

How It Turned Out.

"I'm going now to run away,"
Said little Sammie Greer, one day,
Then I can do just what I choose;
I'll never have to black my shoes,
Or wash my face or comb my hair,
I'll find a place, I know, somewhere,
And never have again to fill
The old chip basket so I will.

"Good-bye, mamma," he said, "good-bye!"
He thought his mother then would cry.
She only said, "You going, dear?"
And didn't shed one single tear.
"There, now," said Sammie Greer, "I know
She does not care if I do go,
But Bridget does, she'll have to fill
The old chip-basket so she will."

But Bridget only said, "Well, boy,
You off for sure? I wish you joy."
And Sammie's little sister Kate,
Who swung upon the garden gate,
Said anxiously as he passed through,
"To-night, whatever will you do
When you can't get no 'lasses spread
At supper-time on top of bread?"

One day from home and Sammie Greer's
Weak little heart was full of tears;
He thought about "Red Riding Hood,"
The wolf that met her in the wood,
The bean-stock boy who kept so mum
When he heard the giant's "Fee fo fum."
Of the dark night and the policeman,
And then poor Sammie homeward ran.

Quick through the alley-way he sped,
And crawled in through the old wood shed.
The big chip-basket he did fill,
He blackened his shoes up with a will;
He washed his face and combed his hair;
He went up to his mother's chair;
And kissed her twice, and then he said,
"I'd like some 'lasses top of bread."

PILGRIM STREET:

A STORY OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

CHAPTER XV.

"MY FATHER IS WITH ME."

THE hope that some day or other his father's heart would be changed as his had been, helped Tom much to endure the discomforts and miseries of his lot. The faint, hungry grudging with which he had watched his father at his tasty meals no longer beset him, and his impatient chafing at the relationship which bound him to such a man passed into a grave pity and sorrow.

Tom ceased to appeal to his Heavenly Father against his earthly parent, but, instead, he prayed for him with earnest and persevering supplication. He called him father now without any inward rebellion; and, as far as it was possible, he tried to obey and honour him.

There were many things which Tom was obliged to see and do altogether at variance with the new feelings and desires of his heart, but which he felt bound to do because his father bade him. One of these was giving up his attendance at the night-school; and, indeed, he was generally too weary now of an evening to take the long walk from his present home to the school which he had been accustomed to attend. Only on the Sunday, a day which he considered as belonging altogether to his Father in heaven, he resisted; and neither threat nor persuasion could move him to break the laws which he found laid down for keeping the Sabbath holy.

One evening after his work was done, he was spelling out a chapter in his Bible—which by this

time was getting well worn—while his father was sitting in front of the fire, smoking his pipe, when Haslam bade him read out aloud, and not mutter the words in that half whisper. The verses he had just come to were these, and Tom read them in a clear and deliberate voice: "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone; or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him!"

"What's the meaning of it?" asked Haslam, with a sneer upon his lips.

"I'm not sure," answered Tom, timidly; "it seems as if it meant that God is more ready to give us good things than folks' fathers are sometimes. It says: 'How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him.'"

"And who is thy Father in heaven?" asked Haslam.

"God!" answered Tom.

"A fine Father!" continued Haslam; "and thou'rt a nice one to call God Father! Does he know thou'rt ragged and clemmed? Why, I serve the devil, and he's a better master. Which is best off, thee or me?"

"Me," answered Tom, steadily.

"Thee?" sneered Haslam. "How dost make that out?"

"I'm ragged and clemmed," said Tom, "but I'm happy, and nobody can make or meddle with my happiness. Thee couldn't never make me unhappy, father. Some day or other, as soon as God sees as it's the right time, I shall be better off—and I've only got to wait. But if thee waits, it's only for judgment, and sorrow, and anger, when God sees that it's time to punish thee. Oh, father, I wish thee only believed what I believe!"

"What's that?" asked Haslam, filling his pipe again, and crushing the coals in the grate with his heavy boot.

