

make me miserable, I know." There was a faint smile in Hagar's eyes, though she shook her head dejectedly.

"You are too good for me," she answered; you're the best friend I ever had; but perhaps some day you'll be worn out, too, and forsake me. It would only be what I deserve, and I shan't blame you."

Yet, in spite of herself, it roused and gladdened Hagar's heart to believe that Abbott, who knew all about her, loved her well enough to wish to make her his wife. His search after Dot, which had slackened a little, was renewed with more persevering energy than before; and Hagar, as she grew less downcast, entered into it more earnestly. Yet it was almost a hopeless pursuit; and grew more and more hopeless as the autumn succeeded summer, and itself faded into the chilly dreariness of winter. They followed up the faintest track, and caught up the vaguest rumors of lost children; but with no success. Many a child had been found straying about the streets since March, and had been carried to the workhouse; but not one of them was Dot.

"It's a year next Sunday since I forsook them," said Hagar, one day, as they were returning, baffled and dispirited from some fruitless search, "and if you like, I'll go into the Gardens then."

It was just such another day as the dreary day last November. The yellow fog hung about the trees; and drops of rain fell from the bare branches upon the muddy sward below. There were very few people about, though it was Sunday afternoon; and Abbott and Hagar walked along the sodden paths, undisturbed by the sound of voices or the foot-fall of passer-by.

"If I'd only kept true!" said Hagar, lifting her pale face to the gloomy sky; if I'd only thought of God, and kept true to them! God does love us; I believe it now; but oh! if I'd only known it then, and waited, and seen what He would have done for us. There's the very tree I left my father under; he stood just there, listening as I went away, and little Dot was playing off yonder among the trees, hiding behind them for me to go and find her! How could I be so cruel? It's right I shouldn't find her now. Oh! what a wicked, wicked thing it was to do!"

"But you have repented sorely," said Abbott.

"Yes, sorely, sorely," sobbed Hagar, "God forgives; you say so, and I believe it. I don't think He's angry with me now, and I'm going to try to be a real Christian. But oh! to think of little Dot playing there among the trees, and never to see her again, and never to know what has become of her! I feel as if I didn't know how much I loved

her. I couldn't ever forsake her now. It isn't Baby I grieve for, for he's safe and happy in Heaven, and my poor father, he's quiet in the grave. But Dot! I'd be glad to find her lying dead yonder among the trees where I left her playing, rather than never know what's happened to her."

"Cannot you trust her to God?" he asked, gently. "You forget what the Lord Jesus said whilst He was yet alive, when He called a little child unto Him, 'It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish.' You do not yet believe that God loves your child more than you love her yourself; ay, and can take care of her better. He can never forget or forsake her."

"Oh! I'll try to believe it," she answered, with deep-drawn sobs.

"I do try to believe all you tell me about God! But, oh! if I'd kept true to them then!"

She said no more, but paced mournfully along the paths she had trodden when she wandered about the Gardens in the night, with her baby slumbering at times, and wailing at times on her bosom. She recalled it all, and fixed it afresh upon her memory, as if she feared it might fade away. Abbott walked beside her in silence, in pitiful patience, until they left the Gardens by the gate where she had fallen under the horses' feet in the darkness of the November morning, and he had first seen her in her utter misery and poverty.

"I'll try to be a good wife to you," she said, as they stood still for a few moments, thinking each of them of that morning. "You are very good to me, and I shall get over it in time maybe; but if I'm ever down-hearted and very sorrowful, you'll know what I'm thinking of, and you'll bear with me?"

"Ay, God helping me!" he answered heartily; "you shall be a happy woman yet, Hagar."

CHAPTER XV. — DON'S THANKS-GIVING.

