

Clack's strange face, and though she was not so rosy as she had been in the summer, she was yet healthy-looking, and her little hands and arms were plump and firm. She made Don's face seem still more pinched and hunger-bitten. His eyes met Mrs. Clack's as she stood gazing fixedly upon them both.

"Cripple Jack told me as little Dot was to be taken to the work-house," he said, with a faint light breaking in his dim eyes, and with a smile playing on his face, "and I couldn't abear that. I couldn't leave her to go there, and I took her away with me. I've never forsook her, never! And now she'll never have to go there, never—never."

His voice failed him, but the smile did not pass away from his lips. He stroked little Dot's curls, feeling that never had there been such rest and satisfaction for him, after all his troubles and his fears.

"Don't you talk no more till I've got tea ready," said Mrs. Clack, "and then you shall tell me all, and I'll tell you all. There's lots to tell."

She made haste to prepare tea, and ran down to send Peggy for some new bread and a kippered herring, such as had been a rare feast for Don in former days. His eyes followed her restlessly wherever she moved about the room, as if he was afraid she would vanish out of his sight. And he was partly afraid. Was this a dream, or were the last ten months a dream? His brain felt too bewildered to answer the question.

But when the tea was poured out, and steamed fragrantly before him, and the food was heaped up on his plate, he could not swallow a mouthful. The mere effort seemed to choke and suffocate him. He was too tired to be hungry, he said, and he stretched himself on the earth, with his eyes still fastened upon Mrs. Clack and Dot as they sat at the table, listening to them, and laughing feebly once or twice when Dot began chattering gayly, as if she were quite at home. When the meal was over, and Mrs. Clack drew her chair up to the fire, with Dot upon her lap, he lay quietly on the hearth in great contentment, gazing up into the two faces which were dearest to him in all the world.

"Ay, I've lots to tell you," he

said, with a half-sigh; "but I'm too tired now. And there's lots o' things I wanted to ask you, only I thought as you was dead. You're a clever woman, Mrs. Clack, and you can tell. There's God—did He really send His Son out of Heaven, you know, to come here and live like us?"

"Ay, He did," answered Mrs. Clack, "only we're always forgettin' it, and goin' on as if it wasn't true. God loved us, and sent His Son Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ loved us, and came to save us."

"I know it's true now. I couldn't never have forsook little Dot."

He asked no more of the questions he had longed to have answered, for the exertion of speaking was too great for him. But Mrs. Clack told him of her holiday in the country, with all its pleasant surprises and memories of her own childhood, and Don enjoyed them, remembering all the while the wonders of his own sojourn at the sea-side, which he would tell to her in return as soon as he was a little more rested. She went on to describe to

little Dot's sake, and she couldn't think she could ever be happy again, even with him. And, oh! Don, I'd like you to grow up to be a man like him! P'raps he'll get you a place on the railway, with settled work. I never thought there could be men like him; if he wasn't so strong and hearty I should be afraid he'd not be long for this world, as folks say."

"That's what folks said of me," remarked Don, "and I felt as if I couldn't die before seeing the old place; so me and Dot came off here at once."

"Are you ill, Don?" she asked, anxiously.

"Oh, no, only quite tired; I shall sleep well to-night, and it'll all be right in the morning. Everything is right now, and we'll take Dot to Mrs. Hagar. But it'll be very hard to part with my little gel."

(To be continued.)

THE KESTREL.

Some years ago the children at a Derbyshire rectory procured a young kestrel. When it was able to fly they gave it its liberty, but it never left the place, as it had become attached to them. In the spring of the following year his friends missed him for nearly a week, and thought he had been shot, but one morning it was seen soaring about with another of its species, which proved to be a female. They paired and laid several eggs in an old dove-cote, about a hundred yards from the rectory; but being disturbed that season by some white owls, the eggs were never hatched. The next spring he again brought a mate; they again built and reared a nest of young ones.

Last year they did the same, but some mischievous boys took the young ones when just ready to fly. Though, in every respect, a wild bird as to his habits in the fields, he came every day to the nursery window, and when it was opened he would come into the room and perch upon the chairs or table, and sometimes upon the heads of the little ones, who always saved a piece of meat for him. His mate sometimes ventured to come within a yard or two of the house, to watch him when he came out of the room with his meat; she would then give chase, and try to make him drop it, both of them squealing and chattering in an amusing way.



THE KESTREL.

"Oh, is that true?" he asked, eagerly, half-raising himself from the floor; "did Jesus really come to save us, and to help us to be good? They told me so, but it was too good to be true. Is He the Son of Man that came to seek and to save them that are lost?"

"Yes," she answered solemnly, "it's all true. It was a hard thing for Him to do; but He never gave up. He lived like us; and then He finished by dying on the cross for our sakes. He's done all He could for us. He was so sorry for us that He couldn't leave us or forsake us, because He loved us."

"No, He couldn't forsake us," said Don, with a shining face,

him Hagar's heart-broken grief over her lost child, and the tears stood in his eyes again as he heard of it. He said how sorry he was that he had taken Dot away, yet he had done it to save her from a fate he dreaded, and Mrs. Clack laid her hand fondly on his head, and said, "God bless you, Don!"

"We'll start first thing in the morning," she said, "and take Dot to her mother. It's Sunday morning, too, and maybe Mr. Abbott's at home. Hagar was here last night, helping me to mend some gowns, and she told me as she is to be married to Mr. Abbott when Easter comes; but her heart's as heavy as can be for