

THAT WINTER.

BY EDITH AUBURN.

(*Copyright reserved.*)

CHAPTER VI.

After Lawson had seen Mabel through the most unsafe part of the town, he returned home to get supper for himself and Jack. His room was in pretty much the same condition in which we first saw it, when Kitty washed the stolen apples. Early each morning it got a "redding-up" and sweeping, that were to do for the day. Now, this sweeping and "redding-up" were of rather a peculiar kind. He began by using the broom on the shelves of the dresser, pushing the cups, saucers, teapot and tins into corners during the operation, then bringing the handle into use "poked" them out again until the corners received attention. Then the table was given a similar wipe, his work-bench run against the wall, and all the boots and shoes, which lay scattered over the floor for mending, piled upon it. By the time this was done and the floor swept, Jack would be up, crossing and recrossing the floor; every time he did so shaking down a boot or shoe from its place on the bench, and kicking it from him, so that by the time breakfast was ready the room retained no appearance of the "redding-up."

When Lawson entered this evening, he found Jack sitting with his feet on the stovepan, and his elbows on his knees. He was a big burly boy, the male counterpart of Kitty, two years older, but with not quite so smiling a face. He was not what any one could call vicious-looking, and yet no one would venture to say he looked good.

He was, as I said, resting his elbows on his knees, and his chin on his hands. When his father entered he merely raised his eyes, and as the old man commenced to mend the fire, he took one foot down from its elevation, and giving a shoe which lay by his chair a kick, said,—

"Father," (he did not call him 'dad, like his sister,) "there is no use in my trying to get education; everything goes against me."

Lawson instantly dropped the poker, and stood mouth open. Jack continued,—

"Why, you are as frightened-looking as though a pistol-shot had passed through your ear. See, you have left the stove-door smoking."

"What be the trouble, Jack?"

"The trouble is this, I need ten dollars for new books, and if I don't get them I'll leave off school. What is the use of my going when I've not books to learn my lessons in? The only way I can stand my ground at all is, by having them better than the rest, and to-day—" here he stopped.

"I thought you had a promise from Percy Stiggins, to have his books a while in the mornin'."

"So I had, but his mother won't let him. She says they smell of leather after I use them, and it makes her sick," (another shoe was kicked across the room.)

"There be five dollars owin' me for cobblin', you can collect it to-morrow; that 'll pay part; Murry 'll give you the rest on tick, and I'll pay at Christmas."

The boy's face brightened a little.

"That's not the only trouble, I've a hard life at school. The boys all laugh at me, and call me names because I'm your son."

The sexton scratched his head, and with a woe-begone face said,—

"Dear, dear." But this complaint was too frequent for him to think much about it.

"You don't think anything of that, father. You think I shouldn't be ashamed of being your son, and I aint; but I am that you're a cobbler and sexton. Why hadn't you spirit when you was like me,