

'I'll try not,' said Ben with a grave look on his face, and then he hurried on towards the village. He did not much notice the people he passed, for his thoughts were centred on his home, and in a few minutes he reached the familiar row of cottages.

It seemed to Ben as if everything had stood still just where it was since he had left. The same children seemed to be playing in the road; the same organ seemed to be grinding away its doleful ditty; and surely that was Ned Willett loitering at the corner, just as he had seen him a hundred times before. The door of his mother's cottage stood open, and in another minute he was in the kitchen, while a chorus of eager voices cried out to gether—

'Here's Ben! here's Ben come home!'

His mother was there among them with baby Nell in her arms, and this being a sober day, from the simple fact that she had no money to spend, she was capable of joining in the general admiration of Ben's appearance. The children looked at his dress, from the smart Gleggarry down to the Gordon trews, in silent wonder, evidently thinking that Ben belonged to quite a different order of beings to themselves.

'Give Nell to me, mother,' Ben said, as the first gush of excitement subsided. And if the little one had forgotten her big brother in the long months of absence, still there was something as she nestled in his strong arms that made her wonderfully content.

That same day Ben made his way to Allen Lodge, for he was anxious to tell Miss Carew of all his doings and express his gratitude to her. Her heart was full as she looked at the once forlorn looking boy, and felt thankful that God had put it into the hearts of these good men to establish a home where boys such as Ben might be rescued from sin and temptation.

Miss Carew was as pleased to listen as Ben was to tell of his new life. She only grieved that the boy should have come back to such associations.

'Ben,' she said, 'you will be surrounded by temptations here, you will be tempted to drink and go to the public houses.'

'They won't get me in,' said Ben firmly.

'They won't if you ask for God's strength to help you, Ben; but if you trust in yourself alone I tremble for you. A soldier must go forth to battle prepared for the fight. Our great Captain has given this promise to those who love him, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' Remember that he is close beside you, seeing all you do, and listening to all you say; close beside you too, to shield and help you in every time of need.'

Ben had not been many hours at home before he found the truth of Miss Carew's warning words. The battle was hard to fight, and the boy was so miserable, that had it not been for baby Nell he would have returned to the Home long before the week was over. But the helplessness of this wee sister seem-

ed to appeal to him more than ever, especially as pension day had come round again, bringing in its train all the miseries that Ben knew so well. He presented himself at Miss Carew's before he left Rengate, and his friend soon saw that the happy face was clouded.

'I am afraid you have not enjoyed your holiday much, Ben,' she said kindly.

'No ma'am; I shall be right glad to get back to the Home.'

'I am afraid you have sadly missed the good wholesome food.'

'Yes, ma'am, I have,' said Ben; 'but there's more than that. Here everybody is tempting me to do what I know is wrong, while at the Home the Commandant, and the Major, and everybody try to help us to do what is right.'

'Poor Ben,' said Miss Carew sadly; 'I wish you had a different home to come back to. Do you know I have sometimes thought that if any one could win your mother to a different life it would be you. I tried to help her, and she did make a beginning, but soon sank lower than ever.'

'Poor mother,' said Ben, 'if she would only give up the drink, I think perhaps father would.'

'Then try, Ben. God's grace alone can make her turn right about face and begin afresh, but he uses very feeble means sometimes to carry out his wonderful plans, and it would be very nice if her own boy helped her.'

'I'll try, ma'am,' said Ben thoughtfully.

The next morning Ben was off early, and very glad he was to get back to the kindly shelter of the Home, leaving his dear ones yet again to go on in their old ways of sin and misery.

(To be Continued)

Once a minister paid a visit to a deaf and dumb asylum in London, for the purpose of examining the children. On this occasion a little boy was asked in writing: 'Who made the world?' The boy took up the chalk and wrote underneath the question: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and earth.' The minister then inquired, in a similar manner: 'Why did Jesus Christ come into the world?' A smile of delight and gratitude rested on the countenance of the little fellow as he wrote: 'This a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.' A third question was then proposed, eminently adapted to call his most powerful feelings into exercise, 'Why were you born deaf and dumb, while I can hear and speak?' 'Never,' said an eye witness, 'shall I forget the look of resignation and chastened sorrow which sat on his countenance as he took up the chalk and wrote: 'Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight.'

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