

The Angry Boy.

BY ERNEST M'GAFFEY.

He has taken his toys and gone home,
And refuses to play any more;
The jack-in-the-box, and the little tin dog,
And the cat that rolled over the floor;
He is pouting, and thinks he's aggrieved,
But truly, what vexes him most,
Is to feel his himself who is wrong,
In spite of his home-going boast.

He has taken his toys and gone home,
And refuses to play any more;
The old Noah's ark, with its windows cross-
barr'd.

He has flung by the half-opened door;
He has taken the animals out,
And piled them along on the shelf,
And martyr-like, there on his chair,
He mopes and sulks all by himself.

He has taken his toys and gone home,
And refuses to play any more;
His quaint wooden soldiers with swords in
their hands,
And red uniforms that they wore,
Are gloomily standing in line,
And hushed is the rub-a-dub drum,
While their juvenile captain near by
Is valiantly chewing his thumb.

He has taken his toys and gone home,
And refuses to play any more;
Well, well, let him go, it was no great
surprise,

He threatened to do it before;
His comrades laugh loud by the trees,
And a robin pipes sweet from a spray,
And violets smile from the grass,
While above are the blossoms of May.

In Prison and Out.

By the Author of "The Man Trap."

CHAPTER VI.—NOT GOD'S WILL.

WHEN Mrs. Fell and Bess bade Euclid and Victoria good-night, and went downstairs to their own room, they felt cheered and comforted by the neighbourliness they had received. Bess was ready to declare Victoria the prettiest and cleverest girl in the world. As they opened their door, they saw a letter lying just within it, which had been slipped through the nick below it, and which was scarcely visible in the darkness. Such an extraordinary event—one which had never befallen them before—filled them with so much astonishment, that it was with trembling hands Bess stooped to pick it up. It was a real letter, with a stamp and post-mark upon it, though they could hardly believe their own eyes. There was no light in their own room, not even a dim farthing candle to burn; and there was no resource but to carry the strange letter to the gas-light on the stairs, and read it there as quickly and quietly as possible, with the very probable chance of some of their neighbours coming by and watching them inquisitively.

It must be news of David; there was no one else in the world to write to them. Bess could not read writing, and it was no easy task to Mrs. Fell. But as soon as she unfolded the sheet of paper, which was headed by the name of the jail where he was imprisoned printed plainly upon it, and which she read half aloud before the meaning reached her brain, she uttered a piercing shriek of anguish, which rang through the whole house, and brought every inmate of it running into the passages and upon the staircases. Mrs. Fell was lying in a deep swoon upon the floor, and Bess was kneeling beside her, calling to her, and trying to raise her up. Blackett was the first to reach her; and the half-drunken man gave her a rough push with his foot, uttering a brutal oath.

"You leave her alone!" cried old Euclid, hurrying downstairs, and confronting Blackett with a courage that astonished himself when he came to think of it: "you leave Mrs. Fell be! She's been spendin' the evenin' with me and my daughter, and I'll take care on her. You ain't no man if you'd kick a poor sickly woman like her. You're a coward if you touch her again, and I say so. Ain't he?" he shouted in his hoarse voice, as he turned with a quivering face and excited gestures to the cluster of neighbours gathered about them.

"Ay, he is!" cried the crowd, with so unanimous a voice that Blackett even was cowed by it, and, contenting himself with muttering some bad language, retreated to his own place. Two or three of the neighbours helped Euclid to carry the poor woman into her room. Even to them, used to destitution as they were, it seemed bare of everything.

There was no seat left, unless a few bricks, picked up in the street, could be called seats; and they had to lay her down upon the mere sacking of the bedstead, from which the bed and clothing had all disappeared. Euclid gazed round him with a strange pity stirring at his heart, mingled with a sense of superior comfort in his own circumstances. He felt almost like a rich man.

"This is bad, worse than any on us," he said; "and she might ha' been my widow, if I'd died first, instead of my wife. She might ha' been the widow of any one on you. I vote as we make a little collection for her in the house; and I'll begin with a shillin', and that's more than I've earned to-day. Some on you can do it easier than me."

"She gets four shilling and eightpence parish pay, every Tuesday," objected one of the women who stood by.

"And pays arf-a-crown a week rent," replied Euclid; "it's short-commons after that."

"She's always a-hungered," sobbed Bess; "nothin' can satisfy mother."

"She ought to go into the House, where she'd have medicine and everything," said another voice; "the officer says so."

"Who says she ought to go into the House?" asked Euclid, lifting up his head, and looking round him with eyes almost bright with indignation. "She, as is a decent, hard-workin' woman, and a honest man's widow! She's not the sort as goes into the House. We know who goes there,—bad women, as no decent man 'ud look at, and drunken women, and swearin', cursin' women. Don't nobody speak o' goin' to the House while I'm by."

