

He did, and Margaret read him the second chapter on 'Arthur Subduing His Kingdom.' The boy was captured, he would do anything for a story. From that time he came willingly, and they lived all the rest of the winter in a glorious vision of gallant knights and lovely ladies. There was the clang of armor, the crash of battle axe and spear, the joust, the tourney, the riding forth upon some noble quest, the glorious return. Many were the questions.

'How do you get into your armor?' 'How do you fight with spears?' 'Guinevere—who was she, anyhow?'

It was a far cry from the boy to the fair daughter of King Leodogran.

At first the great charm in the stories was that those old chaps invariably 'put up such a dandy fight,' but gradually as the boy became acquainted with Launcelot and Percival Galahad, new ideas dawned upon him, and the mathematics did not suffer. One night he came dashing in with shining eyes.

'Miss Margaret,' he cried, 'I'm promoted, and the "long division" did it.'

Margaret kissed him, he turned stiff in an instant, and she was afraid she had made a dreadful mistake; but she had not.

Soon after this she read him with a sweet solemnity the 'Search for the Holy Grail,' making sure he understood the meaning as she went along. When she had finished he went home very quietly with a new expression on his face.

Next evening his first question was, 'What became of Arthur when all his knights were gone?'

Then Margaret dared to do something at which I was surprised, but her instinct was a true one. She took her Tennyson and read to Boy the 'Mort d'Arthur.' Did he understand it? No, not all, but much he comprehended, for he had not been Margaret's companion for six months for nothing. When she came to that noble passage beginning, 'Pray for my soul! More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of,' which has inspired so many hearts, the boy's face changed.

As the last words fell from her lips, her listener sprang from his seat and with one plunge he was beside Margaret. His head was on her shoulder, and he was clinging to her arm, while the tears ran down his cheeks. Margaret had won her boy.

'I'd like to be a knight,' he said. 'How do you get to be one?'

So Margaret told of how they took the little lad of seven from his home and gave him to some noble knight for training. She described the splendid education he received, and the gifts of hawk, and horse, and armor each in turn, and how at last, when he had learned all that noble knight or gentle lady could teach, the young esquire watched and prayed, fasting all night, alone in the lonely church, his maiden sword lying before him on the altar. And how, next day, in the presence of father and mother and all his loved ones, he took the vows of knighthood upon him—vows of utter hardihood, utter gentleness and loving, utter faithfulness in love, and uttermost obedience to the King.'

'But a feller can't do that now,' sighed Boy. 'There ain't no chance to be a knight these times.'

This is a true story, and a story of the present, so of course Margaret was ready for him with more than one narrative of the true knights of to-day who have fought in as gallant a quest as any knight of Arthur's ever won.

Whether Margaret's boy ever goes to West Point to learn how to become a modern knight, as he wishes to do, is an open question. But this much is surely true, he has surely learned through those old legends

that to lie is a shame, to obey is honorable, to be brave is noble.

Never But Once.

Susan Field was nursemaid in the family of a country doctor, thirty miles from her native town. It was her first place, and Susan had never before been at any distance from home; and when she had been there a year, Susan longed for a sight of all the dear faces round the home fireside. Her mistress, who was well pleased with her young servant's willing and active services, readily gave her leave of absence for a fortnight; and Susan set out with eager, joyous heart on her short railway journey. Her little brothers and sisters met her at the station, and led her home in triumph to their mother, talking dancing round her all the way. The mother was rejoiced to have her daughter once more beside her, and proud to see her grown so womanly and looking so blooming and neat; and in the evening, when the father came home from his work in haste to welcome his eldest lassie, and they sat down together to the little feast that had been prepared in honor of her return, Susan thought she had never been quite so happy before in all her life. 'And who do you think is to be here to-morrow or next day, Susan?' said her father; 'you've just come in good-time.' 'Oh, I don't know,' said Susan, smiling, 'there are so many neighbors to see.' 'Aye,' said her father, 'but this is a neighbor you have not seen these nine years. I daresay you won't mind him. It's your uncle Ralph, that's been so long in Canada. He wrote us last week that he had landed in London, and would be down here this week.' 'Here, Billy,' said the father a few minutes after, putting his hand in his pocket, 'we must have an extra pot of beer to-night for a treat to you all when Susan's come.' Billy took up the jug, but Susan laid her hand on her father's arm. 'Oh, no, father, please; at least not for me.' 'What for, lass?' said he, smiling; 'have you lost your taste for beer? You used to like a drop.' 'Well, so I did; and I daresay I might like it well enough yet; but you see the doctor's a teetotaler, and he and some other gentlemen used to give lectures in the village, and they told us how there's hardly any strengthening in the beer, and it only makes them weaker after, and how the men in the ironworks can work far longer—them that takes no beer or spirits, than them that do; and how so many get drawn in to be slaves to it before they know, and then they go to the bad altogether. And some of the books that Missis gave us to read told how even young girls often get into great trouble and disgrace just through a little drink; so I just put down my name to take no more, and I don't want ever to touch it.' 'Well, well, lass,' said the father with a good-natured smile; 'I wouldn't say but it's the best plan for a young lass like you; but I don't see I could do without my beer, though it's but a little I take.' 'But you never tried, father.' 'No, and I don't see as there's any need. You don't think I'm going to be a drinker, Susy, eh? You never saw me the worse of drink.' 'You, father! Oh no; only the doctor says nobody knows when they're safe that takes it at all. The little ones, who began to think their father had had a large enough share of Susan's attention, now broke in, and the subject was not taken up again. Two days after, the long-absent uncle arrived, and as his brother's house was full, he took up his temporary abode in a comfortable lodging in the same street. During the day his brother could see but little of him, being closely engaged at his work; but as soon as he was at liberty in the evening they set out together to seek out and visit some of Ralph's old acquaintances. Susan rather