"I can't rightly put it into words," answered Tom, earnestly, "but it's somehow in this way. Before I cared anything about God, or knew aught about him, he was loving me all the time, and he sent Mr. Hope and Mr. Banner, and Nat Pendlebury, to teach me that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to be my Saviour; and he is my brother, just as I'm Phil's brother; and if I'd only believe in him, and trust in him, then God would be my Father, and I should become his son. Jesus loved us all so well that he died for us, just as I would die for little Phil; and now he is gone back to heaven to make our home there ready for us. I've only got to wait a little while, and then he'll take me home. Father, if thee'd only believe in Jesus, then God 'ud be thy Father."

"I want no father," said Haslam, with an oath; "I can fend for myself; and I'll bide the judgment thee talks of. But I want my boy Phil, and him I'll have. Where's he gone to, I ask thee? If thee keeps the secret from me any longer, I'll half kill thee."

There was an evil look in his father's eye, which made Tom quail for a moment; but his courage came back quickly.

"I'm not scared by thee," he said, his eye kindling and his face brightening. "Maybe thee thinks that the room is empty, and there's nobody to stand betwixt us. But God is here, and he sees everything that we do, and hears everything we say; and he can keep me safe. Aye, and he will keep me safe. Or, if it is his will that thee should kill me outright, why, then he'll take me home to him and the Lord Jesus, and I shall see his face,

and stand among the angels. God is in the room with his father."

Tom's bright, keen eyes looked as if he could more than his father saw, and Haslam glared round with a fear and dread which had never possessed him before. He dropped down into his chair, from which he had started in his fury, tried to whistle a merry tune, but the notes quivering, and he took up his pipe again, and peered between his lips.

"Didst ever ask God for those good things says he'll give thee?" he asked, after a long silence.

"Aye," answered Tom, quietly.

"Didst ever get them?" he asked, jeeringly.

"Aye, surely," said Tom. "Before I knew was my Father I used to ask him for clothes, food, and money, and he gave them to me. I got two good suits of clothes, as decent as I could want, and I'd plenty to eat; and I'd seven pounds shillings in the Savings Bank. Thee'd call those good things, I reckon."

Haslam nodded his head, as much as to say "Yes."

"But of late," continued Tom, turning his head in a dreamy way to the fire, and speaking as if to himself, "ever since I know he was my Father, it seems as if I could ask for nothing but what he'd give me. I used to count the things wages for being good, and I thought I was like a master, and was paying me my wages. But now it's all different. He's my Father, and I don't want anything besides what he thinks best for me. As soon as it's time he'll give me food and clothes. There used to come strange thoughts into my head when I was starving in Liverpool, but I didn't know what they meant then, but I do now. If he thought it best for me to lie down in the streets and die, I'd not be afeared but what he'd take me right up to heaven."

"Then, what does thee ask thy Father for?" asked Haslam, in his scolding voice.

"I say 'Our Father,'" answered Tom, in the same dreamy way; and he murmured to himself a low half whisper, all the prayer, asking for the Father's name to be hallowed, and the Father's kingdom to come, and the Father's will to be done, then for himself only the daily bread, the forgiveness of sins, and the deliverance from temptation and evil.

Haslam did not speak again; but as soon as he had smoked out his pipe he pushed back his chair, calling his son a canting hypocrite, and then started off on his mysterious nightly business.

Tom's room was untenanted now except by himself, but it was neither empty nor lonely. A dirty, scantily-furnished room it was, with patches of mildewed plaster on the walls, and with muddy footprints upon the bare floor. The smouldering fire scarcely lit it up, and it was, perhaps, better the dimness than in a brighter light. From the room below, which was occupied by a large family, there came the sounds of rude laughter and wailing. But Tom, bending over the fire, with his eyes still peering into its dull embers, saw and heard nothing of all this outer life.

He could not have put his thoughts into words, but, as he had said, strange thoughts and fears passed through his brain. Once he had been filled with dismay at the thought that God saw him always, and that had been his chief idea about God. It was the one truth concerning him which he had taken the strongest hold of his mind. He had been the poor runaway slave, Hagar, whom the angel the Lord found in the wilderness, he called the name of the Lord, who spake unto him, "The Lord seest me!" Once, as you remember, this had been a source of terror and torment to him, and