitated.

The man took pains to look over the counter. It was too much for him—he couldn't see the little toes. Then he went all the way around.

"I thought I should need a microscope," he said gravely, "but I reckon if I get close enough I can see what you look like."

"I'm older than I'm big, sir," was the neat rejoinder. Folks say that I am very small of my age."

"What might your age be, sir?" responded the man with emphasis.

"I am almost seven," said Tommy, with a look calculated to impress even five feet nine. "You see my mother hasn't anybody but me, and this morning I saw here crying because she could not find five cents in her pocket-book, and she thinks the boy who took the ashes stole it—and—I have—not—had—any breakfast, sir." The voice again hesitated, and tears came to the blue eyes.

"I reckon I can help you to a breakfast, my little fellow," said the man, feeling in his vest pocket. "There, will that quarter do?" The boy shook his head.

"Mother wouldn't let me beg, sir," was the simple answer.

"Humph! Where is your father?"

"We never heard of him, sir, after he went away. He was lost, sir, in the steamer *City of Boston*."

"Ah! that's bad. But you are a plucky little fellow, anyhow. Let me see," and he puckered up his mouth and looked straight down into the boy's eyes, which were looking straight into his. "Sanders," he asked, addressing a clerk, who was rolling up and writing on parcels, "is Cash No. 4 still sick?"

"Dead, sir; died last night," was the low reply.

"Ah, I'm sorry to hear that. Well, here's a youngster that can take his place."

Mr. Saunders looked up slowly—then he put his pen behind his ear—then his glances traveled curiously from Tommy to Mr. Towers.

"Oh! I understand," said the latter, "yes, he is small, very small indeed, but I like his pluck. What did No. 4 get?"

"Three dollars, sir," said the still astonished clerk.

"Put this boy down four. There, youngster, give him your name and run home and tell your mother you have got a place at four dollars a week. Come back on Monday, and I'll tell you what to do. Here's a dollar in advance, I'll take it out of your first week. Can you remember?"

"Work, sir—work all the time?"

"As long as you deserve it, my man."

Tommy shot out of that shop. If ever broken stairs that had a twist in the whole flight, creaked and trembled under the weight of a small boy, or perhaps, as might be better stated, laughed and chuckled on account of a small boy's good luck, those in that tenement house enjoyed themselves thoroughly that morning.

"I've got it mother! I'm took! I'm a cash boy! Don't you know when they take parcels the clerks call 'Cash?'—well, I'm that. Four dollars a week! and the man said I had real pluck—

courage, you know.—And here's a dollar for breakfast; and don't you ever cry again, for I'm the man of the house now."

The house was only a little ten-by-fifteen room, but how those blue eyes did magnify it! At first the mother looked confounded; then she looked—well, it passes my power to tell how she did look, as she took him in her arms and nuzzled him, kissed him, the tears streaming down her cheeks. But they were tears of thankfulness.—*From an English Journal.*

Our Casket.

BITS OF TINSEL.

Why is a horse the most curious feeder in the world? Because he eats best when he has not a bit in his mouth.

An Irish magistrate asked a prisoner if he was married. "No," replied the man. "Then," replied his worship, "it is a good thing for your wife."

A little girl said to her mother one day: "Mother, I feel nervous." "Nervous?" said the mother, "what is nervous?" "Why, it's being in a hurry all over."

The man who lost both arms in the machinery proposes to strike, as he has noticed that whenever there is a strike they put on new hands.

There is a farmer in Yorkshire who has a mile of children. His name is Furlong, and he has four boys and four girls. Eight furlongs make one mile.

A little fellow was eating some bread and milk, when he turned around to his mother, and said. "Oh, mother, I'm full of glory! There was a sunbeam on my spoon and I swallowed it!"

A rich miser was offered the plate on the occasion of a charity collection. "I have nothing," said he. "Then *take something, sir,*" said the lady collector; "you know I am begging for the poor."

The travelling showmen are exhibiting three skeletons of Queiteau—his skeleton when he was a boy, his skeleton before he shot Garfield, and his skeleton after he was hanged.

A Philadelphian went to a physician with what he had feared was a hopeless case of heart disease, but was relieved on finding out that the creaking sound which he had heard at every deep breath was caused by a little pulley on his patent suspenders.

While the American army was in camp at Cambridge, Mass. Gen. Washington heard the colored soldiers could not be depended upon as sentries. He determined to ascertain the truth or falsity of the report by a personal investigation.

So one night, when the pass-word was "Cambridge," he went outside the camp, put on an overcoat, and then approached a colored sentinel.

"Who goes there?" cried the sentinel.

"A friend," replied Washington.

"Friend, advance unarmed, and give the countersign," said the colored man.

Washington came up, and said "Roxbury."

"No, sah," was the response.

"Medford," said Washington.

"No, sah," returned the colored soldier.

"Charlestown," said Washington.

The colored man immediately exclaimed, "I tell you, Massa Washington, no man go by here 'out he say Cambridge!"

Father Matthew frequently used the following illustration: A very fat old duck went out early one morning in pursuit of worms, and, after being out all day, she succeeded in filling her crop full of worms, she had the misfortune to be met by a fox, who at once proposed to take her life to satisfy his hunger. The old duck appealed, argued, implored, remonstrated. She said to the fox. "You cannot be so wicked and hard-hearted as to take the life of a harmless duck merely to satisfy the cravings of hunger?" She exhorted him against the commission of so great a sin, and begged him not to stain his soul with innocent blood. When the fox could stand her cant no longer, he said: "Out upon you, madam, with all your fine feathers, you're a pretty thing to lecture me for taking life to satisfy my hunger. Is not your own crop full of worms? You'd stroy more lives in one day than I do in a month." This was Father Matthew's reply to the makers and vendors of liquor when they charged him with spoiling their trade and taking the bread from the lips of their children.