



The Family Circle.

A CONSECRATED LIFE.

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my intellect, and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store.

Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

—Francis Ridley Havergal.

YOUNG SIX-FOOT, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM.

BY MRS. CHARLES GARNETT,

(Author of "Little Rainbow, A Navy Boy,"
"Lost and Found: A Navy Winter Tale," Etc.)

CHAPTER I.

The ganger stood with his legs apart and his hands thrust deep into the pockets of his velvet shooting coat. He was a broadly made, powerful man, with a red, determined face and grizzled hair. A face to dread when ablaze with passion; but pleasant enough now, as, with a quizzical half-smile, he looked down on the little figure before him. The ganger was not a tall man, but he looked so in comparison with the child.

A very small thin boy he was, with a little pecky face and quick eyes. He waited, with an independent, self-reliant air and an amusing bearing of equality and brotherhood for his answer.

"So that's what you want, young Six-foot, is it? Work on this here dock? And what can you do?"

"Anything a chap like me has to do."

"Ah; but then, you see, we have no lad your size; most of 'em would make two of you."

"Try me, master; I must get on somewhere, and mother and me is tired of being on tramp with two children. Do try me; I'm used to carrying and fetching, and spragging and points, and such-like. We've lived on both lines and other docks, but I'm main fond o' horses, and I expect I'll soon be big enough for a driver."

The ganger burst into a hearty laugh, for just then a team of the gigantic creatures came past, led by their driver, in correct costume of blue-plush waistcoat, adorned with large pearl buttons, knee-breeches, and blue woollen stockings. The horses, too, were as smart as horses could be made; their skins shone like satin, their tails were tied up in knobs with straw, and their manes and forelocks were plaited in many bands with gaily colored braids.

"See, Punch!" cried the ganger; "this little chap's come about a driver's place. Will he do for Curley's job? he's got the sack this morning."

"Nay," returned Punch, smiling as he too looked down on the small boy. "I think he's hardly big enough for tipping yet he'd soon get killed; though Old Bess unhook herself a deal cleverer than Curley could do it."

The child, ashamed and daunted by the men's laughter, had much ado to keep back his tears, and it was in a choking voice he mumbled—"I said some day when I was big enough."

"Well, well, my lad, you'll grow when you get some more beef and pudding into you, no fear. Here Bill!" called the ganger "don't you want a lad?"

A burly blacksmith was passing with a sack with tools in it flung across his shoulder.

"Yes."

"Will this young Six-foot do?"

"Not likely. He's so small; he's only a very temporary little 'un."

"I'm not; I'm a right navy. I was born on Wansdale Harbor Works, I were; ask my mother."

"You'll have to give him a trial, Ben," laughed the ganger.

"All right, young shaver; come along," said the blacksmith, smiling.

"Thank you, master. I think we've settled nicely."

"Well, we shall see that on Saturday. You'll get what you earn, and not a farthing more."

"All right," and, with a nod, the boy turned away towards the forge.

And so young Six-foot was engaged. He

miles to and from their work each day to reach their homes.

