

wailed out, "O I are so hungry! and it's so cold." For a moment Joe's astonishment made him motionless, so that the little arms remained about his neck long enough for him to become conscious of the strangeness of the situation and the feeling. Nobody had ever clung about him or turned to him for help, that he could remember, before, and after an instant an unexplained impulse of anger seized him, as if someone "was trying", as he put it to himself, "to make a fool of him and he was not going to have it!"

"I say, younker!" was the fierce exclamation as he flung off the encircling arms, "stow that, will yer! I ain't none o' yer softies." Then he turned away to depart, but a second later he was back again in his old position, seizing the child by the hand and dragging it up from its recumbent position.

"Here, come along! I'll do one thing fur ye. I ain't 'ad my own breakfast yet; I'll go snacks with yer in that, Only don't yer go a-maulin' of me again as yer did afore, mind that!"

With a hasty glance outside to see that no "Bobby" was in sight, he hurried his protégé down the street and into a smaller one near by. Here he bade him wait for a moment outside a shop bearing in its fly-stained windows a tempting array of superannuated tarts and buns, and slices of highly-coloured ham, only the colour was a little more yellow than is generally supposed to belong to that especial article of diet. His charge was by no means sorry to pause, for what little breath had been left in the thin, half-frozen body was now very nearly knocked out of it by the pace at which he had been dragged along for the last five minutes. In a few seconds his strange protector appeared again, only this time the hand that had been laid so roughly on him before, was stretched out toward him with what seemed to the hungry eyes fastened upon it a veritable feast for the Gods, but which was in reality a bun, neither too new nor too clean, with a currant here and there to redeem its plainness. "You'd better make the most o' that, younker, it's all yer'll get," was the characteristic remark that accompanied the offering. And then Gaol-bird Joe turned away and walked, whistling, down the street. Whether he intended to leave his quondam charge thus must ever remain a matter of doubt; his companion's intentions were more decided. After a short two minutes' walk Joe, looking down, became aware of the fact that the tiny figure was still by his side, trotting along as fast as two very tiny legs would carry him, in order not to be left behind, and munching away meanwhile at the repeat that he, Joe, had provided.

"Hallo, younker!" was the surprised exclamation. "What do yer mean by this? Where are yer goin' to?"

There was no real reply to this, only the blue eyes looked up into the deep-set ones above with not a trace of embarrassment in them, and one little hand, free now, for the last fragment of the bun had been demolished, was slipped into one of Joe's. A long, low whistle testified to the utter state of bewilderment into which this final state of affairs had projected the author. For a moment he was too much at a loss to do or say anything, then a low amused chuckle broke, involuntarily, as it were, from his lips.

"This 'ere's a rum go: Gaol-bird Joe turned philanthropist. Guess I'll found a horpion asylum and get my name in the newspapers! Say, younker, yer don't think hi'm agoing to undertake yer bed and board, do yer? I've a real nice bed but I'd like it hall to myself, thank yer; and as fer board, why my landlady's werry partikler and might hobject to take sich a werry poorly dressed gentleman as you in. What er yer goin' ter do about it?"

The only response to this grim jocularly was a closer approach of the little figure to his side and a pitiful "Is we near home yet?"

A picture came to Joe's mind of various boxes and barrels that had given him refuge at night, varied by stray nights now and then, when a successful "lift" had enriched his pockets, in some tenement devoted to the entertainment of such as he, who could not afford to pay more than a penny or two for the privilege of sleeping under shelter, or did not care to waste more than that amount upon the luxury. The last "lift" had been the cause of his departure from Bromley some two weeks ago, and the last copper of the thence-arising profits had been devoted to the purchase of that bun for his present little companion; a fact which perhaps had caused Joe's sudden departure as soon as he had pushed the bun into the baby-hand, for eighteen or nineteen hours without food in mid-winter are apt to tell upon the appetite, and it was about that long since Joe had tasted anything.

"O yes, werry near 'ome," he remarked, jocularly. "Some of 'em anyway. I's got so many of 'em, you see. Which would yer like to go to?"

But the brain he appealed to was too young to take in the meaning or humour of these speeches, and at last Joe awoke to the full reality of the fact that he positively had to decide what he was going to do with the strange burden so suddenly thrust upon him. For a few minutes he stood with knitted brows and half-scowling face. Then his eye fell again to the level of the small figure waiting so patiently for him to make some movement. As it fell, the former grim smile broke out again, with the ejaculation, "Well, if 'e aint a rum little chap!" and then, a light of revelation breaking over his face, he closed his big hand more tightly over the baby hand lying so confidently in it, and, with a half-impatient "Come on, younker!" set off again at the former rapid rate down the street upon which they were. A pause before an open doorway, a steep climb up one flight of stairs, a knock at a doorway on the right of a dirty, foul-smelling passage, a brief interview (or altercation)

with a woman who opened it, then another steep climb up two more flights, and finally Joe and his companion found themselves in a small, low-ceiled, dimly-lit garret, with one small window set in the sloping roof and cobwebs hanging everywhere about it. Furniture it had none, but Joe looked about it with an air of pride.

