

Teach Me Thy Way.

The dark comes down ere it be late;
I stand amid the shades and wait,
Not knowing whether left or right
Will bring me to the open gate
Where I can pass to home and light.
O God, with whom is endless day,
Guide thou my steps; teach me thy way.

I am alone. But, onward borne,
With weary feet and banners torn,
What hosts have travelled where I go,
Laden and lonely, weak and worn,
Whom thou hast made thy will to know!
Lord, be thus merciful to me;
For as they cried, I cried to thee.

Bid the light shine; and call me where
Thy presence fills the strengthening air,
And wisdom, justice, love, and peace
Make all thy world serene and fair,
And righteousness and joy increase.
This is the goal. But far I stray;
Oh, bring me back. Teach me thy way.

The distant lights like beacons shine;
The city they illumine is mine;
The friends I love are gathered there.
Give me thy help, O Guide divine,
For hope and faith are in my prayer;
And morn will break and I shall stand,
At daybreak in my fatherland.

In Prison and Out.

By the Author of "The Man Trap."

CHAPTER XIV.—MRS. LINNETT'S LODGINGS.

JOHN DUDLEY went away with a heavier heart than when he came to bring good news of Roger. If one boy was saved, the other seemed irretrievably lost. He knew too well one inevitable result of sending boys to prison,—the forfeiture of their only wealth, the wealth of a good name. If David came out of jail neither degraded nor corrupted by contact with confirmed criminals,—a thing he hardly dared to hope,—he would still bear about with him, at the very beginning of his life, the stigma of being a convict and a felon!

Dudley's blood boiled and his heart ached with mingled indignation and sorrow, as he paced slowly along the narrow and dirty street which had been at once David Fell's school and playground. Scarcely a decent man or woman met his eye, and his ear heard oaths and speeches such as had been the common language surrounding David from his earliest childhood. Yet what had the boy been guilty of? Untaught, untrained, with no instruction but the vile and coarse lessons of a London slum, he had kept true to the only faith he had,—his faith in an honest and industrious father. He had striven to his utmost to be honest and industrious, and he had not failed. His crimes had been—begging for his mother when she was dying of hunger; and resenting—hotly, perhaps, but bravely—an insult to his mother's good name, when that was maligned by the man who had robbed her.

Misery and degradation and crime lay all about Dudley as he turned homewards; and for the moment it seemed a hopeless task to endeavour to raise this dead mass of a city's lowest population from its ignorance and savagery. And what if the law did not aid him? If the best of these young barbarians, yielding to his natural instincts, broke the laws he did not know, and was arrested by a Christian people, not to be wisely and gently dealt with, but to be set forevermore against society, every man's hand against him, and his hand against every man, what chance was there for him and his fellow-labourers to work any deliverance?

John Dudley paced along the streets, deep in thought, yet taking unconscious notice of the groups of loafing, ill-fed, ill-clad lads who thronged the causeways. He had known boys and girls under fifteen years of age sent to jail for breaking down a rotten fence; for throwing a stone, and unintentionally breaking a window; for snatching an apple off a stall, or a penny loaf out of a baker's shop; or for stealing a few turnips from a field, and a handful of corn from a sheaf.

By and-by his thoughts turned to old Euclid. It was quite plain that he must move away from his garret, now Blackett's hatred was so greatly provoked. But where must he go? Could nothing better be found than that miserable attic, with its thin roof of slates and lath-and-plaster ceiling, as the sole shelter against the frosts and snows of winter and the hot sun of summer? No wonder that girl looked like a ghost, with her small, wan face, and emaciated frame! Could nothing be done for them?

At last his face brightened, and he turned

hastily southwards, towards the river. He went on nearly to the docks, and then entered a short and quiet street. A fresh breeze blew up from the water, chilly enough this February night, but giving promise of a pleasant air on a summer's day. He paused at a little shop with miscellaneous wares displayed in a bay-window with small panes, and with a door divided across the middle, the upper part of which was open. As he pushed open the lower part, a sharp little bell tinkled loudly, and in an instant an elderly woman appeared in the doorway of an inner room.

"I'm coming in, Mrs. Linnett," he said. The small kitchen beyond the shop was scantily furnished with an arm-chair cushioned with home-made patchwork, two Windsor chairs, a table, and a kitchen piece, combining a chest of drawers with a cupboard. But the walls were decorated with many cheap foreign curiosities; and over the fireplace hung a highly-coloured engraving of a three-master, all sails full set, and four little black figures, representing the crew, standing at equal distances along the bulwarks. A burning mountain in the distance, in a terrific state of eruption, and the intense blue of the sea and sky, suggested the Bay of Naples. Underneath were the words,—*"Barque Jemima; master, Thomas Linnett."*

There was no light in the little kitchen, except that of the fire; but there was enough to show the placid and pleasant face of Mrs. Linnett, though it was partially concealed by a green shade over her eyes. John Dudley smiled as he looked at her.

