

Save the Boy!

Once he sat upon my knee,
Looked from sweet eyes into mine;
Questioned me so wondrously,
Of the mysteries divine;
Once he fondly clasped my neck,
Pressed my cheek with kisses sweet;
O my heart! we little reck
Where may rove the precious feet.

Save the boy! Oh, save the boy!
To the rescue swiftly come;
Save the boy! Oh, save the boy!
Save him from the curse of rum!

Once his laugh, with merry ring,
Filled our house with music rare,
And his loving hands would bring
Wreaths of blossoms for my hair.
Oh, the merry, happy sprite!
Constant, ceaseless source of joy;
But to-night! O God, to-night!
Where, oh! where's my wand'ring boy?

'Midst the glitter and the glare
Of the room where death is dealt,
Scarce you'd know him, but he's there,
He who once so reverent knelt
At my knee and softly spoke
Words into the ear of God;
Oh, my heart is smitten—broke!
Crushed, I bend beneath the rod.

Oh, this curse that spoiled my boy!
Led him down and down to death;
Robbed me of my rarest joy,
Made a pang of every breath,
Mothers, fathers, hear my plea!
Let your pleadings pierce the sky,
Pray and work most earnestly—
Let us save our boys or die!

In Prison and Out.

By the Author of "The Man Trap."

CHAPTER XVII.—MEETING AND PARTING.

BLACKETT was as good as his word. He did not in any way interfere with David's efforts to obtain work by which he could live honestly. He counted surely upon what the result would be; and, when he saw David start off morning after morning on his fruitless search, he would thrust his tongue into his cheek, and chuckle scornfully, causing the lad's heavy heart to sink yet lower. But no one else was kind to him; and, though he had a lurking dread and distrust of Blackett, there was no one else to give him a morsel of food. Blackett gave him both food and shelter, and of an evening he took him with him to the haunts of men like himself; and amongst them David perfected the lessons he had begun to learn in jail.

The brave spirit of the boy was broken; his powers of endurance were gone. He could no longer bear the gnawings of hunger and the cravings of thirst, as he had done as long as he could hold up his head before any one of his fellow-men. He felt compelled to slink away from the eye of a policeman, fancying that all the force knew him. And he had indeed the indelible brand of the prison-house upon him. He had a sullen, hang-dog expression; a skulking, cowardly gait; an alarmed eye, and restless glance, looking out for objects of dread. When he was hungry, and how often that was!—he no longer hesitated to snatch a slice of fish or a bunch of carrots from a street-stall, if he had a good chance of escape. To march whistling along the streets, with his head well up and his step free, was a thing altogether of the past now.

He made no effort to find Bess. If there had been any faint, forlorn hope in his heart, when he left jail, of still doing something better than drifting back into it, it had died away entirely before he had been a fortnight with Blackett. The courage he had once had was transformed into a reckless defiance of the laws and the society that had dealt so cruelly with him. What did he owe to society? Why should he keep its laws? He soon learned to say that his consent had not been asked when they were made; and why should he be bound by them? A strong sense of injury and injustice smouldered in his boyish heart.

Summer came and went; and a second winter dragged down the poor again to their yearly depths of suffering and privation. David was in jail once more, this time for theft, at which he laughed. Prison was a comfortable shelter from the cold and hunger of the dreary midwinter; and, if he had only luck enough to keep out of it in summer, it was not bad for winter quarters. He learned more lessons in shoemaking, by which he could not get an honest living outside the jail-walls among honest folk. The time for

that was past. He did not try to find work when he was free again. Henceforth the work David's hands would find to do was what God's law as well as man's law, and Christ as well as the world, call crime. But whose fault was it?

Nearly a year and a half had passed since Euclid and Victoria and Bess had found a home with Mrs. Linnett; and, though Mr. Dudley had done all in his power to discover David, every effort had failed. One July evening Bess was crossing London Bridge. The light from the setting sun shone upon the river, which was rippling in calm, quiet lines, with the peaceful flowing-in of the tide. Bess stood still for a few minutes, gazing westward to the golden sky. She was a prettier girl than even her own mother had thought sadly of her becoming; but this evening her face was brighter than usual. Her eyes sparkled, and her lips half parted with a smile, as her thoughts dwelt on some pleasant subject apart from the beauty of the sunset. She took no notice of the loungers on each side of her, who, like herself, were leaning over the parapet of the bridge, and gazing down on the river. But, as she roused herself from her pleasant girlish reverie, and turned away to go on homewards, a hand was laid on her arm, and a voice beside her said in a low tone, "Bess!"

She started, in a tremour of hope and gladness. It was David's voice,—his whom she had sought for in vain ever since she had lost him! But, as she looked at him, with her parted lips and shining eyes, a change crept over her face. Could this scampish, vile, and ill-looking lad be David? Yet, as she gazed at him, a change passed over his face also. His hard, sullen mouth softened; and, behind the reddened and bleared eyes, there dawned something of the old tender light of the love he had borne for her when she was his little Bess.