Old Euclid had always been regarded by his neighbours as a quiet, timid old man, who hadn't a word to cast at a dog. There was something so unusual both in his vehement words and his excited gestures, that, one by one, they slunk out of the miserable room in silence, leaving him and Bess to the task of bringing back the fainting woman to consciousness. She was still clutching the letter convulsively in her fingers; but, as Bess opened them to chafe the palms of her cold hands, it fluttered down upon the floor. Euclid picked it up, and carried it to the light of the candle, which somebody had brought in, and left upon the chimney-piece.

"Who's it from?" asked Bess anxiously.

"Is it from Davy?"

"Ah! 'David Fell, your lovin' son,'" he read; "but it comes from jail! He's in jail!"

Euclid's gray old head dropped, and his voice sank into a hoarse murmur. It was no longer a wonder to him that Mrs. Fell had fallen into a death-like swoon. The work-house was terrible; but the jail was a lower depth still. He stood silent for a few minutes thinking. David had always been a sort of favourite with him; he liked his bright, boyish face, and his merry whistle as he stepped briskly about. And the lad had often carried his basket for him, and shouted "Creases!" with his clear young voice, when his own throat was dry and husky with crying them all day about the street. But now David Fell was a jail-bird!

Presently there came to his ear the feeble murmur of his name from David's mother; and he hastened to her side, looking down on her ashy face with a strange gentleness in his sunken eyes.

"Please read it up loud," she said in a laborious whisper, as if she had scarcely strength to form the words with her trembling lips. Euclid read the few lines in a measured voice, giving every word its fullest length; and then he folded it up again, and laid it down near the mother's hand.

"It's only for beggin'!" he cried. "Three months for beggin' for his mother! God help us all! There's something wrong somewhere. Them justices must have hearts like mine, I s'pose; yet they sent Davy to jail for three months for beggin' for his mother! If they'd only take the time for to see what they'd done! But there! they don't take the time, or they'd never punish a lad like David, the son of a decent, hard-workin' woman, as was left a widow with two children to keep. God help us all!"

"It's only for beggin'!" murmured Mrs. Fell, with tears streaming down her cheeks,—"only for beggin'!"

"Don't you take on too much," urged Euclid. "He'll come home all right, and I'll look after the lad for you."

But it was hard for Mrs. Fell to comfort herself about David. It was no uncommon event for boys in their street to get into jail; but it was almost always for stealing, and she knew no one would believe that David had been sent there for begging only. How Blackett would glory and triumph in it! His elder sons were known to be thieves, and he was constantly pushing and urging Roger into the same course, in the hope of getting him off his hands. Yet it had never once crossed her mind that her own boy Davy

could ever be in prison. His father had been an honest, industrious artisan, priding himself on never touching his neighbour's goods by so much as a finger; and she had not thought of David failing, under any stress of temptation, to follow in his steps. David was no thief; but still he was in jail! She kept murmuring to herself, "It's only for beggin'!" But was the bitterness lessened to her that her only son had met with such a penalty for so slight a fault? He would come out into the world branded as if he had been a thief, with the shame of a jail clinging to him through the rest of his life.

Euclid and Victoria were very good to her in her fresh trouble, and helped her as far as their means allowed; the little store of money for Victoria's burial suffering thereby. Many of the neighbours, too, thought of her, and brought her from time to time a morsel of their own not over-abundant food. Even Blackett offered her help, which she turned away from with a sick heart. She was not quite so starved and friendless as she had been before her desperate circumstances were discovered; but she felt more heart-broken, and there was none to comfort her. Victoria repeated her hymns and verses to her; but they seemed words without meaning in her great sorrow. She had set before her one aim,—to see her children start in life honest and blameless, as their father had been before them. Night and day she had toiled and denied herself to this end. She had given herself no rest, but had struggled on through grievous pain, and in great darkness of spirit; and she had failed. The hard battle had been fought, and she was conquered.

"Davy 'ud have made a good man," she moaned to herself through the long, sleepless nights, as she thought of him in jail. "He'd have grown up like his father, if I could ha' kep' up another two-three years. It's come too soon on me. But now he's got a sully and a stain on him as'll never wash off, live as long as he may. He's been in jail, folks'll say. And whatever'll become o' Bess if Davy goes wrong? He'd have kep' her up if he'd been a good man. O Lord! he'd have made a good man, only for this. And now he's in jail!"

Bess was all that was left to her, and she could scarcely bear to let her go out of her sight. Blackett, who swore and raged at every one else, was beginning to speak kindly to Bess, and this filled the heart of the poor dying mother with unutterable terror. She had often been proud of her child's dark eyes and pretty hair, and thought of her own face when David Fell was courting her. Oh, if Davy was but at home again, always with Bess, unconsciously shielding her from untold dangers! Suppose even that she died before Davy's time was up! If she should never, never see her boy's face again! And to leave Bess alone, quite alone!

