

"No, we must give it to him as soon as we see him," said Abel gravely. Whether it is his or not I don't pretend to say, but it certainly isn't yours, not yet mine, Nemo."

The moorland road looked very different in the bright morning sunshine from what it had done the night before. Nemo sat in the cart, watching the waving leaves of the bracken, and gazing at the golden moss and harebells by the wayside, starting now and again as a number of grouse flew suddenly out of the heather and crossed the road above their heads.

After about two miles of this lonely road they came in sight of houses, and soon afterwards they passed through a small village. The houses were built of grey stone, and there was a small plantation of dark fir-trees, which sheltered the village from the northerly wind. They stopped at one or two cottages, and a few children ran out to look at the basket-cart, but no one bought anything, nor would they sell them any milk for their breakfast.

"Never mind, Nemo," said Abel; "it is only three miles to Fairburn, and we shall get plenty of all sorts there, and do lots of business too, I hope; it's Fairburn Fair to-day, you know."

So they ate some biscuits and salt meat, a large slice of which Nemo gave to the poor wounded dog, and Abel filled a jug with water at the village pump, and then they went on their way again.

Nemo had taken a great fancy for the poor dog; he scarcely took his eyes off him during the next three miles, but was constantly stroking and patting him. He talked to him as if he could understand all he said, and as the dog lay beside him, he had such a wise, knowing face, that it would have been difficult for any one to believe that he did not know all that was going on.

"You are an old dear of a dear pet, that's what you are!" said Nemo. "I do wish you weren't going away, I shall never forget you—never, and you mustn't ever forget me."

"Well, take your leave of him," said Abel, after a time, "for here's Fairburn come in sight, and at the first house in Fairburn we shall find his master waiting for us."

Then Nemo threw his arms round the dog's neck, and buried his face in its shaggy coat, as if he could not bear to let him go.

The first house in Fairburn was a newly built one, of white brick, quite in the modern style, with a small bow window, a straight gravel path leading to the door, and a neat bit of garden in front. An old man was raking the round bed in the centre of the grass-plot, and two little girls were weeding the border, but no one else was to be seen.

Abel stopped the donkey and looked round, but no one was in sight.

"We can't have missed him, Nemo," he said. "We've come straight along the road; but we must wait a few minutes, maybe he'll turn up."

They waited nearly half an hour, but no one appeared. The old man and the little girls came out to look at the baskets, and bought one to put their weeds in, but the owner of the dog was nowhere to be seen.

"We must go on, Nemo," said Abel at last, "or we shall get nothing done, perhaps we shall see him in the fair."

Nemo's large eyes were opened very wide that day as he watched the busy scene around him. The fair was held in a large open square, in the middle of the town, and every spot in this market-place had been carefully marked out, and each show as it arrived had a special place given to it. There was no room in the square for the basket-cart, but Abel moved slowly up and down the streets lying between the marketplace and the railway station, and sold many a basket to the country people as they came in from the villages round to attend the great Fairburn Fair.

A constant stream of people passed them all day long, and yet, amongst the crowd, Abel failed to catch sight of the face which he most wanted to see, the face of the man who had spoken to him on the moor the night before.

The dog lay quite still all day at the bottom of the cart, and seemed to be in great pain, for it moaned a good deal from time to time. Abel was afraid sometimes that it would die, and was anxious to restore it to its master, and he was still more wishful to get rid of the gold ring which he had found under the cart after the man had gone.

But though they lingered about the fair the next day, until the booths were all taken down, and the last caravan had started, and until nothing was left in the marketplace but straw and paper and dirt, still the man did not appear.

Abel made inquiries in Fairburn, and found that there was a large village about four miles away, on the northern

road, and he determined to make for that village before night came on.

It was a beautiful road down which they went, shaded by large trees almost all the way, and on either side were banks covered with ferns and wild-flowers. The village was named Evorton, and a pretty place they found it.

In the midst of the village was a pretty lodge, and a carriage drive leading up to some large house, and massive iron gates brightly gilded, and shining like gold in the afternoon sun.

Close by the lodge, and between the gates and the road, was an open space covered by soft green grass, and only broken by the road leading up to the lodge-gates. On this quiet sward Abel and Nemo saw a number of people gathered together. They were surprised to see such a crowd assembled in a country place, and wondered what could have drawn it together.

"Hurrah!" said little Nemo, clapping his hands; "we shall sell some baskets here, Abel."

"Hush!" said the little man. "What are they doing? There's some one talking to them. Whatever's going on?" As they drew nearer, they saw that the speaker was a young man about twenty years old. He was standing at the top of a high bank, on the side of the grass-plot which lay farthest from the lodge, and round him was gathered a large group of people, mothers with babies in their arms, little children hand in hand, old men leaning on sticks, middle-aged men in their working-clothes, young men standing a little apart, yet listening like the rest.

