

quickly; "it's best to shut your eyes to the bad, sure."

"Bad! Yes, they're a precious bad lot are brats nowadays," said Granny, walking back in great wrath. "Now I'll have to tramp all the way back again. Greg'll catch it when I do find him!"

"Why did you say you hadn't seen me?" asked Greg, presently, when Granny was fairly out of sight.

"An' I didn't say so honey. Little childer shouldn't be called 'brats.'"

Greg did not question this, but he drew closer to the kindly heart.

"Does your Granny beat you, honey?" asked Biddy, in a kindly voice, meanwhile keeping a sharp look-out after likely customers.

"Yes," returned Greg, sorrowfully, turning up his ragged sleeve—"look there!"

"Oh, the cratur! to give you a blow like that!" exclaimed Biddy, indignantly, as she saw a long black mark on the little bony arm. "An' it's she doesn't deserve to have a child near her. You come to me, my darlint, whenever she beats ye, an' I'll take care o' ye."

Greg looked up gratefully, and ate the bread she offered him.

"Here, take a drink o' this, 'twill do ye good," and she held a jug of tea to his lips.

It was long since Greg had been so kindly treated. Isaac was kind, to be sure, but he had not fed and comforted the hungry, aching child like Biddy; and though May was always sympathizing, she could not help and defend him as the apple-woman did. No, from that day Greg always counted Biddy as his best friend. He remained hidden with her till she began to pack up her things for the night, and then he sorrowfully returned to the dreary court.

It was some time before Greg went to see old Isaac again; he longed to have another talk about the happy land, but he did not like to go without May, as Isaac had especially asked for her. May had not been about the court for some days; the last time Greg caught sight of her at the window she had a bandage tied round her head, and she looked very sorrowful. Greg guessed that her father had been striking her in some drunken fit. He had often watched the man stumbling home, and heard his angry words and loud voice; and he grieved in a quiet way that May, too, should know the sorrows of a drunken home. But one day when the sun was shining, and Greg was enjoying its warmth, sheltered from the cold

winds in his usual nook, he saw May coming out. She looked sad, and there was a great black mark on her forehead; but she came straight up to the boy and said, gently—

"You're always in this corner, Greg."

"Yes, I've got to be here. Granny goes out every morning, and turns me out afore she goes, and locks the door so I've got to be here."

"Ain't you very cold?"

"Sometimes. It's nice and warm now in the sun."

"Shall we go and see that lame man?" asked May. "Mother

hearty "Come in!" Greg could not reach the latch, so May opened the door, and there sat Isaac alone busy at work.

"Come in, come in," he said, when he saw his visitors timidly standing at the door; "I can't move, and my wife is out. I thought you had forgotten me, you were so long coming again."

"No," said Greg, "but May couldn't come."

"Oh, this is May is it? I'm very glad to see her. Has she had a fall? What a bad knock you've got, my child!"

"No, it wasn't a fall—" said May, slowly, and she stopped.

Isaac slowly shook his head, watching the faces of the children before him, and thinking with grief of the sadness that sin had brought into their lives. Then rousing himself, he asked, "What did you read to-day."

"Why, mother read such a beautiful bit! 'Twas all about singing and being glad—about the sea making a happy noise, and the leaves rustling in the wind, and the river rushing along—and all 'cause the Lord was King! 'Twasn't like this 'ere court at all. But mother said that if people would come to the dear Saviour, all the world might be like that—all bright, and happy, and good, and singing. And I know one verse said something about 'victory,' because mother said, 'Ah child, our court's called 'The Battlefield,' and it is just a part of the great battlefield; but, dear me, most of the battles are lost here because they don't know that the Lord has got the victory.'" She said something like that," said May, in her old-fashioned way. "and I wish the victory was come, 'cause 'twould all be so nice then."

Isaac smiled. "It'll come, child, it'll come. Yes, there'll be a grand victory one day! Your mother was right, this is part of the great battlefield; she's got a hard fight, I expect, but you tell her she's sure to win, because she's on the right side she'll win, sure enough."

May smiled, pleased that Isaac thought her mother all right, but not understanding his meaning. Greg had sunk down on the floor in a crouching position; he never could bear to stand long, for his back gave him so much pain; but his bright eyes were wide open listening eagerly to the conversation.

"When'll the victory come?" he asked at last, with his head bent eagerly forward.

"I don't know, my boy. Every fresh one who comes to the Lord Jesus makes it a bit more likely, and every little victory gained over sin brings the great triumph nearer."

"But what have we to fight?" asked Greg. "Granny fights sometimes, must I fight her? I'm over little to do any good."

(To be continued.)

TO DO ONE THING poorly and slowly, for the sake of saving a little money, at the expense of another thing we have learned to do quickly and well, is a mark of parsimony rather than of real economy. The most precious things are time and opportunity for good.—*Sunday-School World.*



"GREG, MY BOY, CREEP UNDER MY SHAWL AND HAVE A BIT O' MY SUPPER."

says I can go now."

"Yes," said Greg, eagerly, rising with difficulty—"and hear about the happy land."

"I wish we could go there, Greg," said May wistfully.

"We're goin' some day ain't we?"

They walked up the court, turning round to Isaac's corner. When they got there Greg's courage failed him.

"You knock, May," he said.

"No; you've been before, it's you to go first," replied May, drawing back.

So Greg gave a timid knock, which was responded to with a

"I see, I see," said Isaac, pitifully—"poor lambs, you've a deal to bear. But the blessed Lord knows all about you, and He cares for you. Do you know about Him?"

"Yes," said May, a soft light coming into her eyes; "He is the dear Saviour who died for us, and is going to take us to the happy land one day."

"God bless you, child. Who told you about Him?"

"Mother told me; she talks about Him every day, and she reads about the happy land, and we sing sometimes when father's out," said May, innocently.