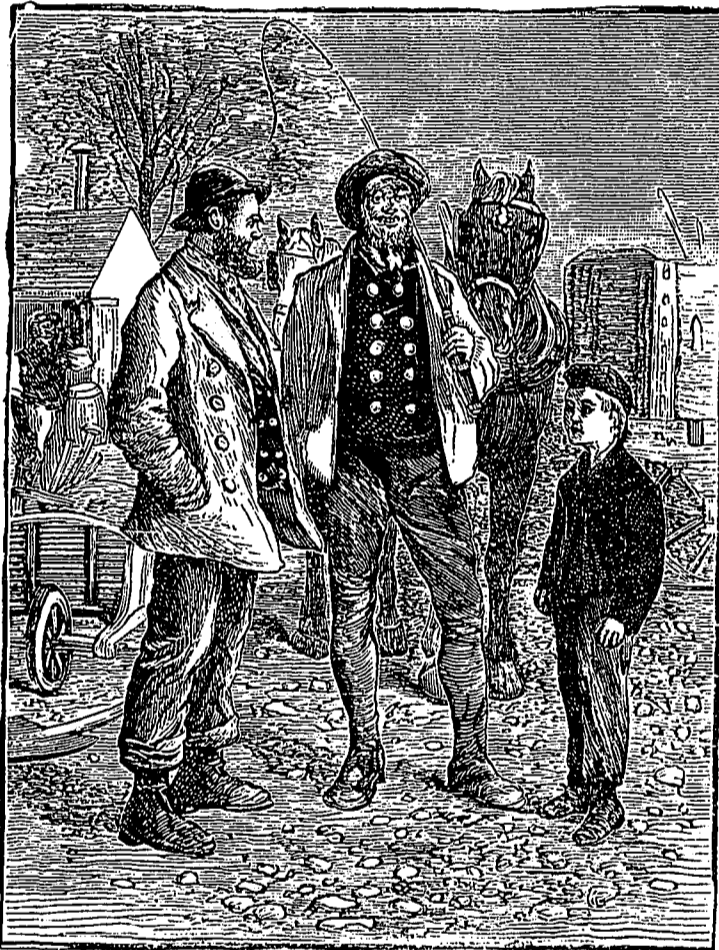
But Six-foot was not watching the workmen, as one white figure after another lessened in the distance. He was gazing at a woman slowly approaching him up a side road from a gray farmhouse, which stood away by itself in the fields. It was a large, rambling place, quickly tumbling into decay when, fortunately for the owner, the navvies came into the neighborhood. He thereupon roughly patched it up, and let it out in three tenements at the rent each of a good house. The building was at least a mile from the works, but he readily met with tenants.

The woman had a basket on her arm. Another minute young Six-foot was sure who it was, and ran to meet her. Her face lit up with a smile as she heard his shout and saw him coming.

"Give me the basket, mother! Look here; here's my week's wage. Have you seen old master? Can we have that there place?"

"Yes; he says now you're in regular work we can; but he'll do nothing at it only put a fireplace in and one window. He has them left over from there. And she pointed back to the farmhouse.

"What's the rent?"



was not strong, and did not always find it easy work, carrying the picks back after they had been sharpened, or sorting out correctly a number of chisels when he took them to the stone-masons' sheds; but he was such a willing business-like little fellow, and so small, that in a rough sort of way he grew to be a kind of pet amongst the men, and being pronounced by Ben on the pay day, "Worth as much as any boy he'd had," nine shillings were pushed out to young Six-foot who had to reach up to take them from the little wooden ledge, as his week's wages. He at once walked soberly away up the road which crossed the hill behind the works. When he reached its brow he turned and looked back.

He saw the blacksmiths' shop, the masons' and wheelwrights' sheds, the stables, and the pay-office clustered together far below him. A swarming gray crowd of men, every moment lessening, as passing the pay-window they dispersed in various directions, gave life to the scene. Not far off from the other buildings were two rows of wooden huts, their roofs covered with felt, tarred black; but these were not enough to lodge a sixth of the navvies, and therefore every cottage in the village below, and every building which could be turned into a habitation for miles around, was let to them. Some were even obliged to walk five or six

"Two shillin' a week."

"That's a lot. Won't he do a bit at the door, mother?"

"No," she said wearily. "Everything seems against us like."

"Nay, mother; I'll take the door in hand. It's a good job we've gotten work and a house to ourselves at last."

"We've been a weary while in finding on it. Dear me! I never thought when I married your father I sud ha' come to this. I'd as good two feather-beds as anybody could lie on, and to-night we shall have naught better nor straw."

"To-night, mother? Are us going in to-night?" the little boy asked joyfully.

"Yes; besent the winder and fireplace up first thing, and they'll be fixed by now. If we stop till Monday, old granny'll mak' us pay another week's rent. So we'll slit this afternoon. Mrs. Nobby's given me a scrubbing-brush, and you'll get me some sand-stone off the quarry."