At the top of the bank, and close to the speaker, was sitting a little girl about Nemo's age. She had long fair hair and the bluest of blue eyes, and her cheeks were like the roses climbing over the lodge,—at least, so Abel thought as he looked at her. She was dressed in a pink frock and white muslin pinafore, and her lap was full of wild roses, blue harebells, and ox-eye daisies.

"Let us go near, Nemo," said Abel, as he lifted him from the cart, "and hear what that young chap's saying. The donkey will stand all right till we come back."

There was a little stir in the crowd gathered round the speaker, as the basket-cart drew up. Every one had turned round to see what it was, and several of the children whispered to each other, and pointed to Nemo, who was sitting in his basket-chair in the front of the cart. But as Abel and the little boy joined the group, all were again looking at the speaker, and listening attentively to his words.

"Friends," he was saying earnestly, as Abel and Nemo came within hearing,—"friends, there it stands, that great door; and every one of you, every man, every woman, every child amongst you, stands at this moment either on one side or the other—either inside or outside that great door."

"I don't see a door," said little Nemo.

"Where is it, Abel?"

"Hush!" said Abel. "Listen."

"Are you outside that door?" said the speaker. "Then you are lost, you are out in the darkness and the cold, you are unsaved, unforgiven, utterly undone. Are you inside that door? Then you are saved, eternally saved; you live in the sunshine and the warmth, for on you are streaming the blessed rays of the Sun of Righteousness; you are redeemed, you are forgiven, you are happy."

"On which side of the door are you old men, you mothers, you little children? On which side of the door are you two strangers, who have just joined us? Outside, or inside? Which?"

"He means us, Abel," said Nemo.

"Which side of the door are we?"

"Hush!" said Abel. "Listen. I don't know what he means."

"Look at the door again," the speaker went on, "so high, none can climb over it, so strong, none can force it open. The door is shut, but it opens with a touch. The smallest knock, even the feeble knock of the old man, even the tiny knock of the little child, is heard within, and at once the great door is opened wide."

"Who then will lift up his hand and knock to-day? Which of you would like to be safe for all eternity? Which of you would like to see the city of God? Who amongst you would like to lie down to-night feeling he was on the road to that city?"

"I would, Abel," whispered Nemo.

"Wouldn't you?"

"Then come to the door to-day, knock to-day. Do not wait till yonder sun has set, but this very evening let the sound of your knocking be heard inside, this very evening take the step, for it is only a step, inside the door, this very evening pass, I beseech you, from danger to safety, from darkness to light, from Satan to God."

"What door does he mean?" said

Nemo again. Is it them pretty goldy gates, Abel?"

"I don't know," said the little man. "We didn't hear the beginning, you see. It was nearly done when we came up. Hush! they're singing. Listen."

"Only a step to Jesus!

Then why not take it now?

Come, and thy sin confessing.

To him, thy Saviour, bow.

Only a step! Only a step!

Come, he waits for thee.

Come, and thy sin confessing.

Thou shalt receive a blessing.

Do not refuse the mercy

He freely offers thee."

When the hymn was finished, the people bowed their heads, and the speaker prayed. Abel did not hear much of the prayer, for he was watching the donkey, which was tired of waiting, and was walking leisurely down the road.

As soon as the prayer was ended, and he could leave the crowd without making a disturbance, he went forward to stop the donkey, and then he came back for Nemo. The people were still gathered round the speaker, who was giving each of them a paper; but the child was nowhere to be seen. Turning round, however, Abel caught sight of him standing by the great iron gate of the lodge. He went up to him and asked him what he was doing.

"I've been knocking, Abel, ever so hard," he said, "but they don't come to open it, and I've hurt my hand now. I think it can't be the right door—do you think it is? Or does he mean the door of yon house?"

"I don't know what he means," said Abel. "I couldn't make head nor tail of it. Never mind, Nemo, come along, and let's get some milk for our tea."

But as they turned to go the little girl in the pink frock stood before them. She was still holding the wild-flowers in her pinafore with one hand, but she held out the other hand to Nemo. "See," she said, "wouldn't you like a picture too?"

"Thank you, miss," said little Nemo, touching his cap, as Abel had taught him to do when he had anything given to him, and stretching out his hand eagerly to take the picture she held out to him. Then the little girl ran back to the young man who had been speaking, and Abel and Nemo went to the cart.

"Let's look at what she's given you," said Abel. It was a beautiful picture of a bright golden door, standing in the midst of a high, massive wall. In the middle of the door, in bright red letters, were these words:

"I am the Door:
By Me if any man enter in,
He shall be saved."

and over the top of the door was printed in large capital letters—

"KNOCK, AND IT SHALL BE OPENED
UNTO YOU."