"'Ere, younker," he exclaimed, "'ere's my town residence. I've several fine places in the country, but I prefers this in the winter. It aint werry grandly furnished, but that's a matter o' taste. Some people likes lots o' furniture, some likes little; I'm one o' them as likes little. Now, baby, I'm just agoin' to pay a few calls, and as children ain't hallowed, yer'll 'ave to stay 'ere for the present. I'll be back some time or other."

Whether this was a real promise, or merely a ruse to get rid of the child, and, whilst leaving him under shelter for the day, leave his future destiny to chance, must remain another matter of doubt. As Joe emerged on to the pavement, he cast an involuntary glance up at the cobweb-hung windows which he knew overlooked the street. It was merely the last glance that most of us give as we are taking our departure from anywhere; but the sight that met Joe's eyes touched a chord somewhere in his nature. Close against the dusty glass, in the vain effort to see down into the street below, was the outline of a little face, and Joe's imagination could fill in the rest. The blue eyes, the soft, baby-features, the tangled fair hair. "Blow the little brat!" was the not very tender ejaculation. "He kind of haunts a feller."

Perhaps it was this same haunting that drew Joe back to the "little brat" waiting so trustfully for him in the dark garret. At all events, as the lights began to twinkle one by one in the street below, and the gloom in the garret grew denser and denser, he re-appeared with a piece of bread he had begged, and the usual invocation, "Well, younker!" Later, when the city clocks had long since tolled forth the hour of midnight, and his young roommate was sleeping as soundly as bare boards and no covering would allow, after having been nursed to sleep in Joe's arms, beneath Joe's overcoat, Joe himself stole forth again (there were no locks in that dilapidated tenement), and in the morning the papers told of a robbery committed the night before, in which a widow's house had been entered, and all her little hoard of money taken out of her bureau-drawer. Peter robbed to pay Paul. God protects the widow and the orphan, we protect the one at the expense of the other, just as it pleases us. When little Bobbery, as Joe had taken to calling his young protégé, because it was all he could make out of the child's effort to tell him his name, saw the bright glitter of the silver and the gold, the next morning, he laughed with delight, though he appreciated still more the dainties that Joe placed before him as his breakfast. Joe himself fared sumptuously as well. It had always been his habit to feast when he could, and starve when he couldn't. He was an unconscious epicure, and held their motto, "Live while we may, for to-morrow we die!"

So followed the long, hard winter. By degrees Joe had managed to get together a bundle of straw and a blanket purchased of a second-hand dealer in all sorts of household necessities, so that Bobbery was tolerably comfortable at night, and as for Joe, sometimes he was there, sometimes he was not. Little Bobbery never missed him. He was always there when the little one went to sleep and when he woke, and, to Bobbery, all the kindness and goodness in the world was concentrated in one person, and that person his big protector. He would have been very much surprised if he had heard the opinion held of that selfsame personage by the world at large. Gaol-bird Joe seemed to be "wanted" more than ever that winter, but somehow he was never found. He *might* have been found at any hour of the day in the attic at No. 419 Water St., but apparently fortune favours others than the brave, and no one sought him there. At night he was there also as long as the proceeds of the latest adventure lasted; when those were spent, the daily papers had another robbery to chronicle, and so the winter wore away. Every night after dusk the necessary purchases had to be made, and the last thing that Joe saw on setting forth, the first thing that greeted him on returning again was the outline of that baby face pressed flat against the glass to catch the last glimpse of the retreating, and the first glimpse of the returning, figure of his hero. But at last a time came when the uproar in the city over the repeated robberies grew so great that the police were roused to unusual efforts to find the culprit. So it came to pass that Joe dared not venture on any new exploits, and funds dwindled *very* low. At last Joe had to do what he had never done before, husband his pennies. Little Bobbery, munching his bun or bit of bread, sometimes wondered when Joe eat his breakfast or tea, but it never occurred to him that Joe, perhaps, did not have any. But the worst thing was the rent. A shilling a week is not much, but it might as well be a pound if you have not got it. For two weeks the irate landlady waited and then, one night, marching up with a new tenant, she turned them out into the winter night with as little mercy or compunction as if they had been two cobwebs from the ceiling. It was a bitter night. The thermometer that had been falling all day, now stood at about ten degrees below zero, and the wind was blowing up for a storm. Joe took little Bobbery in his arms and turned his face, almost unconsciously, down towards the docks. Perhaps some faint remembrance of olden refuges found there in the days when he was alone, guided his feet. Folded under Joe's greatcoat, little Bobbery tried to still his frightened sobs, and be good for Joe's sake. And so they went down to the docks of that mighty river that bears the

