

HOW BILLY WENT UP IN THE WORLD.

BY ANNETTE L. NOBLE.
A RANDOM SECT.

Dwellers in a city are accustomed to grand parades, to informal fireworks, to noise, in short to all kinds of excitement. They can hardly understand the interest of a Fourth of July celebration in a large country town. Such an affair occurred in Sefton the second year of Billy's farming, and was greatly enjoyed by the inhabitants. The Fourth happened on a bright day, and by nine o'clock the Barnards were ready to start for the field of operations. Prissy, as she stowed her three youngsters away in the wagon, warned Silas to watch Urban (the idol), for he would surely eat any torpedoes or fireworks that came to hand. She solemnly adjured the twins not to squeeze orange juice over their new pink frocks and then she began wondering why Billy Knox did not appear.

"Don't freeze and fret!" said Silas, picking up the reins. "Billy is going to Sefton along with the Ellerys. The old man has got a lame wrist, and he wanted him to drive."

"Oh, has he? Well, hurry, Silas, or we shall be late."
"No, there they be now, just ahead of us, Billy didn't care about the parade. He said he shouldn't go into town until noon, but I suppose he had to be accommodating."
"Yes, he can accommodate himself to Nan's movements almost any time," said Prissy, forced just afterwards to put her fingers down Urban's throat, after an agate button. He certainly did think his stomach was the best receptacle for any rubbish about the outside universe. The spluttering ended Prissy noticed that Silas was lost in meditation.

"What are you thinking about?" she asked.

"Why, that!"

"What?"

"Why Billy and Nan Ellery! Is he does he?"

"Yes, he is and he does; and he has been for the last three years," returned Prissy, reckless of all syntax, adding, "but I guess it is all on his part. There, I hear brass bands!"

They were crossing the town boundaries, and soon had met the Ellerys. The team had been put in a safe place, the families had joined forces and were in the Park, the centre of festivities. The trees shaded them pleasantly; the houses on every side were gay with flags, and the on-coming parade was sufficiently gorgeous. The marshal first (a peaceful citizen, looking to-day like a bloodthirsty warrior), the Goddess of Liberty, the States of the Union (young ladies in red, white and blue), the soldiers of the Grand Army, the town firemen—all were there in proper order. Bells rang, cannons fired, and Prissy, excited by the music, was as lively as were Jack and Jill.

Billy, who remembered many street processions in New York, was chiefly interested in meeting his friends; for everywhere he met familiar faces. Before the oration, however, he was careful to secure the cool corner of a stone porch, where the ladies could be out of the crowd. Perhaps he heard everything said by the long-winded speaker, and enjoyed the reading of the "Declaration," but he did not lose any of Nan's merry comments on the scene around them. Often during the past year he had said to himself, that as he had no reason to think Nan would ever return his affection, it was wise for him to shun her society. That was his theory; his practice was never to lose an opportunity like the present to enjoy her conversation. He had not been alarmed for a long time by mention or by sight of the Professor, and gradually, his fears in that direction were allayed. He often nowadays called at the Ellerys', and Nan never avoided him.

When the speeches were over, the Barnards wandered off to show the twins everything astonishing that the town afforded. Mrs. Ellery went with her husband somewhere for a cup of tea, leaving Nan and Billy together. They were away from the noise and the crowd, yet near enough to see it all, had they cared to see. Billy was too happy to sit quietly near Nan and talk of the Academy, of their school friends, and

similar topics. At last he ventured one direct question, his eyes full of meaning: "Where is your friend the professor?"

"In Boston."

"May I see him?"

"Yes, six months ago," replied Nan.

"I am so glad to know it," said Billy.

When the most formal ceremonies of the day were ended, he betook himself to the one large hotel of the town to see a man with whom he had appointed an interview. He not only found him, but with him were many acquaintances, all talking of the news, politics, or business. A few were in very high spirits, owing to excess of patriotism, or proximity of the Sefton House bar; and after a while, Billy perceived that his neighbor Holmes was behind this bar as an extra assistant for the day.

"Pshaw! Isn't it hot here!" exclaimed a pleasant faced man, one of the group with Billy. "I seldom drink beer, but that looks cooling. Won't you have a glass, Knox?"

"No, thanks."

"Don't you ever take it?"

"Oh, don't you know Knox is as mad as a March hare on the temperance hobby?" laughed a bystander. "It is of no use to ask him to drink."

"Yes," added another, "Holmes here, says he is spoiling the beer trade up his way."