"Davy!" she cried.
"Ay!" he said.
Then there was a silence. What could they say to one another? There seemed a great gulf between them. They stood side by side,—the one, simple and innocent and good; the other, foul and vicious and guilty. How far apart they felt themselves to be!

"Davy," said Bess at last, though falteringly, "you must come home with me."
"No," he answered sorrowfully, "I'll never spoil your life, little Bess. You're all right, I see. You've not gone wrong, and I'll never come across you. I'm very glad I've seen you once again; but I didn't try. Bess, I'd ha' been very proud of you if things had happened different."

"Where do you live now?" asked Bess, letting her hand fall upon his greasy sleeve for a moment, but as quickly removing it, with a girlish disgust.

"I live off and on with Blackett," he answered. "I've got no other friend in the world; and sometimes he's good enough, and sometimes he's ravenous. Bess," and he lowered his voice again to a whisper, "I were in jail again last winter!"

"Oh Davy! Davy!" she moaned.
"Ay!" he went on. "It's the only home I've got, except the workhouse; and jail's the best. So I must keep away from you, or I'd do you harm. Don't you tell me where you live, or I'd be a-comin' to look at you sometimes; and it 'ud do you harm, little Bess, and do me no good."

"Oh! if Mr. Dudley 'ud only come by!" Bess cried.
"Who's Mr. Dudley?" asked David.
"He'd find you somewhere to go to, and honest work to do," she answered. "I know he would; and you'd grow up into a good man yet, like father."

"A good man like father!" he repeated. "No, I couldn't now: I've grown to like it. I like drink and games, and things as they call wickedness. I can't never be anything but a thief. There's good folks like you and mother and father; but I've been drove among wicked folks like Blackett, and I can never be like you no more. Mother was a good woman; and what did she come to? Why, she died o' clemming; Blackett's always a-sayin' so, and he's right there. But she couldn't keep me out o' jail; and I belong to bad folks now."

"Oh Davy! Davy!" wailed Bess.
"Good-bye, little Bess!" he said very mournfully. "I don't want ever to see you again. If Blackett was to see you now! No, no, Bess! you and me are parted forevermore. If there's a hell, I'm goin' to it; and, if there's a heaven, you're goin' to it! So good-bye, Bess!"

"Oh! why doesn't Mr. Dudley come by?" cried Bess again, not knowing what to do. For, if David was living with Blackett, she must hide from him where Euclid and Victoria had found shelter from their old enemy. How could she take David home, or even tell him where it was, if that would bring danger to them?

"Why did they send me to jail, and send

Roger to school?" said David with bitterness. "It isn't fair. He'd stole money, and I'd only been a-beggin' for mother. They didn't give me no chance; and Roger'll get taught everything. Nobody can help me now. I'm not sixteen yet, and I've been three times in jail; and nobody ever taught me how to get a livin' till I went to jail. And what's the use o' learnin' any trade in jail? Nobody'll take you on when they know where you've been. Father was a good man and he'd not ha' been willin' to work side by side with a jail-bird. It stands to reason, Bess. So I can never get free from bad folks,—never again."

"What must I do?" cried Bess, weeping, and pressing his arm between both her hands. "Oh, Davy! I can't let you go; but I mustn't take you home with me. What am I to do?"

"Well! only kiss me once," he answered, "just once, and let me go. You can't do nothink for me; it's too late! I'm bad, and a thief now; and all I've got afore me is jail, jail! I wouldn't like to spoil your life for you, little Bess. Don't say where you live; don't! It 'ud be too hard for me some day, and I might come after you, and spoil your life. Don't forget Davy. Kiss me, Bess; kiss me just once, and let me go!"

She lifted up her pretty, girlish face to him with lowered eyelids and quivering mouth; and he pressed his hot, feverish lips upon it. Then he suddenly wrenched his arm from her grasp, and, running very swiftly, was lost to her sight in a few moments amid the crowd always crossing London Bridge.

(To be continued.)

COULD NOT AFFORD TO GIVE.

A MAN who attempted to raise some money on a subscription paper for a necessary church out West relates his experience as follows:

"The first man I went to see was very sorry, but the fact was he was so involved in his business that he could not give anything. Very sorry, but a man in debt as he was owed his first duty to his creditors. He was smoking an expensive cigar; and before I left his store he bought of a peddler who came in a pair of expensive Rocky Mountain cuff buttons.

"The next man I went to was a young clerk in a banking establishment. He read the paper over, acknowledged that the church was needed, but said he was owing for his board, was badly in debt, and did not see how he could give anything. That afternoon, as I went by the baseball grounds, I saw this young man pay fifty cents at the gate and go in, and saw him mount the grand stand where special seats were sold for a quarter of a dollar.

