

"Well, I oughtn't to keep you away from your work, my man, so if you will just look after Dorcas here, and tell the boy where you would like to have her put, I'll trot on. Why, yes, of course she is yours; a man with a family to support needs a cow, and she is the nicest critter ever was, and gives *cream*, most, instead of milk."

Now I am sure there is no use in trying to describe to you Reuben's astonishment. Isn't it a good place to stop?

And yet there came to him before that day closed what he called the best news he ever had in his life.

It was Beth, curling in a little heap on the sofa beside him, who brought it.

What do you think it was? Why, that at last she had really decided to wear the colours of his Captain, and fight under His flag. Among the pleasant words that she spoke to him that night were the ones that told him she had been led to think carefully about it all from seeing how well he bore the trouble that had come to him. Before that she was getting to have a feeling that it was easy enough for Reuben to be good; everybody praised him and trusted him, and he did almost exactly as he liked, and there wasn't anything for him to be cross about. But afterwards, when she found herself so cross with Mr. Barrows, and so angry at that wicked somebody who brought all this trouble on him, and found Reuben so patient, and so unwilling to have Mr. Barrows blamed, and so cheerful all the