

## "RED DAVE";

Or, "What wilt Thou have me to do?"  
(From the Family Friend.)

## CHAPTER II. — Continued.

For answer, his father, lifted him gently on to his knee, and put his strong arms around him, as though to defy even the thought of Death to touch his precious boy; and when the tea-things came in, Willie woke up from a cosy nap, lively and smiling; but his smiles could not banish from his father's mind the thought that, for the first time in his life the child had appealed to him for help in vain. Willie had turned to him, hoping his clever father would relieve him from the fear of lying for ever underground; but what could his father tell him, since he had determined the child should never hear of Him who says, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die"?

## CHAPTER III.

## "OUR FATHER!"

Intense hunger often prevents sleep, and though Davie felt tired and faint, he was still wide awake that evening when he crept away from an approaching policeman to rest within one of the recesses made by the seats upon the bridge. Away in the distance he saw everywhere the lighted windows of homes, but he—like the King of earth and heaven—"had not where to lay his head." It was cold and damp, curled up on the stone seat above the river, and some might even have preferred the warm, safe prison cell; but to the street boy liberty was next to life. He was free—free to look up at the golden stars, and wonder vaguely concerning their calm, sacred beauty; free to look down at the flowing waters, and think of a boy he had seen drawn up out of the river drowned.

"Anyways he ain't hungry," thought Davie; "I mind he were often short of cash like me, before he got drowned; wonder what's come of him now!"

The next moment he was conscious of a faltering step beside him, and the starlight showed him dimly the bent figure of an aged woman, with a little basket on her arm. He saw she was poor and feeble, so he felt there was no need for him to make his escape.

"Why, my lad!" said a weak, quavering voice, "ain't this a blessing that we've got into this cosy place out of the rain? It's just beginning to come down, but we shan't feel it much if we creep under that there shelter."

"The bobby will be by," said Davie. "I spects I can give him the slip, but he'll see you, and he'll turn you out, sure enough."

"He's turned his light on here a while ago," said the woman.

"I don't think he'll look right in again, and if it rains hard, he'll turn into the cabmen's shelter at the top; I hope he'll let me alone just this one night."

"They'll take you in at the Union," suggested Davie, "if you hain't got no tin."

"Why ain't you there, child?" she asked.

"Oh, I couldn't—I wants to feel free."

"And so do I, lad; I've lived off the parish, and I hoped to die off the parish, but our Father—He knows better nor I do. Maybe I've got stuck up of late, for I'm over seventy, and I've earned my living, and nursed my good man till he went to glory; and what with charing and needle-work and washing, I never wanted no parish relief; but I've got the rheumatiz this three month, and I couldn't do no work nor pay the rent, and I'm two month behind, so the landlord he sold

no appetite to eat a morsel. So here it is, dearie, and do you eat every bit of it; dear now! where's your mother, to leave you alone, and you such a little wee boy?"

"Haven't got no mother," said Davie, snatching at the food, "and I ain't little; I'm bigger than I look in the dark. But I say, you'll be hungry maybe to-morrow, and then you'll want this."

"No, lad; it ain't no good keeping up my pride—the Lord knows better nor I do, and since He sends me there, I'll go there; He'll come along of me, I know. I'm a-going to apply there in the morning, only I just wanted one night more to feel free like afore I goes to the — Workhouse. I likes being out here better than being shut up there, so I says to

Reckon you wouldn't sit so close to me, if you'd a-known I'm out of gaol to-day."

"I don't know about Jarvis," said Betty; "but whether you've been in gaol or not, I know the Lord does love you. Why, He used to touch the lepers—poor creatures nobody wouldn't have about them, and who had to get out of the way of everybody."

"Just like me," said Davie, "Guess He wouldn't touch me though; I'm horrid dirty, but I means to wash in the morning."

"You don't know my Lord Jesus, you don't know nothing of Him if you think He wouldn't touch you; why, boy, we touch Him when we pray to him."

"Pray—what's that?"

"Talking to Jesus; He likes us to tell Him all we feels, and all we wants."

"All we wants? my eye!" cried Davie, "I wants something more to eat, and a new suit, and kittens, and lots. Where does He live? Guess if I go to Him, some one will drive me off."

"No, nobody can," said the old woman, "there ain't nobody can drive us off from God."

"God! is it Him as you means? —I can't get to Him."

"Yes you can, and He will hear you and help you."

"Tell me how." The boy crept close up to her, his face upturned to hers in the darkness.

"I can't tell you much, laddie; I'm only old Betty, and don't know nothink. But God did teach us one prayer, and I knows that right enough. You say it after me—say it quick, 'cause something queer's come to my tongue, and I feels a bit sleepy. Our Father."

"Our Father," said Davie, in wondering, hushed tones.

"Our Father," came again more feebly from old Betty, and again the boy spoke it after her. But she did not speak again, only leant back against the wall, and her basket rolled from her hand.

"She's gone to sleep, sure enough," said Davie. "Guess I'd like to tell Him all I wants. But it don't matter about me; I'm used to sleeping out of doors; but she's too old for it;" and then his face looked up to the sky where the dark cloud hid the stars, and Davie uttered his first prayer—"Our Father, can't you find a place for old Betty to-night?"

He dropped fast asleep by her side, so sound asleep that he was not conscious when in the gray dawn of morning a policeman flashed his lantern into the recess, and found a little ragged boy asleep on the seat, wrapped round in Betty's shawl. But the old woman slept more deeply still, for though she had been turned from her earthly home, One whom she loved had drawn nigh unto her in the darkness, and lifted her away to our Father's house, "where the many mansions be."

(To be continued.)



OLD BETTY AND DAVIE ON THE BRIDGE.

me out to-day, and told me to go to the Union."

"What a shame!" cried Davie. "I'd like to shoot the old fellow."

"Ye mustn't talk like that, child; I ought not to have been behind with my rent, but this poor hand got terrible bad a while ago."

"Won't it get worse if you stay here? the rain is getting in to us now."

"It don't feel over bad to-night; I feel somehow stiff and chilly, but I'm not in pain, thank the Lord."

"Well, I'm glad you're come," said Davie. "I likes company, and I'm that hungry I can't sleep."

"Well now, that's queer. I've got half a loaf as a neighbor give me—poor dear! she wanted it bad enough herself—and I can't get

myself, Betty, you shall say one more prayer out of the Union, and then you goes in to-morrow! I'd a-hoped to have died out of the House, but sure and I ain't no call to be discontented and to grumble—it's nothing to what the Lord went through."

"Who's the Lord? do you mean the Lord Mayor?" asked Davie, with his mouth dangerously full.

"Why, laddie! our Lord—our Lord Jesus."

"He ain't our Lord," said Davie, "I ain't heard nothink on Him."

"Not heard of Jesus! why, there's nobody loves you like Jesus does, laddie."

"Nobody loves me at all," said Davie, "nor I don't want them to; Jarvis pretended to care a lot for me, and he got me in gaol.