

## HOW BILLY WENT UP IN THE WORLD.

BY ANNETTE L. NOBLE.

## "WHAT SHALL THE HARVEST BE?"

The sunny beautiful days went swiftly by, and the harvest came; then every hour was so filled with work, that there was no time to settle moral questions. They dropped out of Billy's thoughts until the day he carried his barley into Sefton, and did much better than he had done with it the year before. He had been glad last season to get eighty cents a bushel for his grain, and was satisfied with his crop of thirty-five bushels to the acre. This year he had forty bushels to the acre, and sold his barley at the brewery for ten shillings per bushel. As he started for town that morning he found himself wishing that the great brewery was not so near—if it were in a city farther away he would sell his barley to a dealer, and—*and—* He followed the idea no longer. A neighbor driving into town joined him, a man universally respected. He was enthusiastic about the success of a friend of his who got his seed from Canada, and found that it yielded him from fifty to sixty bushels of the four-rowed barley.

"Mr. Waite," said Knox, "did you ever think it was wrong to raise barley?"

"Wrong?"

"Amn't we helping along the cause of intemperance?"

"O nonsense! Talk that to this fellow who had forty acres of this Canadian barley. Do not suppose he'd stop raising it?"

"Not if he thought it wrong?"

"It ain't in human farmer nature to see it wrong, I reckon."

The words were empty, but the airy tone in which the matter was disposed of stung Billy's present mood, and greatly helped him to sell his barley a little later.

In the afternoon he had a pressure of other business to attend to, and the day was gone before all was accomplished. Jogging along home in the sunset light, he began to calculate how long it would be before he could clear off all his debts and own his farm, if he were to go on raising barley, and from such seed as Waite had told of that morning. He was too tired with the excitement of the day to think clearly—too tired to be troubled by the old question of right in the matter. His thoughts, allowed to drift at will, turned backward to his early boyhood, and he saw bits of life as in a kaleidoscope.

Blear-eyed Sall, the old hag who sold beer in the Water Street cellar;—he could see the cobwebs full of dirt in her own window, could smell the vile odor of her den, and see the tramps who stumbled down into the dimness and filth, to swear over their coffee and her beer. Far pleasanter to recall was the face of a pretty young shop-girl who used to send him to buy her beer at a grocery. She had it every night when her work was over. At first she sent him with a little blue pitcher, and took it half-shamefacedly. She used to go herself, bareheaded, for it, after a while, and would stop to joke with men about the grocery. She lost her pretty face and nice ways. He remembered a day when she was drunk,—another day when the women of the alley called her vile names; he had wondered at that, for they all drank beer. That night she threw herself into the river, and a few of those same women cried over her dead body, and said it "was drunk at the first" that ruined her. He had forgotten poor Nellie for years.

Next there came to him a moon-lit Sunday night, when Ned Fenton was walking a Sefton street with him, and they came to the bright saloon. He could hear that gay voice so plainly. "Hold on, Knox! Don't you want a glass of beer?" He could see the young fellow bowed down in self-disgust another night, when he said, "I am morally weak." The world was full of weak men, who fell before temptation—and beer was a curse. Knox had arrived at this conclusion already. It annoyed him that his mind dwelt on the subject so persistently. He whipped up his horse and sang the rest of the way home.

Billy was very tired that evening, and would gladly have stayed at home from the weekly meeting; but he had agreed to deliver a message from a man in Sefton to a person who would probably be at the school house, and he could not properly tell it to any one else. At this time of the year the

attendance was small, and the best leaders not always at hand. Not being in a mood himself to render active service, and remembering this, Knox started late.

A few were present, but the evening was sultry and everybody looked dull and drowsy. Seeing a good but rather tedious man at the desk, Billy sank down near the door, thinking he could rest his body, if he were not very much edified spiritually; but soon, weary as he was, he found his mind unusually lively. Now that his barley crop was sold, and that matter decided for the season, he resolved to put aside for future settlement the question whether or not he should sow it again. If he had erred in the past, he must redeem the time that remained by some unusual exertion. He resolved soon to move in a matter that had been suggested to him some months previous: the starting of a "Young Men's Christian Association" in Sefton. He ran over in his mind a list of available workers, and during a lengthy prayer he found himself planning the proper organization in a way to get it in order before winter. After the prayer and a hymn, the leader chose a chapter from Jeremiah, apparently at random, and read it rather unintelligibly. Billy was wondering if the Association could not from the first carry on a course of lectures, and he resolved that the subject of Temperance should be made prominent.