Don began his new task with great energy—the task of providing for little Dot's wants. Fortunately for him the worst part of the winter was over; though the nights were still cold, and many of the spring days were too stormy for a young child to live altogether out of doors. But the daylight lasted long, and the times were busy; it was just the season of the year when work was most plentiful. Even at the East End there was a difference when the West End was filled with its population of wealthy people. From the earliest dawn till the latest twilight Don was sharply on the look-out for any job to be done, and his keen eyes and quick movements often secured him work wherever there was a press of business on hand. Sometimes Dot trotted beside

him, or rode on his shoulders, when he went on errands. His happiest days were those when he had a little money to lay out in oranges or sweetmeats, or other small marketable stock, which promised him a quick return, and a good profit on his outlay. Then Dot rode triumphantly on his hired wheel-barrow, keeping him merry with her little ways, and the chatter he loved to listen to. But he often found that she could not go with him when he was bound for any distance or was engaged for a few hours' work, and then, with sore misgivings of heart, and countless terrors, while he was away he was compelled to leave her in charge of some lodging-house keeper, or, still oftener, under the chance care of some apple-stall woman, near his place of work, whose stall might happen to be in an archway, or any other sheltered spot. The women were very good to little Dot, but it caused him many a pang of anxiety, and many a sharp sense of gladness, first to leave her, and then to come back and find her safe and happy.

The wandering life they lived was very pleasant to him, and Dot throve well upon it. They scarcely ever spent a week in the same lodging-house, or even in the same street; though Don kept cautiously to the East End, and the neighborhood of the docks, where he could almost always find some work to do. In his eagerness to be earning money for Dot and her wants, he pitted himself against full-grown men, and thrust himself forward for tasks too heavy for him. He could not get rid of his dread of the child being forcibly taken away from him if there was anything miserable and neglected about her appearance. To ask any person for help or advice in any way would subject him to questions he could not easily and truthfully answer. If he found any of the people with whom he was thrown into company at all desirous to know his history, it was a sufficient hint to him to change his quarters; and any kindly enquiry from the women who took care of Dot for him, filled him with deep anxiety. Amid all his ignorance he knew he must not tell a lie; and he could not bring himself to break the law of the God of whom he had so faint a knowledge, even when facing the danger of losing little Dot. If he could only say she was his sister, that would be a sufficient answer to every enquiry, but Don could not. To speak the truth always, and to teach Dot to do the same, was what God required of him, and he must do it.

As a further precaution against being tracked and discovered by Dot's enemies, the police and parish authorities of Chelsea, who were bent on imprisoning her in

the workhouse, he dropped the name of Don, which he knew by this time to be too odd and singular to escape notice, and called himself John. He tried hard to call Dot "Hagar," which he believed was her real name, as old Lister had once said she was christened after the mother who had forsaken her.

The summer was very welcome to Don, and the long, light, warm evenings were full of pleasure to him. Then, after the day's hard work was done, he could carry Dot down to the side of the river, and watch the ships passing up and down, with their gayly-colored flags floating idly on the soft western wind, and he would wonder with the quiet wondering of ignorance, where they were going to and where they came from. He had seen them sailing with all their canvas spread on the open sea, looking even more beautiful and strange than on the river, and the sight of them brought back those pleasant days when he was growing slowly better from the fever, and was treasuring up stories to talk over with Mrs. Clack. The ships, with their tall masts and the white sails, recalled to him some of the lessons he had learned about God, and Jesus Christ, and Heaven—names which were little more than mere words to him, yet which had a power over him no other words possessed. They were like good seed buried deep in the good ground of his faithful heart, promising to bring forth a hundred-fold at some future harvest-tide.

Don was growing very tall during these lightsome summer days; but he grew thinner and weaker as if he was out-growing his strength. He was always hungry, and hunger is a costly comrade to poor folks. It had to be tricked, and put off, and mastered instead of being satisfied. What gave him more real concern was that he had quite outgrown his clothes, and was no longer decent-looking enough to be entrusted with errands. He grudged buying for himself anything which Dot could not share, or as long as there was any want of hers not supplied. Dot did not look as if she had any want; and he loved to see her pretty face look rosy and smiling. She never cried softly now, as if afraid of being heard; it was seldom that she cried at all, but if she did it was quite openly, and noisily enough to frighten Don. He would not let her suffer from hunger or cold, and the fresh air from the river made her strong and active, and gave her a ravenous appetite, which Don satisfied, whilst he put off his own sharp-set cravings. It was quite necessary to live on short commons, if he had to provide himself with larger clothes.

(To be continued.)