traffic of the world upon its breast. Comfortably-housed people, that night, between their linen sheets and woollen coverings, listened with a shiver to the howling of the wind outside the rattling casements, to the beating of the sleet against the glass, to the concatenation of storm-voices abroad that never-to-be-forgotten night. "God pity those abroad!" was the cry of many a heart and tongue. Perhaps they would not have prayed it, or perhaps they would have made a reservation in his case, if they had known that Gaol-bird Joe, the disturber of their peace, the despoiler of so many homes, was one of those they prayed for. Perhaps God understood and answered according to what they *would* have prayed, or perhaps He was not thinking of them but only of Joe, whom, despite his vice and vileness, He may still have loved. Who knows? His "way is in the sea."

When the morning came at last, bright and smiling as if just awake from a peaceful sleep, a policeman on his rounds found in a barrel on the docks, close by Westminster bridge, two figures frozen stiff: a tiny child wrapped up in an old greatcoat, and a boy of about sixteen with nothing between him and the bitter air but a pair of trousers and a cotton shirt. "Gaol-bird Joe!" The cry burst involuntarily from one of the crowd that soon gathered about the spot, as crowds will gather on such occasions—an "officer of the law" who had once had the honour of holding Joe in his possession for about five minutes, until that worthy's aforesaid snake-like propensity had enabled him to wriggle, physically this time, from under the detaining clutch, and then do something more than wriggle down the street and out of sight. They had been after him all the winter, and now they had got him—only it was not exactly as they had expected. If they had taken him alive he would have been sentenced to penal servitude for years at all events; now he had passed to a higher tribunal—what would his award be there? There was nothing to regret in his death; there might be a good deal to be glad of. The world had lost a nuisance, perhaps he had been spared a death upon the gallows, for he certainly would have come to that in the end. He was thoroughly bad from beginning to end, *utterly depraved*. So the world said, and why should we doubt its judgment? Well! now he had passed to the Judge, whose ways are not our ways and whose thoughts are above our thoughts as the heavens above the earth! He would appraise him justly either for good or ill. They could not unclasp the frozen arms from about the little figure by his side (and there were some, principally women, who began to wonder if "Gaol-bird Joe" had been as black as he had been painted), so they lowered them together into one common grave. To me it seems so sweet: the little heart resting in its last long sleep on the big, faithful heart that had yielded up its own beating in the vain effort to preserve life in the small frame that had become so inexpressibly dear to it. Bah! I am an imbecile. He was "Gaol-bird Joe," the worst criminal for his age that England had ever known. No doubt his death was a just punishment, and they were right: he was bad from beginning to end, *utterly depraved*.  
ESPERANCE.

### THE ORANGE REVOLT.

IN the works of Artemus Ward reference is made to a suppositious sensation novel "De Jones, the Corsair of the Gulf." "For seventeen long and weary years," says Artemus, "he languished into a loathsum dunjon. But one day a idee struck him. He opened the winder and got out." The career of this long-suffering hero of romance is forcibly recalled by the anti-partizan speeches and protestations of the 12th of July orators. For many years they have been grinding in the prison-house of partyism, keeping in power by their votes a government which has been guilty of repeated acts of corruption and tyranny and has only maintained its hold on office by the wholesale subsidizing of sections and classes. Yet they have only just discovered what has been a perfectly familiar truism, ever since Confederation, to every man with a grain of intelligence and capacity for independent thought. There is something ludicrous in the naive simplicity with which these Orange and "Equal Rights" zealots shout out that they have been betrayed by the politicians, and exclaim with the air of one who has just made a novel and startling discovery, that the government is actually willing to buy votes by concessions to provinces and race sections! Really after this the stolid infatuation of the detected swindler in the "Bab Ballads" loses its point as a caricature:

He called me "thief" the other day,  
And daily from his door he thrusts me,  
Much more of this and soon I may  
Begin to think that Brown mistrusts me!

Ever since the days of the "Canada First" party the evil consequences of our system of partizan government have been pointed out by independent writers and speakers. Every instance in which unjust concessions have been made to sects and factions, provinces and corporations, with the object of buying political support has been utilized to point the moral against partyism, but to little purpose. Even when the Orangemen in their own persons were ignominiously thrust out of doors they failed to realize that party exigencies were more powerful than all considerations of justice or fair play, and continued with spaniel-like devotion to lick the hand that smote them. True, in the case of the not-inconsiderable fraction of the Order who have attained the Nirvana of office, the rustling of crisp bank bills, if we may so paraphrase Tennyson, helps the hurt that honour feels. But the subserviency to their