"He's spoiling other folks' interest in it, but, mind you, he ain't hurting his own a penny's worth," grumbled Holmes.

"How is that?" asked Billy.

"What do you suppose I sell beer for, anyway?" was Holmes' loud return question.

"Why, to make money by it, I suppose."

"Exactly! I have bought a public house, and I have got to sell beer to pay expenses. Now you have taken a farm, and you are trying to pay for it, too, ain't you, Knox?"

"That is just what I am doing."

"Very well then. I sell lager over the counter, by the glass; and you sell lager by a bigger measure. What is the difference, I'd like to know? You raise barley to go in one door of your hands, you hold them up in holy horror at a fellow who sells the lager that comes out of the other door."

A loud laugh went around, not so much at the significance of the defense, as at Holmes' triumphant tone, and Knox's expression of amazement; for the latter stood a second speechless. Of course, there was an absurdity, or a catch, in this adroitly turned argument of the bar-tender; but he could not in his sudden bewilderment, get hold of the fallacy to expose it. He stammered:

"All barley is not raised for the brewery."

"No; but all that you sell goes there, straight enough, and you know it."

"If I raise and sell good grain, I'm not responsible for the bad use it is put to afterwards."

"I don't say as you are; and by that same token, if I sell a glass of good sound beer, you needn't go ranting around about the misery I'm making. I ain't responsible for the bad use made of lager. I tell you, Knox, we're after the very same fish, with the very same bait; and if your line is longer, and has got more knots in it, you're at the other end of it, all the same. Hello here, Jim, these gentlemen want glasses!"

The laugh had subsided; the bar-tender was immediately intent on his duties; and the man who had been interrupted in a talk with Billy about a self-binder, went on as before the digression. In the opinion of the crowd, nothing of any weight had been said. Everybody who owned a farm raised barley. Holmes had only hit on this notion as one calculated, for the time, to silence Knox.

"Where have my wits gone?" thought Billy, half-listening to the praises of the binder. "I ought not have let Holmes get the best of me like that. I must straighten out this kink, and be ready for him my next chance."

A new comer greeted him, and later the incident was only remembered as a slightly unpleasant episode. Then came a Sunday afternoon before harvest, when it was recalled to him by a chance remark of Silas'. They were sitting together in the doorway—the Barnards and Billy—as Sil, looking up from a paper, said:

"If nothing happens to that barley out there, before harvest, it will beat our last year's crop all holler."

"Stop your week-day talk, Sil," said Prissy, promptly. "Remember the man

who was going to pull down his barns and build greater."

"Tell me about him! Tell me about him!" roared Jack, before whom the mention of a story was a red rag exciting him to frenzy. Prissy resigned herself to giving details; while Billy, coming nearer Silas, told him for the first time of Holmes' speech in the Sefton House.

Si, shrugging his shoulders, laughed:

"Why, I didn't think Holmes had gumption enough to fire such a shot as that."

"Well, it was like shot; it floored me."

"What would you have said to it?"

"I should have thought of my smart answer next day."

"I have not thought of it yet. If it is wrong for Holmes to sell beer, because it is beer, why isn't it wrong for me to sell what is surely going to be beer?"

(To be continued.)

SUSIE REDMAYNE, OR THE BITTER CRY.

(By Christabel)

CHAPTER I.—"ALONE, ALONE; ALL, ALL ALONE!"

"It is so cold, Ralphy—so cold! it is going to be colder."

"Do you feel it very much, Susie?" said the boy, turning to the all but fireless grate and trying to rake together the few dying wood ashes.

But it was no use. There was nothing in the grate to give warmth—nothing to give light—nothing to make the cheerless winter afternoon seem cheerful.

They were not quite orphaned children, perhaps they were rather worse than orphaned.

The mother had died when little Susie was born; and it would be hard to say how the child had managed to live through seven summers and winters of neglect, hard usage and scant fare.

Yet she had lived as nature's wild flowers do live, and like them, the little thing contrived to shed a certain sweetness upon the hard world about her.

She was almost like a flower to look at with her golden head, her lily-white face, and her eyes of pure forget-me-not blue; and there was a flower-like grace about her that caught your attention at once if you happened to be passing through Piper's Court.

The room, or rather the garret in which the children were sitting, was at the top of Smirk's Buildings. The slanting roof was low and smoke-blackened. The snow which had been falling softly all the afternoon, was beginning to lie densely on the cracked skylight, shutting out the last ray of light, and making the children feel as if it were probable that they might be buried there in the chill gloom and darkness.