grudged the loss of her father's company, but she did not grumble, feeling that when he and his brother had been so long parted, it was but natural that they should wish to be together; and she had still time for a little chat with him when he came home to supper.

The next evening the two brothers went out again; and meeting a little knot of acquaintances in the street, Ralph said, 'Come, let us turn into Tom Harper's; I haven't seen him yet; and we can have a talk round his bar-room fire about old times.' Tom Harper of course made his guests heartily welcome, and while he sat with them and joined in their chat, did not neglect quietly to replenish their glasses as often as they were emptied; and as one after another called up a story of old times, and they talked and laughed and got more and more excited, they emptied their glasses far oftener than they were aware of, till at last, when they were obliged to separate, William Field was for the first time in his life helped home, thoroughly, helplessly drunk. What Susan and her mother felt it would be vain to try to describe; only those who have seen one whom they love and reverence thus brought low for the first time can understand it. With silent, dropping tears, ashamed almost to look each other in the face, they helped him to bed. Neither would it be easy to describe what William himself felt when he awoke in the morning from his heavy and unrefreshing sleep—his shame and remorse at having so degraded himself, and the pain that wrung his heart as he thought of the grief he must have caused to his wife and daughter. He would gladly have remained at home, for his head ached and his limbs trembled, and his wife entreated him not to think of work that day; but he was engaged with other masons in finishing a house that had been already too long delayed. 'I must go,' said he, 'or my place will be filled up. I've been a great fool, Jeanie, but I promise you it'll be the last time.' He was greeted by some of his fellow-workmen with jokes on his last night's adventure, which, habitually sober as he was, he could ill stand. He went silently to his work, but his hand was unsteady and his sight confused. Standing on the high scaffolding on which the day before he had wrought with perfect safety, his head grew giddy, and he turned to come down; but his footing was uncertain, and before a companion could reach him he had fallen heavily among the rubbish that lay below. Conscious, but groaning with pain, he was raised and carried home, and it was found that his left arm, which had been bent under him, was so shattered that it was necessary to have it taken off. Poor William! it was many days before he could speak of it; but how bitterly, as he lay helpless there, did he repent his one night's indulgence. 'Oh, Susy!' said he, as his daughter sat beside him the night before she was to return to her place, 'this is a sore way to part with you. Who would have thought that all this would come from being once the worse for drink. Here I'm lying helpless, and winter coming on, and what's your poor mother and the little ones to do? And even when I'm able to be up again, what can I do for them;—a poor one-handed cripple?' 'Oh, but you mustn't get disheartened, father,' said Susan, trying to speak cheerfully, though the tears stood in her eyes. 'You know Missis promised to raise my wages, and I'll save all I can; and then Mr. Sawers is going to take Billy into his shop; and there'll be plenty things you'll be able to do with your one arm; and uncle says he'll not see mother and the little ones want.' 'Yes, I may thank God,' said William, 'that it is my right arm I have left; and the first use I make of it, Susy, will be to sign the pledge. Drink has