"The third man to whom I presented the paper was a farmer living near the town. He also was sorry; but times were hard, his crops had been a partial failure, the mortgage on his farm was a heavy load, the interest was coming due, and he really could not see his way clear to give to the church, although it was just what the new town needed. A week from that time I saw that same farmer drive into a town with his entire family and go to the circus, afternoon and night, at an expense of at least four dollars.

"The Bible says 'Judge not, that ye be not judged;' but it always says, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' And I really could not help thinking that the devil could use that old excuse, 'In debt,' to splendid advantage, especially when he had a selfish man to help him."—*The Youth's Companion.*

A NEW ALADDIN'S LAMP.

"Now," said Howard's mother, shutting up the book, "that's the very last story my little boy can hear to-night. Your eyes are as big as saucers now, and I don't know when you will get them shut."

Howard took his elbows off his mother's knee with a sigh; there was nothing he loved so dearly as to have her read these wonderful tales. "I wish I had Aladdin's lamp," he said, looking back from the half-opened door; "one that would call up a giant whenever I wanted him."

"I've got one," said mother, smiling.
"You? Oh, now you are poking fun at me."

"No, truly; my lamp will not bring me bags of money or a castle, but I can have any great hero I please to spend the evening with me. If I want Alexander or

Cæsar or Napoleon or Washington, I rub my lamp, and here he is; if I want a poet, I can have Tennyson or Longfellow or dear old Whittier; if I want to hear Livingstone talk of his wonderful journeying, I can listen without leaving this room."

Howard looked puzzled, and yet a dim light was beginning to shine on mother's strange words.

"But my lamp will do greater things than any of these," she continued in a solemn tone; "it will bring me into the presence of the King of kings, of angels and archangels, and of a great company whom no man can number, clothed with white robes, having palms in their hands."

"Do you mean reading, mother?" he asked.

"Yes," she said; "reading will do all that for me."

Howard went off in a very sober mood to undress by mother's chamber fire. He had been a lazy little boy about learning to read, and seemed only too well satisfied to have his mother read to him; but now he had a new thought about it.

"S'pose Aladdin had had to get somebody to rub his lamp for him," he said to himself, slowly pulling off his shoes and stockings; and Howard made up his mind to begin the very next day to learn to read in dead earnest.—*E. P. Allen.*

THE JUNIORS AS HELPERS TO THE PASTOR.

BY MRS. J. P. BRUSHINGHAM.

Do not be always preaching to the Juniors. You listen while they make the speeches and tell the Bible stories and give the temperance lesson, and they will never grow restless. Bishop Vincent says; "I would rather have a boy that I had to harpoon in order to catch him than have a dead-head." We want the bright, wide-awake boys and girls in the Junior League, and we want them to understand that God needs their happy, bright hearts to use for his service in his Church. The Junior League is a training school for boys and girls, fitting them for active church membership.

Not long ago a number of boys and girls were graduated from a Junior to a Senior League. To have heard their testimonies in the first devotional meeting was refreshing. One boy arose and said: "I would like to be such a man as Daniel was," giving in a manly way as his reasons all the strong points in Daniel's character.

The Juniors had been studying the biography of many Bible characters, and each boy had vied with the other in learning the most interesting facts. A sweet-voiced girl arose and said: "I think it was beautiful when the disciples were out on the Sea of Galilee, and that terrible storm came, that they had Jesus in the boat, because he could drive away all their fears. I want him with me all the time."

The Juniors had drawn a beautiful map of Palestine on the blackboard, and had studied it for eight Sundays, locating its mountains, cities, rivers, and lakes, and telling all that could be found about them, always giving some Bible story or reference concerning each of them. They had learned to talk so freely among themselves that they were not timid when they were placed among the Seniors.

Someone could well write an article upon "The ways in which the Junior League may help the Pastor," and another upon "The ways in which the Pastor may help the Junior League." When the pastor understands that the boys and girls make the very best of Church members, and that he can accomplish more with fifty of them who have given their hearts to God than he can with a hundred cold, half-hearted men and women; then he will be more anxious to win them. He comes home on a Sunday night tired and discouraged with his day's work. He has left out some of the best things he intended to say in his sermon. Apparently no souls were saved. His official board meets the next night, and he tells them he feels the need of their prayers for the upbuilding of the church and the salvation of souls.

But let him come before his Epworth Guards, who are fighting against all sin, and holding up the banner of love, and say: "Now, boys, I want you to help me to-night. We want someone to lay down the weapons of sin, and enlist for Jesus. If you love me, ask the Captain of our salvation to give us some new recruits." That very night stubborn hearts are moved, and ask the prayers of the Church, and the pastor is not very prepared either, but he is backed by the prayers of an army of sincere, loving boys and girls.—*Epworth Herald.*