

ed to move away regretfully. Awhile longer it touched with its rays the boy's curly head, and silently faded away.

Nat thought of the Jacob scene upon the church door and prayed on. In the hush and the shadows of that time of prayer, did any angels slip down the ladder from heaven and visit Nat's room?

When he arose from his knees he felt strengthened in his purpose, and that somehow the door would open.

"You see, mother," he said, the next morning, "I was going to get acquainted with Chicksie, and then talk about the ladder-school. If I don't see him in a day or two I am going to his street, hunt up his home and—well, now, mother, if anybody was sick there, I could take some oranges, and that would help me."

She laughed, "I think you'll get your door open."

"I—I am going to try."

Day after day went by, but no Chicksie appeared at the church door.

"Well," concluded Nat, "I—I've got to hunt him up. I—I'll get some oranges and start the very first day I have a chance."

Nat and his oranges were soon on their way to the home of Chicksie. Which house, though, did Chicksie live in?

"I think it is this one," decided Nat, halting before a very hard-looking door, battered and dirty.

Suddenly it opened. Out came a drunken man who looked very much like Nat's former enemy. He saw Nat's package.

"Here, give me that!" he growled, and rudely snatched Nat's package away.

Nat's heart sank; a feeling like despair settled upon him.

"Tom," said a voice, "don't you do that! You let him have them!"

It was Chicksie, and he looked very resolute, and he spoke fearlessly. Had Chicksie risen out of the earth suddenly? No; he just turned a corner close at hand, and confronted Tom with the air of a David meeting Goliath. Tom laid down the bag of oranges and slunk away.

"I—was—a—coming to see you, and I thought some of your folks might want oranges," explained Nat.

"You want to see my folks?" asked Chicksie. "You come this way."

What a dingy flight of stairs they climbed! how narrow was the entry! Chicksie opened a low, mean door and said:

"Walk in; that's my family."

On the floor, playing with some rough blocks, sat the Sphinx.

"Haven't you a—a—" Nat began to ask and then paused.

"Hain't I a father?—a mother?" said Chicksie, obligingly coming to Nat's relief. "Not as I knows of! Me and Sis are a-boardin'."

An old woman here came in.

"Miss Greeley, this is my friend," said Chicksie, proudly looking at Nat.

"How do you do, ma'am?" said the Trinity boy, bowing courteously.

The old woman stared and grinned.

"She is deaf," said Chicksie, "You knock agin'."

"How—do—you—do, ma'am?" shouted Nat.

"Oh, I don't do very smart."

"She's Tom's mother," explained Chicksie, "He don't come round very often."

"Then this is Chicksie's home," thought Nat, looking at the humble furniture, and Chicksie and Sis were "a-boardin'," and it was Chicksie that, selling papers, supported Sis.

"He's brought these oranges," shouted Chicksie, handing the old lady the bag.

"Oh, oh, my! I thank 'ee," said the pleased old woman.

"Won't you sit down?"

Nat felt that the door was now open. He was "acquainted" with Chicksie, and he could make his proposition hopefully. Would Chicksie go to Sunday-school with Nat?

"Why, I—I've been a-thinking of it," confessed Chicksie, "a-seein' you and the church door; and Sis, too, she's a-grown up, or will be. Say, Miss Greeley?"

He had turned to his landlady.

"What say, Arthur?"

"That your name?" asked Nat.

Chicksie laughed. "I have two names, just as some folks have two suits of clothes. I am called 'Chicksie' down in the alley, but Arthur is my name—Arthur Drayton."

"That's a fine name," declared Nat.

"What did you say?" asked the old lady again.

"Didn't I say to day that me and Sis ought to go to Sunday-school?" asked Arthur.

"Oh, yes; sartin'."

"But if you hadn't hung on I never might have got there," the newsboy told Nat.

What a happy Sunday that was when Nat, Arthur, and Sis started for Sunday-school! Nat's in Brooklyn was too far off, and they went to one of the Trinity Sunday-schools.

"He has!" said a voice as Nat was entering. "You—you the boy that wanted to open Trinity church door?"

"I am the boy," said the pleased Nat, recognizing his church porch acquaintance. "Are you a teacher here?"

"I am a teacher here. I am Mr. Sinclair. What can I do for you?"

The end of the doing was a seat for Arthur in Mr. Sinclair's class, while Sis went among the lambs of the flock. Nat remained that Sunday. It was a touching scene as Nat and Arthur bowed their heads in prayer side by side. The sun was cheerfully streaming through the windows at this time of prayer; and I wonder if, on those slanting stairways of gold, any of Jacob's angels were silently slipping down? —*Edward A. Rand, in Young Churchman.*

A GRUMBLE-BOX.

"Here, Nell, put in your cent; that was a big one."

"I only said the potatoes are stone cold, and its the honest truth; they are. If that's grumbling, I'd like to know. Is that a grumble, mother?"

"I rather think it is, Helen," answered Mrs. Porter. "Some one had better read our contract again. We haven't heard it for nearly two days. You read it, Harry."

Harry took a box from the middle of the table, and read aloud:—

"Each and every member of this family of Porter agrees to pay one cent into this box for each and every grumble or complaint he or she may make about any article of