"I think I've found you a little maid," he said, "and a lodger, if I pay a small portion of his rent. He's an honest old fellow, or I'm much mistaken; and he gets his living by selling water-cresses."

"It's a poor trade," remarked Mrs. Linnett tranquilly.

"He's as poor as a man can be, and keep off the parish," continued Mr. Dudley; "and he has a daughter very sickly, who will grow well and happy with a little mothering such as you will give her. And there's a strong, bright girl, whom they have adopted, and who is the little maid I spoke of."

"Three of 'em!" said Mrs. Linnett. "You like to have plenty of folks about you," he answered persuasively; "and by-and-by the elder girl will help you to keep shop, and Bess will clean and scrub, and you will be at leisure to be my Bible-woman. You shall teach sick and miserable people what you know about God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

"And them three,—do they know?" inquired Mrs. Linnett.

"They know nothing," he said. "None of them can read, and the old man has only one idea in his head,—how he can keep off the parish, and bury his children and himself in coffins of their own. Try them, Mrs. Linnett. Old Euclid goes to the market every morning, and Bess might still go with him, and bring back a basketful of fruit or vegetables for the shop fresh every day. Only promise me to try them."

"You were pretty sure o' that afore you came in, Mr. Dudley," she answered, with a quiet laugh. "I couldn't say 'no' to you, as befriended me when Thomas Linnett died away at sea. Where would my twenty pounds a year ha' been but for you? There's the front room upstairs, and a closet as'll do for the old man to sleep in, and Bess'll sleep with me. I've kep' them for old shipmates o' Thomas Linnett's; but they'll find lodgings close by, and my heart goes after those two young lasses as have everything to learn. They'll fill up my spare time when trade's slack."

"How often is trade slack?" asked Mr. Dudley.

"Not as often as you'd think, sir," she said cheerfully. "Bein' so handy to the docks, there's always some old mate or other droppin' in as knew Thomas Linnett. They step in here, or, if it's fine, they sit on the counter, and we talk of old times on the *Jemima*; and most of 'em 'ud spend more money in the shop than I let 'em. Some of 'em leave their money with me for safety, and I've six or seven sea-chests in my room to be took care of. So there's not so much slack time for me as you'd suppose."

Old Euclid visited the new lodgings proposed to him the next day; for there was no time to be lost. Some caution was necessary in making the move, so as to leave no clue by which Blackett could trace them. To make sure of perfect security, the old bedsteads once belonging to Mrs. Fell were privately disposed of, as well as the broken chair and empty boxes. The rest of their possessions were packed up, and stealthily conveyed downstairs at four o'clock in the morning, Euclid's usual hour for being about; and a hand-truck, sent by John Dudley, quietly carried them off. Later in the morning, Victoria, pale and trembling, descended the familiar staircase for the last time, and, clinging to Bess, passed Blackett's open door.

He scowled at them as they went by, and muttered an oath; but he did not rise up to follow them. When they had safely gained the corner of the street, a cab took them up, and set them down at Mrs. Linnett's door.

One of the many old shipmates who had sailed in the *Jemima* with Thomas Linnett, had papered the front room with a cheerful paper of red roses, and had festooned the window with strings of some foreign beans of a bright scarlet. The old egg-shaped grate, with high hobs, had been polished till it glittered in the firelight. Victoria's bed stood in the corner, ready-made; and Euclid's was also ready in a little closet opening at the top of the narrow stairs. Over the chimney-piece hung an oval looking-glass, cracked across the middle, which had once belonged to some ship's cabin, and had found its way into Mrs. Linnett's possession; and on each side of it was a picture in black frame. Victoria stood on the threshold of this sumptuous dwelling-place, gazing at it with wondering eyes, till she suddenly broke down into tears.

"Oh, it's too grand!" she sobbed. "We can never pay the rent here."

"To be sure you can," said Mrs. Linnett, soothing her tenderly. "And by-and-by you'll more than pay the rent, my dear, when you are strong enough to help me in the shop; and that won't be long, my poor precious! There's the fresh breeze blowing off the river; that'll make you strong. And there's me to look after you, poor dear, that never knew what it is to have a mother! And father'll be as happy as a king to see you picking up your roses. And there's Bess—why she'll be as good as a fortune to me, I know; she'll save my old legs and arms so. And it's a mile nigher to the market; and Bess shall go and buy me apples and oranges and green-grocery for the shop; and we'll sell all the cresses as Mr. Euclid brings home of an evening. And you'll see if he doesn't more than pay the rent!"

(To be continued.)

THE CHANGED COMPOSITION.

BY RUTH ABBOTT.

"WHAT is a forger, father?" asked Harold Boies, as he looked up from his book one night.

"A forger," said Mr. Boies. "I never hear that word without thinking of something that happened when I was thirteen years old."

"Just my age," exclaimed Harold, all interest in his book forgotten in his eagerness to hear one of his father's stories. "Do tell me about it."