The lamp by the reader smoked; he turned it down, and then went on with the only sentence that attracted Billy's attention that evening: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully." Not having known there was such a verse in the Bible, he began to puzzle over its meaning. A man might easily do his own work deceitfully, if he did it claiming that he were working for his master; but this was said of going the Lord's work—doing it deceitfully.

Now a man might, for instance, be starting a Christian Association, with the sole purpose to make other men better, and yet its founder himself might not be right in the sight of the Lord. If the words could bear any such interpretation, would they apply in any way to him? So far as he knew his motives were of the best.

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the heart,"—*came to him.*

Then, as Knox sat there, verse after verse, that he had never consciously committed to memory, passed through his mind. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." "All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." "A deceived heart hath turned him aside that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say: Is there not an iniquity in my right hand?"

(To be continued.)

## SUSIE REDMAYNE, OR THE BITTER CRY.

(By Christabel.)

"Wait a minute, my boy;" and the gentleman took out a silver coin, asking the boy, as he did so, what he did with his money.

"I work for my little sister, and myself," said Ralph earnestly.

"Then you have no father?"

"Yes, I have," replied Ralph; then he blushed and was silent.

"Well, I hope we shall meet again," said the gentleman as Ralph hurried away.

Then mentally he exclaimed, "That boy could be made something of!"

Ralph was delighted, and his first impulse was to run home and tell Susie; but he said to himself, "No, that would be unbusiness-like; I must go and try to earn some more."

He had some more small successes; then he went to a cook-shop and bought their dinner, and ran home as fast as he could.

The morning had seemed long to Susie. It might have been a week, so long and lonely did the hours seem to her childish imagination.

Bessie Brown had been in, and with her cheery voice and kindly words had broken the loneliness; but Bessie had so many calls upon her time that she could not devote much of it to the little girl, who, through the lone hours, shed many silent tears.

No devoted wife ever waited more anxiously for the footsteps of her husband than did Susie for Ralph's. She knew,

too, by the way he ascended the long flight of stone steps which led to their dwelling, whether he had been successful or not.

She heard him bounding up the steps, and she clapped her hands with joy when she saw his smiling face.

Slowly Ralph unburdened his pockets. Moments like these did not come every day. It was so pleasant to look at the old rickety table with the dinner and the money spread upon it. They could not hurry even to begin their dinner. Very reverently Susie put her hands together and asked a blessing in her own simple fashion.

The short winter's day was soon over, and the night again closed in. There was no abatement in the storm. The wind drove the sleet against the cracked squares, but tonight the children had warmth and food, and the success of the day had made them hopeful.

They laid plans of future happiness and built aerial castles, and dwelt in them at pleasure; and at times forgot the storm and their own wretchedness.

But, ever and anon, coming back upon them with redoubled force, was the dread of the sound of the unsteady footsteps; for which they waited and watched long after the hour when Susie's pale face and weary little eyes should have been wrapped in refreshing slumber.

Then Ralph remembered that they had not thanked their heavenly Father for the kindness they had received that day.

They might have been frozen or starved to death in the storm that raged around their poor dwelling. But in all that dreary mass of blackened buildings and thronging thousands God had not forgotten them.

This Ralph and Susie felt, and expressed their thanks in their own child-like way.

And He who said, "Let the little ones come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," would not turn a deaf ear to these little ones.

For he will listen to the petitions and accept the thanksgivings of every child who prays sincerely.

Redmayne staggered up the steps a little earlier than usual, and not quite so deeply intoxicated. But the black frown upon his forehead, and the fiery glances that darted from under his shaggy eyebrows, told Ralph that nothing except the money that he had hoped to save for the following day would avert the impending storm.

"I say, lad, hast thee been idle again to-day?" asked the man roughly, and a threat was about to follow; but Ralph quietly took out a shilling and laid it on the table beside him.

The poor boy had hoped that this would satisfy his father; but no! the depths to which strong drink can reduce a human being are like to the fathomless ocean,—by no human calculation can they be measured.

Seizing the boy by the arm he thrust his dirty and bloated hand into the boy's pockets, and took out every coin that remained.

"Ralph," he said fiercely, "next time empty thy pockets thyself, and don't try any deception with me."