It would have been a hard and bitter sorrow to leave her children, if she had a good hope of their doing well; but, oh! how infinitely harder and more bitter it was to die while David was in jail, and when Blackett was speaking kindly to little Bess!

Once she tried to say, "It's God's will, and he knows best;" but something seemed to stop her. She could not utter the words, even to her own heart.

(To be continued.)

BEWARE OF HIM.

I WANT to warn our boys against an ugly customer that I have met with more than once in my time. He spells his name with

"An upright and a cross,
And a circle complete.
Two semicircles perpendicular meet,
An angle triangle standing up on feet
Two semicircles
And a circle complete."

I would like our boys to learn the name of this ugly customer, and think whether they have met with him. Ask your father whether he has made his acquaintance, and whether he would recommend you to his friendship and fellowship. I think he makes his home in your vicinity. Be on the lookout for him. You may at first find it difficult to make his acquaintance, but when you have once formed an intimate acquaintance with him you will find him hard to get rid of. I caution you to beware of him. He gets men's money and injures health, he destroys life, he makes men stupid, stolid, selfish, sleepy, and filthy. He is bad company. He comes where he is not wanted. He makes himself too plenty. He stays too long. Better "get rid of him" at once. What is it?

BE SURE YOU'RE RIGHT AND THEN GO AHEAD.

BY R. M. WILBUR.

THE high runners had parted company with the top, all ready to be made into a "pung" for the next day's market. The "pung" top waited on the barn floor, while Farmer Dick stopped for a talk with a neighbour by the kitchen fire.

Did ever five boys get together for half an hour without some bit of mischief coming to the surface? You may be sure this five did not. It was Christie who started it.

"Let's have a sleigh-ride, boys. Lots better than the best 'bob' in the world. Come on, will you?"

"What?" said Will Dick; "what's better'n the best 'bob'?"

"Oh, you stupid," said Christie, "the sleigh-runners, of course."

"Oh," said Will.

"That all you've got to say?" said Christie, beginning to drag out the runners.

"Dunno whether father'd like it. Some-thin' might happen to it, you see," said Will.

"Poh! I'll risk it!" said Christie. And the other boys joined in.

There was a steep hill just beyond the house, a "jolly one" for coasting, and it took but a minute for their united strength to draw the sleigh out of the barn to the top of the hill, and another minute to get it started down toward the bottom.

Two things the boys forgot. One was that it's always best to "be sure you're right" before you go ahead, and the other was that it's not quite so easy to guide a set of big sleigh-runners as one might think. Both of these things the boys learned in less time than it takes to write it; for the hill was so steep, that before the bottom was reached the sleigh was whizzing away at a breakneck speed.

At the bottom was a fresh snowdrift. Christie saw it, but in spite of all his efforts, on shot the sleigh, one runner striking the drift and overturning it. That was little matter for the boys, but the sleigh—something had "happened" to that. The shafts were broken. You may guess the rest.

BEGIN RIGHT.

BY JULIA COLMAN.

"GEORGIE, do you smoke?" I inquired. "Oh! no; not yet. I am not big enough, father says."

I couldn't help smiling at this, for he was a big-feeling boy, very big for a boy only seven years old.

"Then you expect to smoke when you are big enough?"

"Oh! yes; of course."

"And when will that be?"

"Father says I may smoke when I am thirty, but I guess I sha'n't wait till that time. I mean to smoke when I am eighteen."

"But don't you think you would better do as your father says?"

"Oh! well, I'm not going to wait so long as that; father didn't."

"But what good is it going to do you to smoke?"

"Oh! I don't know; it's fun, I suppose. Everybody smokes."

"Not everybody quite. And perhaps it will hurt you—make you sick."

"Oh! I'll risk that. Father smokes."

That was enough. I might as well have talked to the statuette on the mantelpiece.

But how came his father to smoke? Ah! he did not begin right. He learned when he was a little fellow, before he knew any better, and he got the habit so strong upon him, that he thinks he can't leave it off.

He does not want his boy to begin so young. He would like to have him not use it at all, and so he tells him to put it off till he is thirty. But there is his own example. However he may flatter himself, the boy will not wait till he is thirty, nor till he is eighteen either, unless somebody gets up a temperance school in that place and gets him to study about tobacco.

And now I must tell you a sort of secret. Men seldom learn to use tobacco. They learned when they were boys, and by the time they find out what a foolish thing they have done they think it is too much trouble to stop. So they have the burden to carry and the expense to pay, and their health suffers as long as they live, just because they were so foolish when they were boys. Would it not be best to begin right?