"Yes, mother; and we've got a kettle and a pail of our own, you know."

But the poor woman was too tired to answer the boy; and when they reached "Granny's," as the old woman's cottage was generally called, where for the past week they had been lodging, she was so exhausted that she sank feebly into a chair; and when a little girl of six years old and a sturdy

boy of four rushed in and fell like two young wolves on the basket, she could only say, "Fred, give 'em some, and save the rest for to-morrow."

"Now, children, behave, or you'll get none," said Six-foot sternly. Paying far more attention to their brother than they had done to their mother, the children sat down on the floor and waited until he had made his mother a cup of tea, and divided half the bread and cold potatoes and pudding as he thought right. Then, with an injunction to his mother, to "Stay still," young Six-foot, intrusting the pail to his sister's care, and carrying the kettle and brush himself, set off for their new house.

It was a stone cow-house in the corner of a distant field. A trough and old pump stood near. Outside, a rough chimney and a small window, which consisted of four panes of glass, were to be seen. Inside, the walls were rough and unplastered. The room was open to the rafters and slated roof; and the floor might have been earth, so little did the pavement show. In one corner of the place was a pile of rotten wood apparently old stackrests.

"Now, young 'un," said Six-foot, "this here's our house, and we've got to clean it. You be off, Priss, to fetch sand-stones—good rubbers, mind. You, John Willum, stay with me."

So the work began. Three hours later, Ben and Punch, who were strolling out, accompanied by a very small dog with very large ears, saw smoke arising from the lonely cow-house. Snuff ran forward, and his glad bark brought the two men to the spot. A cheerful fire was glowing within the bars of the fireplace; the floor was cleanly scoured and sanded; the wood was neatly piled in one corner, all but a long, square piece which, resting on some bricks, formed a seat by the wall.

"The children have gone to fetch mother," said Six-foot; "and when she comes I'm off to get some straw for a bed. This is our house, mates."

"Ain't you going to whiten the walls?" asked Ben.

"No; I can't afford, not yet. I must have some bits o' furniture first."

"Well, you would be better for a chair or two and mayhap a table," remarked Punch.

"Yes; and it's very unfortunat, but Daddy Green's selling off at huts to-day, and his sticks are only poor 'uns. Now next week we might ha' managed to have bought some. However—here's mother!" which was the signal of departure to Ben and Punch.

Six-foot had been twice to a farm at some distance off, and had dragged home, with much labor and many stoppings, two trusses of straw, for which he paid a shilling. His mother had arranged it in one corner of the room, and covered it with an old quilt and her only shawl. Here Priss and John William were already sleeping, and Six-foot and his mother were just going to join them when the door, to which there was no lock, was suddenly thrown open.

"Give us a light," cried a voice. "We'd hard work to tie 'em on." And there stood a hand-cart with some dark objects piled on it, and Punch and Ben with faces streaming with perspiration.

"Lend a hand, Six-foot," said Punch.

"There's one chair; there's another; here's a table; that's a bed-stock, sacking wants mending tho.' There are some pots and cups and plates—oddments, missus—in this box."

"Have you been to Daddy's sale, mates?"

"Yes, we have; but this was the last lot; we was only just in time."

Six-foot whispered something to his mother, and then said, with a business-like air, laying two shillings on the table, "This is on account, mates. Happen as I'm in regular work you'll trust me for the rest till next pay."

The men looked at one another and then laughed—"Of all the old uns. It's too good!"

"Nay," cried Ben, giving Six-foot such a slap on the back that it sent him half across the floor as he thrust the money back into the child's hand; "you take that and travel, my son."

What with the stinging in his back, what with happiness, what with weariness, Six-foot burst into tears; but no one saw the tell-tale drops save his mother, for the two navvies were already racing the hand-cart home. Happy little Six-foot! he dreamt that night the house was white-washed and there were bright pictures on the walls!

(To be Continued.)