Ralph reddened under the insult, for he had never told his father a falsehood. But he had no time to think about it.

"Here, run quick, and get this filled," said Redmayne, taking an empty bottle from his pocket; "and if thee doesn't get it, then never enter this house again."

Ralph thought as he ran down the steps that the thing he desired most on earth was that he might never again have to share his father's home; but for Susie's sake he wouldn't run away.

During Ralph's absence, Susie, who was trying to hide herself in bed, partially hid her breath, she was so afraid that anything should remind her father of her presence.

The suspense was short, for Ralph quickly returned with far more than enough of spirits to deprive the reckless man of all power of movement or speech.

The children kissed each other in silence and went to sleep.

When the next morning dawned there was nothing to relieve the harshness of the keen frosty wind. The hail-stones, which fell at intervals, threatened destruction to the window; but nothing seemed to matter now.

There was no breakfast, nor any means of procuring one. Ralph crawled out of bed, for his limbs were stiffened with the cold that every day increased.

With difficulty he managed to get a handful of fire to burn, then he sat down with a

listless stare. There was the kettle cold and empty on the dusty old-fashioned hob. A heap of ashes and cinders were under the grate. The worn brush and the old shovel, that Ralph had used so often, were laid by the fender. His father slept in an old arm-chair in the corner, and he awoke and consciousness returned he put out his hand for the bottle that stood at his elbow, and drank again of the deceptive draught, to drown his wretchedness in a short oblivion.

In another corner was little Susie sitting up in bed; she seemed afraid to get up, and Ralph did not stir to help her.

The silence of blank despair reigned in the room. It was a terrible silence! No ray of hope either for this world or the next broke in upon it. It was not the silence of a Christian's death-bed, for that throws around a holy calm which the rude contact with the world cannot at once disperse, as if the hovering of angels' wings over a household purified its inhabitants, for a time at least, from pride, worldliness, and the over-carefulness for the things of time.

Susie shivered as she sat and pulled around her shoulders an old blue cashmere shawl which her mother had worn with pride on her wedding day.

Her beautiful blue eyes took in the whole of the repulsive scene before her, and she could never afterwards entirely forget it.

The half-emptied bottle, the ragged coat and bloated appearance of her father, the despairing attitude of her brother, the breakfast table with no food upon it, but only some cracked crockery that was not wanted now.

Instinctively she closed her eyes and tried to think of something else.

The day wore slowly on, and after a time Ralph roused himself to go out. He was stiff and weak and hungry; he could not do much, but he earned a few coppers and bought some bread and went back to share it with Susie.

Very fragile and shadowy Susie looked as she ate the dry bread without a murmur. Her golden hair, which curled naturally, twisted itself in rings all round her face and neck. And Ralph thought as he looked at her, perhaps the angels would come and take her. She looked so out of place in the revolting room.

But a sharp pang shot through his breast at the thought of parting with her. She was the only sweet thing that the earth held for him.

Yet he resigned himself as a martyr when he goes to the stake, because he dies to attain an object.

Ralph could think of no future pleasure that Susie was not to share. All his day-dreams of the brightness to come vanished at the thought of parting with her.

It was late in the evening when Redmayne startled the children by jumping up wildly and beating the air, which to him was filled with imaginary beings that mocked him and drove him mad.

The children clung to each other and eluded the blows at first. But the mocking spirits in the air maddened the man, and Susie's cry of terror directed him to the spot.

He was burning with the desire to be revenged on his imaginary tormentors.

Ralph saw his clenched hand raised high in the air, and rushed in between the blow and Susie. They both fell on the floor, and Susie was more hurt by the fall than the blow. They were stunned for a moment and knew not what to do. Then Ralph crept on his hands and knees towards the door, beckoning Susie to follow. The only way of escape was in flight.

Redmayne did not know that he struck nothing more terrible than the air and his poor children.

## CHAPTER III.—THE BLACK RIVER.

The children left the house sobbing wildly and passionately.

The night was cold and dark and wet. The rain was washing the snow from the black icy streets,—very icy they were to the two pairs of little naked feet.

They fled on swiftly through the cold falling rain,—through the dingy rays of light that streamed from the little shops.

They did not know where they were going. They seemed to be impelled onward by the violence that had struck them and wounded them, and turned them bruised to the floor.

They were too heart-sick to make any plan.

They might have appealed for shelter to