Mr. Boies laid down his evening paper, and turned with a sober face to his son.

"Harold," he said "it is something I have wished for years I could forget, but I suppose I never shall. You know, I was a mischievous lad and was happiest when playing all sorts of pranks; but the only really serious result of my sport occurred, as I said when I was about your age. My mother never sent my sister and me to public school, but she taught us herself until we were prepared for college. One winter my little cousin Jennie was sent to our home in the sunny South, hoping the warmer climate would benefit her, for she was a delicate child of ten. She and sister were such good friends that I began to think that Mary was learning to love Jennie better than she did me, and I can remember how angry I used to feel, and how, in many ways, I teased that poor child.

"One evening mother had us all hand in our compositions. For over two weeks we had toiled over the task, and at last it was ended. Mother was to look them over before school-time next morning, when we were to meet and read them. Our subjects were a great secret, and no one was to know anything about them till the morning they were read. So, when the papers were in mother's hands we were eager for the time to come so we could hear the 'stories,' as we called them. That night, I can't tell how it ever happened, but I must have been just wicked. I slipped down to mother's desk in the school-room and found she had left the compositions just where we had put them. I took sister's and Jennie's, and went back to my room. No one heard me, and I didn't stop to think how bad my plan was. Anything to annoy Jennie was all I seemed to care about.

"I could imitate handwriting unusually well, so I deliberately copied sister's composition in Jennie's handwriting, signed her name to it, and then put all the papers back on mother's desk as they had been, except Jennie's own, which I hid. At

school-time next morning we three met mother, who had read over our work. She seemed sober and quite unlike herself, and the girls did not understand what was the matter, but I guessed she would have something to say about Jennie's fraud.

"Sister's story was about something that had happened in our home before Jennie came to us, so Jennie couldn't possibly have known about it, yet there was her own handwriting and all. Mother talked long and earnestly about the wickedness of deceit, of defrauding others, and how such sins led to forgery in business and great crimes and sorrows. Even now I can see how Jennie looked, her face growing white as she clasped her hands and said, 'O auntie, truly I didn't do it. That isn't my story at all.' Oh, it was terrible. Well, to make a long story short, Jennie went to her room sobbing, and when she didn't come to dinner, mother went after her. She found Jennie in a high fever, tossing on her bed and crying in her delirium, 'Oh, I didn't do it. It wasn't mine.' She was sick a long while, and for a time we feared she would die. I can't tell you how I felt. It was too dreadful. Of course I couldn't stand it, and when Jennie was better and could talk, mother told her how it happened, how sorry I was, and how I wanted to ask her forgiveness. The dear girl held out her thin, white hand as I went into her room, and before I could say a word she said: 'It's all right, cousin, don't worry;' and then with an attempt to cheer me up, she added, 'You'll make a nice forger when you're a man.' I can remember just as well as if it happened only yesterday, how I answered her with a single word, 'Never.' She laughed at my vehemence and declared 'That word must weigh a ton,' but to me it was no joking matter then. Ever since I have had a horror of copying anything that would in any way defraud another, or wrong my own sense of justice."

When Mr. Boies had finished his story and turned to finish reading his evening paper, Harold sat for some time quietly thinking. His active conscience recalled several examinations in school where he had not been strictly honest. He thought of the essay he had paid another boy to write for him, and how deceitfully he had handed it in as his own. At last, when he had made the firm resolution to be true to himself, no matter what happened, it suddenly occurred to him that he hadn't spoken to his father since the story was finished. He simply said, "Father, I'm glad you told me that story." Mr. Boies, with rare tact, smiled but said nothing, for he knew Harold's earnestness meant a new determination not to be a "forger."—*Junior Herald.*

JUNIOR LEAGUE WORK.

THE interest in work for the children by the League is the chief feature of our Epworth movement to-day. The rise of Junior Leagues is rapid. They are found now in every part of the country. This department does a work not attempted by the Sunday-school. It fills a hitherto unoccupied place. It is a fitting supply to a great demand. We give at this time a few instances of successful junior work:

Mrs. Luther Freeman writes in this interesting way:

"Our Junior League has a membership of forty-five. The meetings are held Tuesdays at the close of school. Forty badges have been sold. We have no age limitations whatever. Our meeting opens with singing and reciting in concert either the first or twenty-third Psalm, the Apostles' Creed or a verse containing the twelve Apostles. After the roll-call the leader gives a little talk, sometimes about some Bible story or some incident of the week. Following this are the testimonies of the children and then a prayer service during which all kneel. Many of the Junior League are here beginning to pray publicly. The last few minutes before closing the programme varies. We often have some one take a Bible character, and by questions we seek to find out who it is. Some days we have a story read or a piece spoken, and after our secretary's report is read, our new members recognized and our various committees heard from, we close with singing."

THERE is a New England woman whose pastor recently asked after her health. Her reply was: "I feel very well, but I always feel bad when I feel well, because I know I am going to feel worse afterwards."