They had not much to say to each other now. They had had time enough during the day to talk themselves sad, and then to talk themselves bright again, half a dozen times over.

They had eaten the last morsel of bread, or rather Susie had eaten it; for Ralph declared that he had no appetite when he had no work.

His work was to run errands, to hold horses, or to help the market people, in short to do anything and everything that a quick and eager boy of eleven might be expected to do.

He had been unfortunate on this particular day. Not a penny could he earn, and he had never yet had to beg. He could not have told you what instinct within him made him shrink from an appeal to charity, as he would have shrunk from that.

He only remembered his mother very vaguely, but that vague remembrance acted as an unseen check, when t. boy knew it not.

It gave him a feeling that he was not exactly as the other boys of Piper's Court, and he saw plainly that Susie was not like the other girls.

Something marked them off, though the boy was all too young and too ignorant to know what that something was.

His resolution, if such it could be called, had been tried many and many a time, but never more than to-day, and now, when the day was almost gone, it was tried more than ever.

His little sister's words rang in his ear, "It is so cold, so very cold!" He knew how cold it was too; his own jacket was thin, he had no stockings, and in the morning he had had to fasten his left shoe on to his foot with a piece of string. He had laughed as he did it, but he did not laugh now, when the night was coming down into that bare unfurnished room, bringing with it new hopelessness, new terror, new and unknown dread.

There was a little straw bed in one corner of the garret, where Susie always slept. Ralph's bed, where he slept with his father on the rare nights that the latter went to bed, was in an adjoining garret; that was a straw bed too, and had only a ragged coverlet, which was of little use in the way of warmth.

The frost grew more and more intense, and colder still grew the evening.

Instinctively the children crept closer, and Ralph put his arm round Susie, for was he not her protector?

It was a great thing that each had the other. Fain would they have tried to soothe one another, but what could they do? This thought puzzled them much.

Then a cheering idea occurred to Ralph. He had been a Sunday school scholar before his father had sunk so low through drink. And his teacher had once told him, that when we were in difficulties and could do nothing for ourselves, that if we prayed, God would do it for us.

"Susie, child," said Ralph, in tremulous tones, "let us ask God to help us." And with Susie's hand locked fast in his own he knelt and uttered a broken prayer.

Who shall say that it was not answered when half an hour afterwards good old Bessie Brown looked in upon the forlorn little ones?

"Has it come to this, Ralph?" said Bessie in a husky voice, as she looked at the fireless grate and the desolate room.

"Heaven help you! poor motherless bairns," she continued.

Then in a more cheery voice:

"Come now, Ralph and Susie, I think we could make this place a little bit cheerful, and perhaps father will be pleased, when he comes home, to see that you have made the best of things. Just run along to my room, Ralph, and bring a few pieces of wood and coal."

Very soon a blaze from the fire sent its fitful glare over the bare floor and walls.

Ralph was sent to get a loaf. And while he was gone, Susie, who had taken off her shoes to save them, took the big kettle and ran off to the tap.

The splash of her bare feet amid the half-melted snow on the wet stone steps fell heavily on the ears of a well-dressed young lady, who passed upward to another gallery to see a sick woman.

The lady turned to look but the child was gone. It seemed useless to follow, for the windings in Piper's Court were very intricate to a stranger.

She passed on to fulfil her errand. But as she returned to her comfortable suburban home, the momentary glance, by one dim gas-lamp, of the naked feet and the big kettle, and the beautiful tangled hair flying wildly in the wind, and she thought the child was sobbing—these things haunted her.

The luxuries of her home had lost their charm. When she retired to her boudoir her eyes rested on velvet, and marble and gilt; but these she saw not.

Miss Frere's mental vision was too full of the sad picture in Piper's Court. The frail child, the tiny bare feet, the big kettle, and the ice and snow. To what kind of people could the poor child belong? Miss Frere almost despaired of ever finding her, for her organ of hope was not large; but she at once resolved to pray every day that she might again meet the child and befriend her.

If a room could be made tidy or cheerful Bessie Brown could do it. And Susie looked carefully among the cups and saucers to find one that was not cracked, to set ready for father. Bessie made them some hot coffee, for she thought it would help to keep the frost out.

They drank their coffee and at their bread, and although they had neither sugar, milk, nor butter, they were happy; for good old Bessie was near them, and she always carried about her an atmosphere of peace and kindness. Yet over their short-lived happiness there hung a cloud. They could not shape their fears into words. But a

(To be continued.)