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The Boy Who Did His Duty.

It was to a lonely cottage, situated in one of the Scottish glens, that David Stewart had taken his young wife Margaret when he married her. Tourists as they went through the glen often admired the wild bleak hills that rose on either side, their serried summits presenting varied and picturesque aspects. But to Margaret Stewart they seemed solitary and desolate, and she sometimes longed for a pleasant cottage in the village, like that in which she had been brought up, where there were neighbors by, and friends to whom she might sometimes speak.

But she was a God-fearing woman, and she worked hard to make a pleasant home for David and his children. He was a shepherd, and had to look after the sheep on the hill sides, but after ten years of exposure to all kinds of rough weather he became subject to sudden attacks that, unless speedily relieved, might become dangerous.

It was one wild January afternoon that he came home ill, and full of pain, and Margaret, to her dismay, discovered there was no medicine in the house. The nearest doctor was in the village, nearly three miles away, and there was no one to send except her boy Robbie, a sturdy little fellow of some ten years old.

The mother went to the door and looked down the glen, then gazed doubtfully on the lowering sky, and listened to the wind that sighed through the pass. She would rather have gone herself than send her boy to-night, but she must not leave her husband.

But Robbie was a stout-hearted little man. He knew 'every step of the way,' he said, and would be back with father's physic before the dusk came on. And so with fear and trembling, and many a prayer for his safety, she wrapped the boy in coat and comforter and sent him off.

He had his little shepherd's stick and strode away through the glen. Bravely he buffeted with the wind that played in fitful gusts around him, and climbed up the hill side to the pass, and then down again on the other side, arriving at the doctor's before it was dark, for, although the weather was so dark and threatening, the days were lengthening out.

The doctor kept him waiting, not being at home; but, like a good man as he was, made the little fellow have some tea when he came in, while he was preparing the medicine.

But it was dark when he was ready to start home again, and the doctor hesitated about letting him go. The clouds were so thick, they threatened a storm.

'Oh, I shall win through, sir!' said Robbie bravely. 'Father must have his medicine.'

But when he got outside the village his heart almost failed him. The night was so black he could scarcely see his hand before him, he could not even see the hills looming in front. There was nothing but darkness.

Then the wind came blustering up, colder and keener than ever. He could only just see the path he had to take, but he remembered how his mother had told him that God could see in the dark as well as in the light, and



THE COTTAGE IN THE HILLS.

so he prayed that God 'would help him to win through, that he might take father his medicine.'

Then as he reached the head of the pass, thick flakes of snow began to fall, and soon the ground all over became covered with white. Now he could not see the path, he had to go on by guess work, and sometimes he paused to find which way he was to go. Then fierce blasts of wind came up, whirling the snow around so that he could see nothing about him save the snow tossing and floating in the air.

Poor Robbie became so tired he could have lain down in the snow and slept, and would have done so, only he remembered his father lying at home in pain waiting for the medicine, and though he could scarcely drag one foot after another, he would not give way.

Well was it for the poor little man that he did not, for if he had it would have been his last sleep, and mother would only have found his poor dead body the next day.

But Robbie was brave to do his duty, and for father's sake he persevered.

And we can easily imagine how anxious the poor mother was, with her Robbie out in this terrible storm. Perhaps the doctor had not let him start, perhaps even now he was struggling through the storm, perhaps he had lost his way in the snow.

Again and again she went to the door, and ran down the path to the road, and gazed along the glen, and shouted, 'Robbie! Robbie!' But it was all in vain. She put a light in the window and drew back the curtains that it might shine out.

At last she could bear it no longer, so praying to God to guide her to her boy, and wrapping a plaid over and around her, she went out through the snow, shouting as she went along, 'Robbie! Robbie!' She could not see,

but she could listen, and not a sound escaped her ear.

She had not gone very far when, to her great joy, she heard a response—'Mother!' Yes, it was her boy, and with a hearty 'Thank God!' she grasped him by the hand. He was saved.

But it was that resolve to do his duty that saved Rod Stewart's life. It would have been far easier to have lain down in the deep snow and slept, but he thought of his father's danger and his mother's anxiety, and he had bravely said, 'I must go on,' and, however hard it was, he did.

He did not know that to have gone to sleep would have been to die; he only knew that he had a duty to do, and, hard though it was, he did it. And I wish every one of us would learn this lesson, for, depend upon it, the only way to make life noble is for each of us to learn bravely to do our duty.—'The Child's Companion.'

'It is Well.'

(Charles H. Dorris, in the 'Michigan Christian Advocate'.)

The fever lights were in the little eyes, and the lad's head restlessly turned on the pillow.

'I wish papa were a Christian,' he murmured. 'If he would only start, then I would. If—he—would—only start, then I would. Oh, why don't he stand up and say, "I'll be a Christian," like the rest of them? I so want to be one. If he only would!'

The listening father groaned.

'Why didn't I! Oh, God, why didn't I! What if my boy should die? Oh, God, why—why didn't I give my heart to thee before the meetings closed, and then my boy would