"Tell me what it means, Abel," said Nemo. "Did you ever see that gold door?"

"No," said Abel, "isn't in our town. I'm sure of that, Nemo. P'raps it's all nonsense. He never saw it himself, I'll be bound."

He didn't look as if he was talking nonsense," said the child. "He talked as if he meant it all."

"Well, you be right there," said Abel thoughtfully, "but never mind it now, Nemo. We'll go and get our tea."

Nemo, however, could not forget his picture. He hardly took his eyes off it the rest of the evening. He spelt out, with Abel's help, every word that was printed on it, and said them over and over to himself till he knew them by heart, and when Abel put him to bed amongst the warm wraps in the cart, he still heard him saying softly to himself, "I am the door. by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Nor had he forgotten it when he awoke the next morning, although Abel had put the picture carefully away in the box in which they kept their clothes.

"That's a funny door!" said Nemo, as they were eating their breakfast.

Abel turned round, thinking he was speaking of the door of the cottage near which the cart had been drawn up for the night.

"I don't see nought funny about it, Nemo," he said. "It's much like other doors, I think, though it is in the new country."

"Oh, I don't mean that door," said Nemo, laughing. "I mean the door in my picture."

"Oh, you're on that again, are you?" said Abel, smiling. "I expect you've been dreaming of that there door all night."

"Well, it is a funny door—isn't it, Abel?"

"Maybe it is," said Abel, "I shouldn't

wonder. Why do you think it's funny, Nemo?"

"Because it can talk, Abel," he said. "It's a talking door. It says, 'I am the door. by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.' You never heard a door talk, did you, Abel?"

"No, never," said Abel. "nor no one else neither!"

"Didn't Father Amos never hear a talking door, do you think?" said Nemo.

"No, I don't suppose he ever did."

"I wish he was here to ask about it," said Nemo. "I'm sure he would know all about it."

"Well, you can ask him when we get home," said Abel. "Come, let's clear breakfast away, and get to work; we ought to get rid of a nice few baskets in this village, and then, if we're good luck here, we can begin to think of going home again."

(To be continued.)

The Little Maid's Sermon.

BY A. V. PERRY.

A little maid in a pale blue hood in front of a large brick building stood. As she passed long, her quick eye spied some words on a letter-box inscribed. 'Twas a box that hung in a vestibule, Outside the door of a charity school.

"Remember the Poor!" were the words she spied, Then looked at the pence her small hand held;

For chocolate creams were fresh that day In the store just only across the way. But gleams of victory shone o'er her face As she raised her eyes to the money place.

But her arm was short, and the box so high,

That a gentleman heard, who was passing by, "Please, sir, will you lift me just so much?"

(For the tiny fingers could almost touch.) The stranger stopped, and he quickly stood By the sweet-faced child in the pale blue hood.

As he lifted her, she gently said, "Would you mind it, sir, if you turned your head?"

For you know I do not want to be Like a proud, stuck-up old Pharisee!" He humoured the little maid, but a smile played o'er his face as he stood there the while.

"Excuse me, child, but what did you say?"

The gentleman asked, in a courteous way. And he took in his the wee white hand; "I believe I did not quite understand."

"Oh, sir! don't you know? Have you never read?"

Said the child, amazed, "what our Saviour said?"

"We shouldn't give like those hypocrite men

Who stood in the market-places then, And gave their alms, just for folks to tell. Because they loved to be praised so well. But give for Christ's sake, from our little store, What only he sees, and nobody more.

"Good-bye, kind sir, this is my way home,

I'm sorry you'll have to walk home alone."

The gentleman passed along, and thought Of large sums given for the fame it brought, And he said, "I never again will be In the market-place a Pharisee. He preached a sermon, true and good, The dear little maid in a pale blue hood."

Skeleton leaves may be made by steeping leaves in rain-water, in an open vessel, exposed to the air and sun. Water must occasionally be added, to compensate for loss by evaporation. The leaves will putrefy, and then their membranes will begin to open, then lay them on a clean white plate, filled with clean water, and with gentle touches take off the external membranes, separating them with the greatest care and nicety. The process requires a great deal of patience, as ample time must be given for the vegetable tissues to decay and separate. A much more expeditious method of obtaining the same result is by mixing a tablespoonful of chloride of lime in a liquid state with a quart of pure spring water. The leaves should be soaked in this mixture for about four hours, then taken out and well washed in a large basin of water, after which they are to be left to dry, with free exposure to light and air. Some of the larger leaves, such as have strong ribs, will require to be left longer than four hours in the liquid.